

DESTINATION NIZHNY NOVGOROD, RUSSIA THROUGH THE EYES OF  
DOMESTIC TOURISTS: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, RISK PERCEPTIONS AND  
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

By

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To my parents and my love

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
LIST OF TABLES .....	7
LIST OF FIGURES.....	8
DEFINITION OF TERMS .....	9
ABSTRACT .....	11
CHAPTER	
1    INTRODUCTION .....	13
Statement of the Problem .....	18
Purpose of the Study .....	20
Research Questions.....	20
Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.....	20
Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.....	21
Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks.....	21
Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior.....	21
Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod? .....	21
Significance of the Study .....	21
2    LITERATURE REVIEW .....	24
Destination performance.....	24
Destination Image .....	26
Risk perception .....	31
Post-Visitation Behavior.....	34
Relationship between the Concepts.....	37
3    METHODS.....	44
Instrument Development.....	44
Population of the Study.....	51
Data Collection Procedure .....	53
Web-Based Survey .....	53
Selecting Online Groups.....	54
Data Collection and Data Preparation .....	54
Data Analysis.....	55
Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.....	55

Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.....	56
Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks.....	57
Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior.....	58
Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod? .....	58
<b>4 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Respondents' Demographic Profile .....	60
Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.....	60
Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.....	62
Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks. ....	64
Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior .....	66
Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod? .....	67
<b>5 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>84</b>
Discussion of Findings .....	84
Practical Implications .....	91
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research .....	95
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
<b>A MAPS AND VIEWS OF NIZHNY NOVGOROD .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>B ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SURVEY .....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>C RUSSIAN VERSION OF THE SURVEY .....</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>D DEMOGRAPHICS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS (VKONTAKTE, FACEBOOK) USERS .....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>E MESSAGES FOR MODERATORS AND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>F THANK YOU NOTE TO MODERATORS AND PARTICIPANTS .....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>G IRB APPROVAL .....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>H GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>I COPYRIGHT AGREEMENT .....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....</b>	<b>141</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>page</u>
4-1	Respondents Profile .....	70
4-2	Characteristics of the Last Trip to Nizhny Novgorod.....	71
4-3	Primary reason of visitors vs. number of visits.....	72
4-4	City Performance Attributes.....	73
4-5	Differences in evaluation of destination performance among first-comers and repeat visitors .....	74
4-6	Differences between the primary reason of the last visit and performance evaluation .....	75
4-7	Risks associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod .....	76
4-8	Difference between first comers and repeat visitors in risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod .....	77
4-9	Low and High Risk Profile.....	77
4-10	Differences between low risk profile and high risk profile tourists in their evaluation of the city's performance .....	78
4-11	Intention to revisit Nizhny Novgorod .....	79
4-12	Word-of-mouth activity.....	80
4-13	Overall/composite scores of constructs .....	81
4-14	Correlation between performance evaluation of the last trip to Nizhny Novgorod and post-visitation behavior .....	82
4-15	Correlation between risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod and post-visitation behavior .....	82
4-16	Relationship between performance evaluations, risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod, primary reason, number of previous visits and intention to revisit the destination.....	83
4-17	Relationship between performance evaluations, risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod, primary reason, number of previous visits and WOM.....	83

## LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>		<u>page</u>
2-1	Model of International Tourism Decision-Making Process.....	42
2-2	Model of the Relationship between Destination Image, Risk Perception, Destination Performance and Post-visitation Behavior.....	43

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

DESTINATION:	In the context of this study, the term “destination” refers to large entities, i.e., countries, regions, or major cities, rather than individual attractions within these entities (Echtner, 1991)
DESTINATION IMAGE:	This study accepts a definition of the destination image as a multi-faceted, composite construct, which consists of interrelated cognitive and affective evaluations woven into an overall impression (Gartner, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a).
DOMESTIC TOURISTS:	In the context of this study domestic tourists are those who permanently reside in Russia and travel away from home for a distance at least 50 miles (one way) for business, pleasure, personal affairs or any other purpose except to commute to work, whether s/he stays overnight or returns the same day (National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973)
MINISTRY OF SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS, CONSUMER MARKET AND SERVICES IN NIZHNY NOVGOROD REGION:	This is a local institution responsible for the development of tourism industry in Nizhny Novgorod. Within this Ministry, there is a special Coordination Council for the Tourism Development that is responsible for control over the regional tourism development in Nizhny Novgorod. Destination performance: In the context of this study, destination performance is understood as the feedback got from the visitors who have been to the destination that shows the strengths and weaknesses of this specific destination (Kozak, 2002; Ahmed, 1991).
RISK PERCEPTION:	In this study risk perception is understood as a phenomenon associated with the choice the consequences of which are uncertain, and some of these consequences are more desirable than others (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992).
POST-VISITATION BEHAVIOR:	In this study post-visitation behavior is understood in terms of how willing the person is to revisit the destination and how likely this person is to recommend it as a travel destination (Opperman, 2000, Chen & Tsai, 2007). Satisfaction: This study accepts the definition of the satisfaction as satisfying end-state resulting from the experience of consumption (Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

**TRAVEL RISK:**

In this study travel risk is understood as perceptions and experiences of tourists during the process of purchasing and consuming travel services (Tsaur, Tzeng & Wang, 1997).

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Nizhny Novgorod is a big cultural and historic center of Russia. It is a place of national and world heritage which is home to hundreds of museums, galleries and exhibition centers. Despite the opportunities to make the city a global tourism destination , the city is not meeting the goals set by the Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region responsible for developing tourism in the area.

The purpose of the study was to find out who the domestic tourists to Nizhny Novgorod are, how Nizhny Novgorod performs as a tourist destination, risks tourists associate with visiting the city, and whether their perceptions of risks affect their evaluation of destination performance and intention to revisit and word-of-mouth activity.

The study showed that attributes of the destination were generally evaluated positively, but attributes that involved service component were evaluated lower. First-timers tended to evaluate the destination performance on certain attributes higher than repeaters. The study showed that travelers who visited friends and relatives tended to evaluate service related attributes such as hotel standards and friendliness of personnel

lower than business and leisure travelers. Overall, respondents had a positive risk perception of the destination, while the risk of crime was evaluated higher than others. Contradictory to previous studies, repeat visitors tended to evaluate risks associated with traveling to the destination higher than first-timers. Destination performance and risks perception were found to both intention to revisit and WOM, while number of previous visits was found significant only for intention to revisit.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the fastest, largest growing industry in the world and is the driving force for regional development (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Floyd et al., 2004). The competition for international tourists among destinations is intense due to several factors. These factors include globalization which boosts mobility of capital and people, technological changes including communication technologies, and the greater desire for long-distance travel to a wide range of tourist places (Bramwell & Rawding, 1996). In 2011, the top three countries in terms of international tourists' arrivals were France, United States and China (UNWTO, 2012). In the same year, Russia was ranked thirteenth in the world based on the absolute contribution of travel and tourism industry to GDP (WTTC, 2012). Tourism development is considered a priority in Russia, both in terms of international and domestic arrivals (Kolobova, 2011). It is viewed as one of the most important economic sectors of Russian industry, giving a considerable boost to its economy as Russia is projected to be a prominent international tourist market, with more than 23.6 million in international arrivals reported in 2011 (WTTC, 2012). The importance of tourism development for Russia is underscored by the Sochi Winter Olympic Games and the World Soccer Cup that the country is hosting in 2014 and 2018, respectively.

Being a vast country geographically, the Russian Federation has many tourist resources – historic, cultural, natural, ethnographic, etc. – at its disposal, but its potential as a premier tourism destination has not yet materialized (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2004; Burns, 1998). To realize that potential, attention should be given not only to traditional tourist centers such as Moscow and St. Petersburg, but to other

regions as well. Cities have always been and continue to be popular tourist destinations, although different cities are visited for different reasons (Borg, 1994; Peters & Pikkemaat, 2003). “Big cities” and “interesting old cities” are part of the Russian destination image (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008), and Nizhny Novgorod (Nizhny) is considered one of these cities. Nizhny is among the five largest cities in Russia with a population of 1.3 million people, and it is often called the third capital of Russia, after Moscow and St. Petersburg. The city was founded in 1221 on two great rivers, the Volga and the Oka, and is famous for its historic places, cultural significance, outstanding architecture, and picturesque views (Appendix A presents geographical position and several views of the city). In the 19th century the city had the nickname “the purse of Russia”, as it was home to one of the largest agricultural and trade fairs in the world in those times. The city’s historic and cultural heritage, as well as accessible location, is the primary factor that attracts tourists to Nizhny Novgorod (Kolobova, 2011; Avralev & Efimova, 2011). There are 874 objects of cultural and historic interest in the city of Nizhny Novgorod (Kuftiryov, 2011), with the Kremlin fortress epitomizing the city’s historic, architectural, and cultural heritage. The international and domestic cruises along the Volga River make a stopover at Nizhny on the route from Moscow to Astrakhan (the city on the left bank of the Volga River close to where the river discharges into the Caspian Sea) and back. The Nizhny Novgorod Region possesses 370 museums, several hundred galleries and exhibition centers as well as important national and world heritage sites such as Makariev Monastery and Serafimo-Diveevsky Monastery (Avralev & Efimova, 2011). Thus, using classification suggested by Page

(1995), Nizhny Novgorod can be categorized as a multifunctional city, having the features of a fortress city, industrial city, large historic center, and cultural city.

Russia will host two mega-events which are expected to bring an influx of both international and domestic tourists to various parts of the country: the Sochi Winter Olympic Games, in 2014; and the Soccer World Cup, in 2018, where Nizhny Novgorod will be one of a few host destinations. Besides building new infrastructure, hosting mega-events sharply increases destination visibility and awareness, enhances destination image, and translates tourists' evaluation of destinations performance into word-of-mouth post-visitation behavior (Ritchie & Smith, 1991; Gibson, Qi & Zhang, 2008; Kaplanidou, 2009; Gartner, 1989). Prior to the mega-events of such scope and influence, studies of destination tourism from various perspectives is advisable to the Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region, an institution responsible for development of tourism industry in the area. Tourism research can help coordinate the tourism-development strategies in the city and better prepare for future tourism events. Particular attention should be paid to what drives tourists to the city, visitors' perceptions of risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod, as well as travelers' evaluation of the destination performance and their post-visitation behavior. Better understanding of tourists' destination perceptions and behavior is instrumental to not only improving destination performance in aspects important to visitors but also to more effective marketing communications, that contribute to positive destination image formation that in its turn can boost tourists flow to a destination.

The concept of destination image, including its analysis and evaluation, attracted much attention in academic literature, and has made a significant contribution to the understanding of tourists' behavior (e.g. Crompton, 1979; Hunt, 1975; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Gallarza, Saura & Garcia, 2002; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Hunt, 1975; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). The role of destination image in defining tourism behavior is especially important because most tourism products are intangible and compete primarily via images (Pike & Ryan, 2004). Previously, if a destination had a positive image and at least a minimal amount of destination recognition, it would be more likely considered in the process of decision-making (e.g. Gartner, 1993; Choi, Tkachenko & Sil, 2011; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). Now, tourists are offered various destinations with similar features including quality of accommodations, beautiful scenic views, and friendly people. Thus, having just a positive image is not enough for a destination to be included in the destination consideration set, which is understood as a number of destinations that a consumer considers as a prospective place to visit (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989).

Destination as a product cannot be measured as a single entity; it can rather be evaluated as the attributes of alternatives which can be compared and, as a result, form a basis of destination choice (Gensch, 1978). The cognitive, attribute-based component of destination image, unlike the other two components, affective, and behavioral, is often claimed to be related to destination performance as cognitive image is basically comprised of how well destination performs on certain attributes according to visitors perceptions (Kozak, 2002; Um et al., 2006). The cognitive component is measured most often in the studies on destination image (Pike, 2000; Gallarza et al., 2002).

Making a final decision about the destination, travelers also consider the risks associated with the trip (e. g. Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Sonmez, Apostolopoulos & Tarlow, 1999; Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004). Possible risks associated with going to the destination can sometimes even outweigh the conditions in the particular destination and prevent people from going to a risky region (Floyd, Gibson, Pennington-Gray & Thapa, 2004; Sonmez, 1998). As a result higher risks result in a decrease in visitations to the destination (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998a).

Due to the fact that there is a wide choice of destinations to consider, the destination management organizations also need to pay attention to tourists' post-visitation behavior including word-of-mouth and intention to revisit. Not only is it considered easier to retain the previous consumers, these consumers are also the ones who communicate the image of the destination and advocate it to their friends and relatives through the positive word-of-mouth, including through social networks (e.g. Simpson & Singuw, 2008; Qu et al., 2011; Opperman, 2000; Kozak, 2001). Social networks can facilitate awareness and improve the destination image of the city as they play an important role in travel and tourism information search as well as in increasing the probability of visitation (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008).

Other factors such as number of previous visits to destination (e.g., first-timers versus repeat visitors), primary reason for coming (leisure, business, or visiting friends and relatives) or general travel risk perception (the so-called visitor's risk profile) can influence tourists' perception of the destination as well as post-visitation behavior (e.g. Um, Chon, Ro, 2006; Lehto, Morrison & O'Leary, 2001; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). Depending on these factors travelers can evaluate performance, and decide on their

further behavior towards the destination (Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Um, Chon, Ro, 2006).

In order to attract more tourists to the destination, the city and regional tourism authorities need to elaborate their strategy to better position the city in the tourism market and to create a positive destination image. Destination positioning is based on perceptions, feelings and impressions that consumers have about a particular destination in respect to other destinations (Ahmed, 1991). To do that, the authorities need to know what kind of visitors the city attracts, what drives visitors to the city, how visitors perceive Nizhny Novgorod, what the strong features of the city as a tourist center are, and what needs to be improved. After identifying strengths and weaknesses in destination performance, it is important to pay attention to the concepts of destination image, risk perceptions and post-visitation behavior in reference to Nizhny Novgorod. It will allow the local authorities to project image of the destination to potential tourists so that it becomes desirable to them (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Being a multifunctional city, Nizhny Novgorod has resources to meet diverse tourist needs (Ashworth & Page, 2011); however, currently the city is not realizing the number of tourists it can handle as a tourist destination (Kuftiryov, 2011). Within the government of Nizhny Novgorod region, the Ministry of Support and Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services is charged with development of the tourism industry in the area (<http://en.tourismnn.ru/>). In 2010, approximately 580,200 tourists visited Nizhny Novgorod (Avralev & Efimova, 2011). Among these tourists, only 81,400 were foreign tourists, while the rest, almost 500,000 visitors, were domestic tourists (Avralev & Efimova, 2011). The discrepancy between the numbers of domestic

and foreign tourists to Nizhny Novgorod highlights the importance of domestic tourism for the city. But it has been estimated that domestic travel to Nizhny Novgorod makes only 2% of all domestic Russian travel, while foreign travel to Nizhny Novgorod is only a small fraction of international arrivals to Russia constituting only 1% (Kolobova, 2011). Moreover, the number of tourists coming to Nizhny Novgorod in 2010 was 30-35% lower than the objective set in “Development of domestic and international tourism in Nizhny Novgorod in 2009-2011”, the strategic development program of Nizhny Novgorod (Kolobova, 2011). It can be also illustrated by the occupancy rates that decreased from 52% in 2006 to only 30% in 2010 (ProHotel, 2011; Frontdesk.ru, 2007). One of the reasons that Nizhny Novgorod has an underdeveloped tourism industry is that, until 1991, it was a “closed” city, meaning that the settlement had special travel and residency rules and restrictions. As a result, it was almost impossible to visit the city, particularly, for foreign tourists. After the city was no longer “closed” in the early 1990s only outbound tourism developed, while there was no progress in inbound and domestic tourism.

To realize its tourism potential, the Ministry of Support and Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services is currently focusing on the development of tourist areas or clusters of the city such as the Kremlin, Bolshaya Pokrovskaya street, Verhne-Volzhskaya and Nizhne-Volzhskaya embankments as well as adjacent territories. Due to the fact that the number of domestic tourists coming to Nizhny Novgorod is considerably higher than the number of foreign visitors, domestic tourists play an important role in communicating the image of the destination to potential travelers and advocating travel to Nizhny Novgorod to their friends, family, and larger

audiences in their social networks. The Ministry needs to take the local tourists and their assessment of Nizhny Novgorod as a tourist destination into consideration for tourism planning as well as for marketing the destination.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to determine who the domestic tourist to Nizhny Novgorod is and what their primary reasons for visiting the city are. It also sought to find out what activities tourists prefer to participate in while in Nizhny Novgorod. The study investigated how Nizhny Novgorod performs as a tourist destination, as evaluated by domestic tourists themselves, what city attributes visitors consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the destination, and how satisfied they are with their travel experiences in Nizhny Novgorod. The study explored what risks tourists associate with visiting the city and whether their perceptions of risks affect their evaluation of destination performance, as well as intention to revisit and recommend the city. The study investigated tourists' post-visitation behavior, specifically their intention to return to Nizhny Novgorod and willingness to recommend the city. Finally, the study explored if such constructs as destination performance, risk perceptions, primary reason and number of previous visits to the destination influence post-visitation behavior.

### **Research Questions**

In this study the following research questions are addressed:

#### **Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.**

- What are the primary reasons for visiting Nizhny Novgorod?
- Are domestic tourists to Nizhny Novgorod primarily first-timers or repeat visitors?
- In what type of activities are they engaged while visiting Nizhny Novgorod?
- What parts of the country are they coming from?

### **Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.**

- How do tourists evaluate destination performance?
- Is there a difference between the first-times and repeat visitors?
- Is there a difference between leisure, business, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) tourists in destination performance evaluation?

### **Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks.**

- How do tourists perceive risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod?
- Is there a difference in perceptions of risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod between first-timers and repeat visitors? Leisure, business, and VFR tourists?
- Is there a difference in destination performance evaluation depending on general travel risk profile of visitors to Nizhny Novgorod?

### **Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior.**

- How likely are tourists to revisit the city?
- What kind of word-of-mouth activity are they engaged in after travel to Nizhny Novgorod?

### **Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod?**

- Which variable, performance evaluation, risk perception, number of previous visits, or primary reason for visiting Nizhny Novgorod, is the greatest predictor of post-visitation behavior?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study has practical importance as there is a lack of Russian tourism research, especially research focusing on Nizhny Novgorod that can be used for destination marketing. This study can be applied to positioning the city as a tourist destination as the study investigates such concepts as tourist profile, destination performance, risk perception and post-visitation behavior. By analyzing these concepts in the context of Nizhny Novgorod, this study helps the city and regional tourism

authorities attract more tourists; better understand who visits the city; weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the city's tourism offer, as perceived by tourists themselves; mitigate visitors' risks they associate with travel to Nizhny Novgorod; and create a positive image of the city that visitors communicate as word-of-mouth to their social circles, both online and offline, upon returning home.

Besides the practical aspect of the proposed research, its timeliness, and the lack of academic tourism studies in the Nizhny Novgorod as well as a general Russian context (e.g., Lukashina, Amirkhanov, Anisimov & Trunev, 1996; Braden & Prudnikova, 2008), there is a wider academic perspective where the proposed research can have significance. Although the risks foreign tourists associate with traveling to a destination have been researched, the issue of the risk perception in domestic tourism has not received the same amount of attention that international travel has. As a result this study contributes to understanding the issue of risk associated with domestic trips and find out how risk perception in context of domestic tourism influences post-visitation behavior.

Additionally, there have been only a few studies to date that focus on the cities as a specific type of a tourist destination as opposed to country, state, and resort (Pike, 2002; Peters & Pikkemaat, 2003; Ashworth & Page, 2011), as well as such a large cultural and historic center like Nizhny Novgorod (Kuftiryov, 2011; Kolobova, 2011). And although there are studies on the repeat visitation intention, only a few scholars address the issue of what factors influence the positive post-visitation behavior, including positive word-of-mouth and repeat visitations, and what specific travel related risks

influence the behavior of the tourists (Assaker, Vinzi & O'Connor, 2011; Lee et al., 2005; Chi & Qu, 2008; Dolnicar, 2005).

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

To better understand the place of this research in a larger context of academic tourism literature, five streams of literature were surveyed: sources dealing with destination performance; general concept of destination image and destination image formation process, perception of risks associated with the trip to a destination. The last section of the literature review discusses the relationships between the concepts of destination performance, risk perception and post-visitation behavior.

### **Destination performance**

The importance of the concept of destination performance has been recognized in academic literature (Kozak, 2002; Um, Chon & Ro, 2006; Ahmed, 1991; Cracolici, 2004; Servert, Wang, Chen & Brtier, 2007; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). It is important to evaluate the destination performance as the feedback from visitors shows strengths and weaknesses of the destination and can be used to compare destinations to one another (Kozak, 2002; Ahmed, 1991). It can bring attention to those attributes that the destination performs poorly against so that these areas can be brought up to standard (Kozak, 2002). It is also important to take destination performance into consideration due to the fact that destination performance influences post-visit tourists' behavior, in particular, the behavior of first-comers (Um et al., 2006).

The importance of destination performance was underscored by the fact that it contributed to satisfaction with the destination. The level of product and/or service performance can cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the experience at the destination (Kozak, 2002; Um et al., 2006; Tse & Wilton, 1988; Chon & Olsen, 1991; Servert et al., 2007; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). Based on the fact that destination

performance influences the level of satisfaction with the trip this concept is always a part of the satisfaction evaluation (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Gronroos, 1990). Two major schools in measuring customer satisfaction relevant to the tourism industry are identified in the literature (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). One school measures the satisfaction based on not only on the destination performance; instead of that it compares between initial expectations before the trip and the actual performance of the product/destination (Parasurman, Zeithmal & Berry, 1985; Piza & Milman, 1993; Chon & Uysal, 2005; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). The other school, known as Nordic school, focuses on the destination performance stating the satisfaction is the result of only actual performance of the destination and disregards the previous expectations a person had before traveling (Gronroos, 1990; Pizam, Neumann & Reichel, 1993). The Nordic model shows that the destination performance evaluations and the initial expectations the person has about the destination prior to the visit should be considered independently (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Tse & Wilton, 1988). The model that disregards expectations can be preferable because it is useful even in cases when visitors didn't know anything about the destination prior to the visit or didn't know what they were going to do and what activities to take part in in the course of their trip (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Product performance can be characterized as post-consumption evaluative judgments (Mano & Oliver, 1993). Consequently, it is often measured as the sum of tourists' evaluations of various destination attributes (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Danaher & Arweiler, 1996; Qu & Li, 1997; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). So, visitors evaluate the destination performance judging by several components such as

accommodation, weather, social environment etc. And the destination performance on all these components contributes to the experience with the destination and influences visitor's satisfaction with the trip (Chi & Qu, 2008). And this kind of satisfaction, also known as attribute satisfaction, often cannot be delineated from the level of destination performance (Um et al., 2006; Chi & Qu, 2008; Danaher & Arweiler, 1996).

### **Destination Image**

A number of studies showed that research on the tourism destination image is complicated owing to the multi-disciplinary character, complexity and multi-dimensionality of the destination image phenomenon, as well as subjectivity in providing tourism service and intangibility of image assessment (Smith, 1994; Gallarza, Saura & Garcia, 2002; Gartner, 1989; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). It is said that the concept of destination image is loosely defined and still there is no universal definition of this phenomenon (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Generally, it is understood as a multi-faceted, composite construct, which consists of interrelated cognitive and affective evaluations woven into an overall impression (Gartner, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a).

The importance of the destination image phenomenon has been recognized in the context of tourism because it can affect people's perception of the destination and influence their behavior in selecting a destination (Crompton, 1979; Hunt, 1975; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Gallarza, Saura & Garcia, 2002; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Echtner & Richie, 1991; Bramwell & Rawding, 1996; Baloglu, 1997; Chi & Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011). Destination image can even influence tourist growth as much as, or even more than, tangible resources the destination possesses (Hunt, 1975). Destination choice has two phases: the first phase addresses the general problem of whether to travel or not,

while the second phase focuses on the selection of a specific destination (Um & Crompton, 1990). The final choice of the destination is based on the so-called “benefit package” (Gartner, 1989, p. 16) which is unique to each destination, and is supposed to be the most rewarding for the traveler. This benefit package is derived from the expectations, which result from image formation (Gartner, 1989). For example, when it comes to a city as a specific destination, all cities have different preconditions, and tourists visit them for several purposes depending on what the city is associated with, and which benefits it has (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Peter & Pikkemaat, 2003). Here a destination image acts as an underlying concept that if formed correctly will encourage inclusion of a destination into a traveler’s destination consideration set (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Gartner, 1989; Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Murphy, Pritchard & Smith, 2000). The importance of the destination image in the decision-making process can be explained by the fact that when tourists have limited personal experience, they act upon the image rather than objective reality (Crompton, 1979; Fakye & Crompton, 1991). If the destination has a more positive image among travelers, it is more likely to be included in the decision-making process (Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Chi & Qu, 2008; Gallarza, Saura & Garcia, 2002).

Overall image is formed as a consequence of interrelated components (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Andreu, Bigne & Cooper, 2000; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006). As far as components of a destination image are concerned, most of the academic research states that it consists of cognitive and affective evaluations (Garner, 1993; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Phillips & Jang, 2010; Qu et al.,

2011; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). Cognitive evaluations are conceptualized as the “sum of beliefs and the individual’s evaluations of destination attributes” (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997, p. 12). In other words, it is “awareness, knowledge, or beliefs, which may or may not have derived from a previous visit” (Pike & Ryan, 2004, p. 334). Affective evaluations refer to the feelings a person has towards a particular destination, which can be favorable, unfavorable, or neutral (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). There was always an emphasis on the cognitive component in the literature (Pike, 2002; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). Pike’s (2002) review of the academic articles on the destination image revealed that only 6 out of 142 articles showed interest in affective component. But now there is a general agreement in the literature that the cognitive component is an antecedent of the affective component (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Gartner, 1993). Scholars also recognize a third component of the destination image – conative or behavioral (Gartner, 1993; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2006, 2008). Conative evaluations are associated with the behavior understood as evaluations of the action part of the destination image (Gartner, 1993). Conation can be perceived as “the likelihood of visiting a destination within a certain time period” (Pike & Ryan, 2004, p. 334). In other words, this component shows how tourists will act towards the destination based on the cognitive and affective evaluations they have about it (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). And although all of these components contribute to the overall destination image, cognitive or attribute based component was

found to determine the affective and overall images (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Ahmed, 1991; Chi & Qu, 2008).

Destination image formation can be understood as the “development of mental construct based on a few impressions chosen from a flood of information” (Reynolds, 1965, p.69). Information that is important in the process of destination image formation comes from a wide range of sources (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1993; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). Based on how the destination image is formed, scholars delineate primary and secondary images (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Phelps, 1986). The primary image is formed by the actual visit to a destination (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Phelps, 1986). The visitation modifies any previous image the tourist had before going to the destination. It reduces stereotyping and results in a new image that tends to be more complex and realistic (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Phelps, 1986). In other words, the primary image is based on the first-hand experience that travelers gain when they go to a place and experience it themselves (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). For example, in regards to the city as a destination, Haywood (1990) identifies several consequences of the visitation such as: a confirmation or disconfirmation of the prior expectations and norms based on the quality of the current-city visit experience; an emotional response that can be positive, negative or neutral depending on the extent of confirmation or disconfirmation; and outcomes that can lead to future visits, positive or negative word-of-mouth. In contrast to the primary image, the secondary image is formed by information sources other than first-hand experience and it is formed prior to the visit (Phelps, 1986; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Govers et al., 2007). Promotion, the opinion of others, media reporting and popular culture are among such information

sources (Govers et al., 2007). These information sources are also known as stimulus factors (Gartner, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a). Based on the concept of primary and secondary images, scholars acknowledge that images differ between visitors and non-visitors, and this should be taken into account (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a).

The destination image is a relativistic and dynamic phenomenon influenced by various factors such as personal characteristics of the traveler, time of the trip and geographic location (Gallarza et al., 2002; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Andreu et al., 2000). All the factors that influence the destination formation process are divided into two large groups (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Peters & Pikkemaat, 2003). Personal factors, personal characteristics, or internal factors constitute the first group (Um & Crompton, 1990). This group can be, in its turn, divided into two subgroups: psychological factors such as values, motivation, and personality; and social factors including age, education, marital status, cultural background (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Govers et al., 2007). The second group consists of stimulus factors such as information sources, previous experience and distribution (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a).

Scholars also emphasize familiarity with the destination as an important factor influencing its image and the desire of tourists to revisit it (Milman & Pizam, 1995; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008; Baloglu, 2001). Familiarity has two dimensions: experience with the destination and knowledge about it (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). To form an image of the destination, potential tourists should have at least a minimum level of recognition (Woodside & Lyskonski, 1989). Those who are familiar

with the destination are, generally, more favorable and more likely to travel there (Baloglu, 2001; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010).

Several studies also acknowledge the role of the geographical factor in the destination image formation process, claiming that the closer the potential visitors to a destination are, the more detailed picture and positive image of the destination they have (Crompton, 1979; Gartner, 1993; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Cook & McCleary, 1983).

### **Risk perception**

Risks associated with the destinations influence the lasting destination image formation (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b). These risks can even outweigh the tangible features that the destination possesses, and alter the decision-making process (Sonmez & Graefe, 1999a, 1998b; Floyd et al., 2004). Taking risks into account is especially important due to the fact that in tourism, the product is mostly intangible and consumed at the time of production; the consequence of this process is that the perceived risk is most likely to be very high (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). And the higher the risks are, the more tourists tend to avoid the destination, resulting in a decrease in visitations (Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004; Sonmez et al., 1999; Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b). High Perceived risks can influence tourists to pursue other travel plans, change their destination choice, modify their travel behavior, or search for additional information if they decide to continue with their travel plans (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Chandler, 1991).

The need for safety, security, and stress-free trips is one of the key determinants of future travel intentions (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Braker, Page & Meyer, 2003).

As a result, one of the factors that influence the process of decision-making in risk-perception is often associated with the choice, the consequences of which are uncertain, and some of these consequences are more desirable than others (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992; Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Levantis & Gani, 2000; Maser & Weiermair, 1998). Risk in tourism is defined as perceptions and experiences of tourists during the process of purchasing and consuming travel services (Tsaur, Tzeng & Wang, 1997). Perceived risk can be defined as "a consumer's perception of the overall negativity of a course of action based upon an assessment of the possible negative outcomes and the likelihood that those outcomes will occur" (Mowen & Minor, 1998, p. 176). A situation in which the outcome is a sure loss cannot be considered to be a risk, because there is no variance in possible outcomes (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992).

The degree of risk associated with traveling depends on several factors such as means of transportation used, the facilities and activities offered at the destination, and the customs and environment in the area (Tsaur et al., 1997). Perception of the risk can vary according to the tourists' characteristics (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Roehl & Fesemaier, 1992; Floyd et al., 2004; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008a; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Barker et al., 2003). Based on how individuals perceive risks, three types of tourists have been distinguished by previous studies: (1) the risk neutral group doesn't perceive a trip to a destination as risky; (2) the functional risk group considers the possibility of mechanical, equipment, and organizational risks; and (3) the place risk group generally, thinks of traveling as being risky (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). Another factor contributing to the differences in the level of risk perception among travelers is

previous experience with the destination, which positively influences risk perception as tourists tend to feel safer about traveling to a destination they have previously visited (Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003).

Perception of risk also depends on the type of risk perceived (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). There are several types of risks that exist and the importance of each type of risk depends on the situation (Maser & Weiermair, 1998; Roehl & Fesemaier, 1992). Initially, scholars borrowed the categorization of risks from other areas of non-travel-related research; but examining risk perception outside the tourism domain was considered to be too broad (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008a; Dolnicar, 2005). So, the risk types related to the tourism industry were identified as (1) time – not performing on time or wasting time; (2) financial – the risk of losing money invested in a product or service if the product or service fails to meet expectations; (3) physical - the risk of physical harm, such as injury or illness, to tourists as a result of the functioning of the product; (4) psychological – the fear that the purchased product will not be compatible with the self-image of the traveler or reflect negatively on person; (5) satisfaction – not living up to traveler's expectations resulting in unsatisfaction; (6) social – the risk that the purchase will not conform to the visitor's standards, lead to losing personal and social status, and/or lowering status; (7) functional or performance - not performing or delivering the benefits to the tourists, and not meeting their needs (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Roehl & Fesemaier, 1992; Floyd et al., 2004). Three other types, health, political instability and terrorism, of risks were added later, of which terrorism and political instability were found to be of particular concern (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998a; 1998b; Lepp & Gibson, 2003). The importance of specific types of risks depends on individual

differences among travelers; for example, one tourist may focus on physical risk, while another will think financial risk is more important (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b).

### **Post-Visitation Behavior**

The importance of research on the post-visitation behavior has been recognized in tourism literature (Opperman, 2000; Jang & Feng, 2007; Tiefenbacher, Day & Walton, 2000; Gitelson & Grompton, 1984; Kozak, 2001; Hui, Wan & Ho, 2007; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Ross, 1993). Some destinations or attractions, primarily beaches or resorts, rely heavily, and sometimes even totally, on repeat visitations (Gitelson & Grompton, 1984; Opperman, 2000; Um et al., 2006). The degree of this positive post-visit behavior is reflected in how willing the person is to revisit the destination as well as how likely they are to recommend it as a travel destination. The revisit intention as well as positive word-of-mouth are considered to be the most important behavioral consequences in destination image and destination experience (Opperman, 2000, Chen & Tsai, 2007; Qu et al., 2011; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Simpson & Singuaw, 2008). Tourists' satisfaction, destination performance and previous experience with the destination were found to be the factors influencing post-visitation behavior including the intention to revisit and desire to recommend (Haywood, 1990; Chi & Qu, 2008; Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; Chi & Qu, 2008; Tasici & Gartner, 2007; Lee et al., 2005; Um et al., 2006). Additionally, the destination image is also contributing to the post-visitation behavior indirectly; the more positive destination image is, the more likely the satisfaction with the destination will improve (Chi & Qu, 2008; Tasici & Gartner, 2007; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). As a result the more positive image will lead to increased repeat visitations as well as positive word-of-mouth (Chi & Qu, 2008, Chen & Tsai,

2007). And vice versa, repeat visitors tend to have more positive image of the destination (Algre & Cladera, 2009).

The intention to revisit has been studied in the tourism literature and it is considered to be the sign of the destination loyalty (Qu et al., 2011; Chi & Qu, 2008; Assaker et al., 2011). There is a relationship between the destination image and the repeat visitation (Bigne et al., 2001; Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Tiefenbacher et al., 2000). The overall image was found to be one of the most important antecedents of revisit intention (Bigne et al., 2001). And while the initial visit changes the destination image a tourist used to have prior to it, repeat visitations tend to reconfirm the image formed by the first visit to the destination (Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Tiefenbacher et al., 2000). Five main reasons why people revisit the destination were identified: (1) risk reduction associated with the content with the particular destination, including the unawareness of the alternatives or the fear that these alternatives are not as desirable as known destination; (2) risk reduction associated with finding the same kind of people; (3) emotional attachment to a destination; (4) further exploration of the destination; (5) showing the destination to other people and sharing the experience (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984). Based on the tourists' temporal destination revisit intention, tourists segmentation was proposed: (1) continuous repeaters – those who visit the destination with consistently high revisit intentions over time; (2) deferred repeaters – those tourists who have low level of revisit intentions in the short-term, but high revisit intentions in the mid-term and long-term; and (3) continuous switchers – travelers with consistently low revisit intentions over time (Feng & Jang, 2004). The timeframes can be considered as following: short- term – less than one year, mid-term – 1-3years, long-term – 3-5 years

(Feng & Jang, 2004). Satisfaction with the trip and tourists' positive experience at the destination were found to be an important antecedent of repeat visitations (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Kozak, 2001; Bigne et al., 2001; Hui et al., 2007; Pritchard & Havitz, 2006; Murphy et al., 2000). The studies suggest that the reasons of revisiting the destination may differ between first-comers and repeat-visitors that have already been to the destination multiple times (Um et al., 2006; Kozak, 2001). The revisit intentions of the first-comers tend to be based mostly on their experience with the destination and their satisfaction with the trip, while repeat visitors tend to revisit the destination largely influenced by promotional efforts that recall their positive memories associated with the destination (Um et al., 2006). And repeat visitors have higher probability to come back to the destination again in contrast to those who visited the destination once (Alegre & Cladera, 2009).

Word-of-mouth can be defined as "informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization or a service" (Harrison-Walker, 2001, p. 63). Word-of-mouth is an indicator of the tourist's desire to continue the relationship with the destination as well as one of the most reliable sources of information that people base on in the destination selection process (Chi & Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Simpson & Singuaw, 2008; Qu et al., 2011; Opperman, 2000; Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). It is very important to avoid the negative word-of-mouth as it has a devastating impact on the destination as the visitors spread unflattering comments about the destination (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2003; Litvin et al., 2008). Those who have visited the destination several times and have been to the destination recently tend to

provide more positive word-of-mouth, simply because they can easily recall as it was there recent vacation destination and not the destination they visited many years ago (Opperman, 2000). Tourists' satisfaction and destination performance were found to be important predictors of positive word-of-mouth (Simpson & Singuaw, 2008; Kozak & Rimmington, 1999). Travelers who are satisfied with their experience with the destination are likely to speak positively of it and in such a way to advertise the destination (Kozak, 2001; Tiefenbacher et al., 2000; Hui et al., 2007). Word-of-mouth can be considered as the least expensive advertisement tools as well as one of the most powerful in affecting people's feelings and behavior (Tiefenbacher et al., 2000; Simpson & Singuaw, 2008). It has particular influence on friends and family of those who visited the destination (Tiefenbacher et al., 2000).

### **Relationship between the Concepts**

Previous research found that before going on a trip, tourists are likely to develop an image and a set of expectations about the intended destination (e.g. Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989). These expectations form the destination image, which in its turn influences decision making process and tourists' behavior (Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Lee et al., 2005). The destination image influences the choice of a destination, evaluation of the trip as well as the future travel intention (Fakye & Crompton, 1991; Lee et al., 2005; Saura & Garcia, 2002).

Making a final decision about the destination, travelers also consider the risks associated with the trip (e. g. Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Sonmez, Apostolopoulos & Tarlow, 1999; Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004). Risk perception can influence the destination image affecting its attractiveness and visitors' perceptions of the destination

(Sonmez et al., 1999). Safety is one of the primary concerns of tourists in the process of choosing the destination (Levantis & Gani, 2000; Reisenger & Mavondo, 2005). The model provided by Sonmez and Graefe (1998b) shows how risk perception (awareness of possible risks at the destination) can influence decision making process (Figure 2-1).

This model (Figure 1) shows that in the process of the destination choice, destinations are grouped in different sets. Grouping the destinations into these sets involves assessing the risks associated with traveling to a particular destination. It is reflected in the model (Figure 1) by Sonmez and Graefe (1998a) which shows that when a person is considering the travel option s/he first forms an awareness set – all the destinations he learnt about (both intentionally and unintentionally). During the next stage alternative destinations are divided into three other sets: (1) evoked set (destinations about which information search will be conducted); (2) inert set (destinations about which a person has insufficient or no information); (3) inept set (destinations in this set are rejected because of the negative perceptions or perception of risks) (for the Copyright Agreement please see Appendix I).

Then the remaining alternatives are evaluated on the basis of safety and risks associated with the destination (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998a). So, Risk perception influences the decision making process and impacts travel behavior as based on how risky the destination is tourists decide whether they will visit it or not (Floyd, Gibson, Pennington-Gray & Thapa, 2004; Sonmez, 1998; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Fuchs & Reichel, 2006). The more risky the destination is the more likely tourists will avoid it (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006).

Due to the fact that there is a wide choice of destinations to consider, the destination management organizations should also pay attention to tourists' post-visitation behavior. The visit to the destination changes the image a person had prior to it (e.g. Pearce, 1982; Chon, 1991; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). And the more positive the image formed by visiting the destination is, the more likely person is to return to this particular destination (e.g. Chi & Qu, 2008; Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). Not only is it considered easier to retain the previous consumers, these consumers are also the ones who communicate the image of the destination and advocate it to their friends and relatives through the positive word-of-mouth (e.g. Simpson & Singuw, 2008; Qu et al., 2011; Opperman, 2000; Kozak, 2001). Moreover, positive word-of-mouth also reduces the destination perceived risks associated with traveling to the destination (Qu et al., 2011).

The experience with the destination or the destination performance is also among the pivotal factors that should be considered in the process of destination positioning (e.g. Kozak, 2002; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). The familiarity with the destination, in particular its experience dimension, has a positive influence on the destination formation (Milman & Pizam, 1995; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Kozak, 2002; Mano & Oliver, 1993). People who have already visited the destination before tend to have a more detailed and positive image of the destination (e.g. Baloglu, 2001; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Milman & Pizam, 1995). It also reduces the perceived risk of the destination, as people tend to feel safer traveling to the destination they have already been to (Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003). The fact is the better the destination performs on certain attributes, the higher the level of satisfaction

with the destination tourists have, and the more likely they are to revisit and to recommend it (e.g. Chi & Qu, 2008; Danaher & Arweiler, 1996; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). This relationship is reflected in the experience-based norms model of the consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction by Woodruff, Cadotte and Jenkins (1983) which was adapted to the urban tourism by Haywood and Muller (1988). In respect to urban destination this model shows that initially there is interrelation between norms about expectations regarding the city visit and experience that tourists have prior to experience. Expectations that a person has prior to a visit in its turn influence perception of attractiveness and city's attributes which forms the urban visit experience. When the actual visitation occurs it results in confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations which can lead to negative, neutral or positive feelings about the destination. The outcomes of this visit contribute to prior experience which forms the attitudes towards the destination.

Consequently, the primary goal of destination positioning is forming a positive destination image that will distinguish a particular destination from others including reduction of the risks associated with the trip (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Cai, 2002; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). But although destination image is believed to play an important role in destination positioning, a frame of reference with the competition since positioning is a products perceived performance on certain attributes in relation to competitors (Pike & Ryan, 2004; Ahmed, 1991).

Other factors such as the experience side of the familiarity with the destination and the primary reason of the trip should be considered. As far as repeaters and first comers are concerned, repeaters are believed to have lower perception of risks associated with traveling to destination, they are believed to engage more in the positive

word-of-mouth as well as give higher evaluation of the destination (Baloglu, 2001; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Um et al., 2006; Opperman, 2000). While previous studies showed that destination performance has more influence on first-timers than repeaters in terms of desire to revisit the destination (Um et al., 2006; Opperman, 2000). The purpose of the trip can also impact the destination choice, evaluation of destination attributes, activity involvement and post-visitation behavior (Wheeler, 1972; Um, Chon, Ro, 2006).

Based on the literature review, the relationships between the concepts of destination image, risk perceptions associated with travel to destination, destination performance evaluation, and post-visitation behavior can be reflected in the model represented by Figure 3. Constructs that are operationalized and measured in this study are shaded, and the relationships tested in the Russian domestic tourist context are represented by arrows.

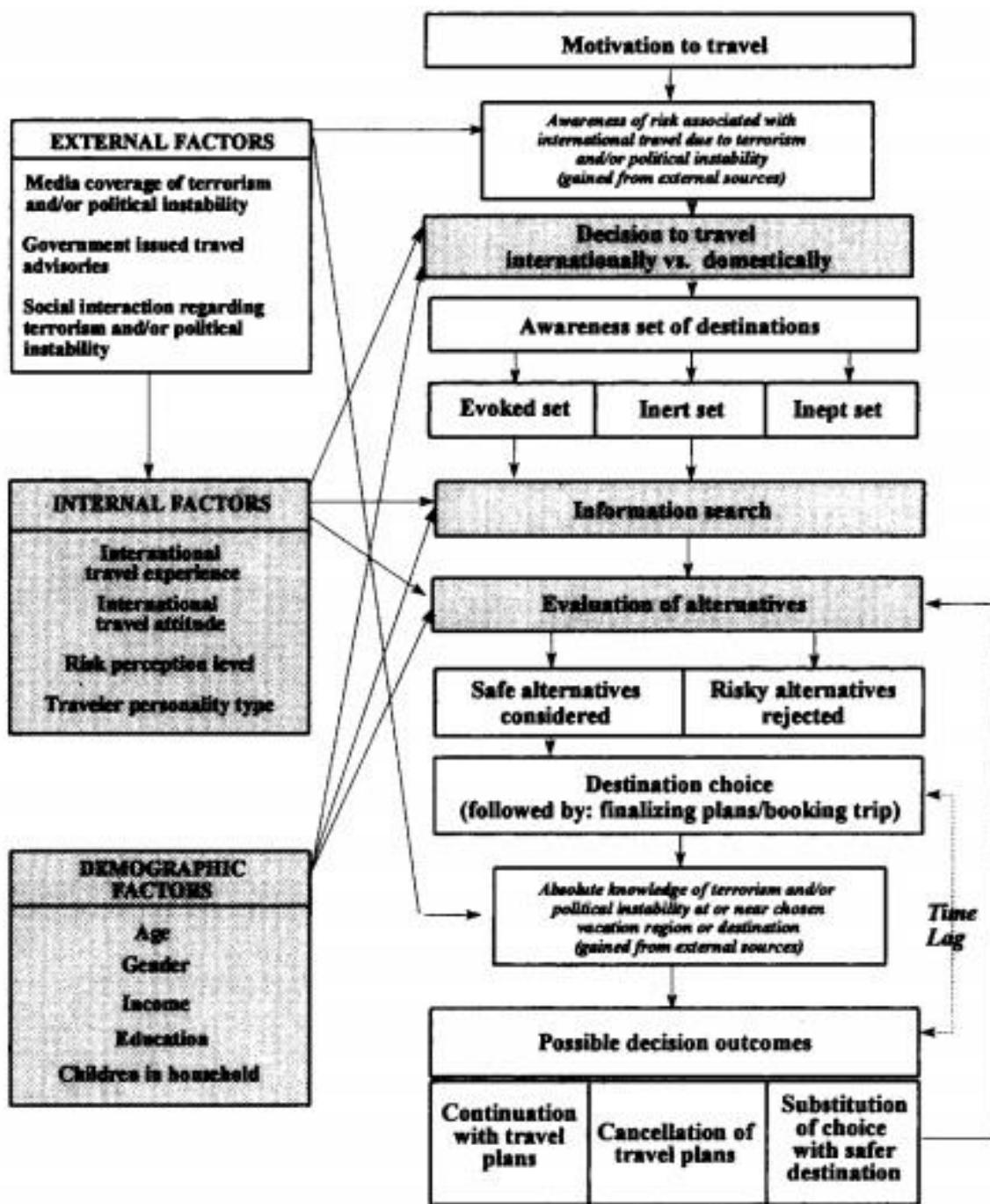


Figure 2-1. Model of International Tourism Decision-Making Process [Reprinted with permission from Sonmez, S. & Graefe, A.R. 1998. Influence of terrorism risk on foreign tourism decisions (Page124, Figure 1). Annals of Tourism Research, 25, 112-144.]

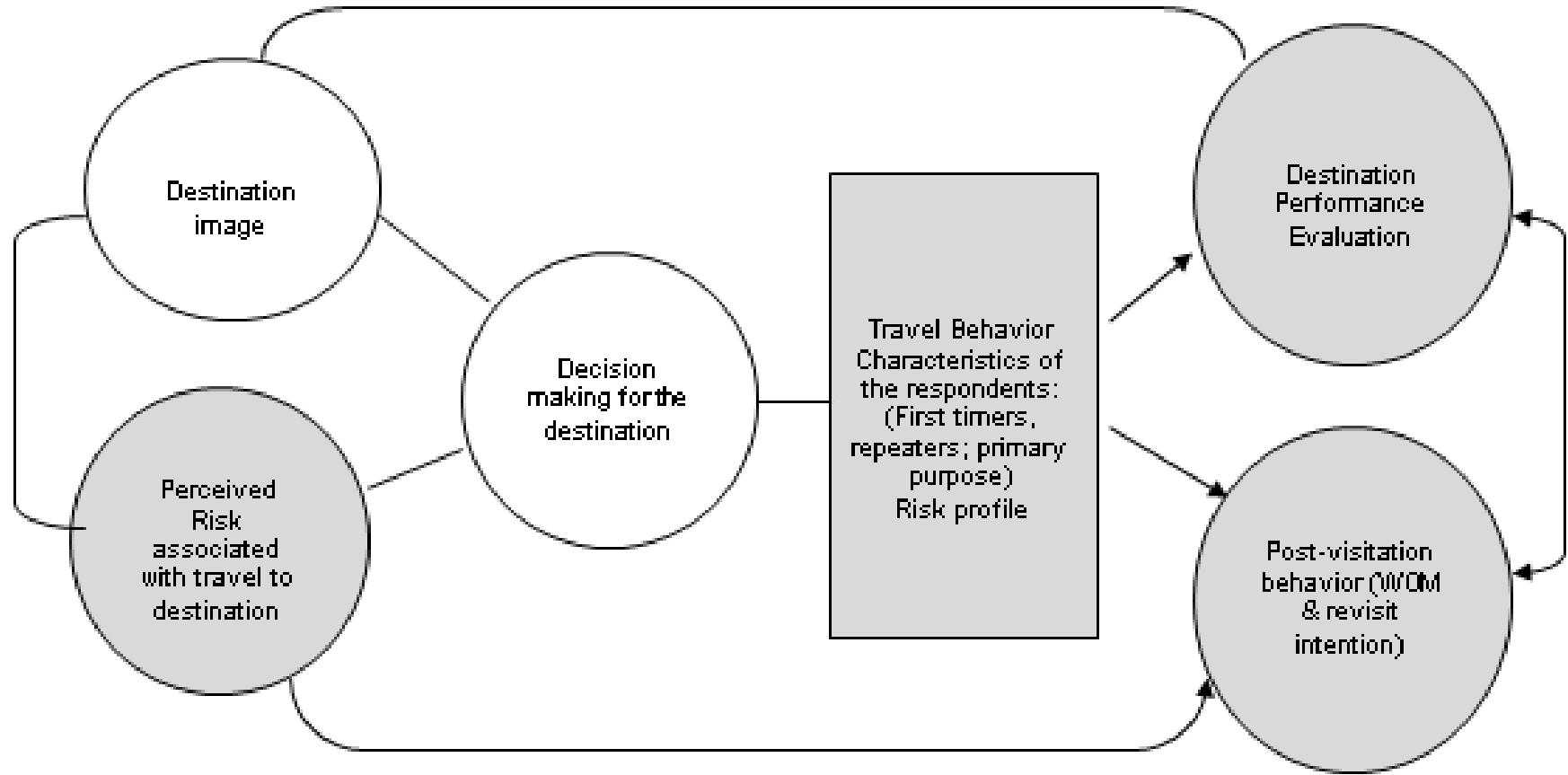


Figure 2-2. Model of the Relationship between Destination Image, Risk Perception, Destination Performance and Post-visitation Behavior

## CHAPTER 3 METHODS

This chapter explains the procedure and instruments that were used to collect data and the statistical analyses that were used to address the research questions.

### **Instrument Development**

The target population of the study is Russian domestic tourists who have been to Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years (2009-2012). The domestic tourist are understood as the person who travels away from home for a distance at least 50 miles (one way) for business, pleasure, personal affairs or any other purpose except to commute to work, whether s/he stays overnight or returns the same day (National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973).

The time was limited to the last four years, since if a person visited the destination prior to this, then s/he might have difficulty in recalling the information on the experience with the destination (Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; Kozak, 2002). These people were invited to participate in the survey. However, since invitations were posted online, it was expected that a certain number of people who are not from the target population would follow the link to the survey. The status of the respondent and the eligibility to participate in the study were determined by the following qualifying questions:

- a) Are you a resident of Russia? Yes/No ("No" disqualifies the respondent)
- b) Are you a resident of Nizhny Novgorod? Yes/No ("Yes" disqualifies the respondent)
- c) Have you been to Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years (2009-2012)? Yes/No ("No" disqualifies the respondent)
- d) What is your zip-code? (to ensure that respondents are indeed tourists as pertaining to the definition)

Questionnaire for this study was developed based on the literature review and then adapted to the case of Nizhny Novgorod. Due to the fact that this study is aimed at domestic travelers, the questionnaire was initially written in English and then translated into Russian. It was then translated back into English to check the accuracy of the translation. The translation was performed by three researchers who are fluent in both English and Russian languages. Based on a comparison between the original English version and the re-translated to English version, several modifications were made to some questions to ensure they carry the intended meaning. Survey was approved by the University of Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB Approval can be found in Appendix G.

Survey consists of the following groups of questions: (1) domestic tourists to Nizhny Novgorod, (2) evaluation of destination performance, (3) perception of travel risks, (4) post-visitation behavior, and (5) demographics. Following are brief descriptions of each of these sections.

#### **Research Question 1 Survey Items: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod**

includes questions that measure such variables as the purpose of the trip, the experience with the destination (the frequency of visitation in last 4 years and the length of stay during the latest trip) as well as the type of tourist (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). The data is thought to help the Nizhny Novgorod DMO obtain information about primary reasons of visiting the city, frequency of visitation in the last 4 years, length of stay during time of the last visit, as well as time of the year they visited Nizhny Novgorod for the last time. Since this is an exploratory study, the reasons for visitation were divided into categories following (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). The section also includes a question

that is asking to check the activities visitors were involved while in Nizhny Novgorod.

The following survey items were used to answer these questions:

1. In the past 4 years, how many trips to Nizhny Novgorod did you have?

The variable was numerical; respondents had to enter the approximate number of visits to Nizhny Novgorod within last 4 years.

2. What is the primary reason for your last trip to Nizhny Novgorod?

The respondents were given the following answer choices: sightseeing, business trip, education/academic trip, visiting friends and relatives, special event, entertainment, outdoor recreation, sporting event, shopping.

3. Was your last visit a day trip or an overnight trip?

Respondents had to check if their last trip was a one day trip or an overnight trip.

And if it was an overnight trip they had to indicate how many night they were staying in the city. It was a numerical variable; respondents had to enter the approximate number of nights they spent in the city during their last visit.

4. During what season did you visit Nizhny Novgorod last time (check the most appropriate answer)?

It was a multiple choice type of question.

5. Please check each activity you participated in during your last trip to Nizhny Novgorod.

This is a multiple choice type of question, in which several answers could were allowed. The sum of percentages of responses is not out of one hundred percent.

#### **Research Question 2 Survey Items: Destination Performance Evaluation:**

The destination performance items were taken from the urban experience survey by Haywood & Muller (1988) with the minor adaptation to the case of Nizhny Novgorod.

Thus, the attribute “the city’s setting and scenic beauty” is measured by two items such

as “the city setting/surroundings are scenic” and “the city has beautiful parks and greenery” in order to avoid ambiguity. Nizhny Novgorod is a very large city, and various areas of the city can perform very differently on certain attributes. Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region is set to develop areas of the Kremlin, Bolshaya Pokrovskaya street, Verhne-Volzhskaya and Nizhne-Volzhskaya embankments as well as adjacent territories as their premier tourist sites, since these areas are considered to be historical, cultural and business center of the city. Therefore, five items specified that they were concerned with these tourist areas only. All destination performance items are measured on the 5-point Likert scale with 1 - «strongly disagree», 2 — «disagree», 3 — «neither agree nor disagree», 4 — «agree», 5 — «strongly agree». This section is designed to assess how the city performs as a destination on certain attributes, (questions # 6-22). The English version of the destination performance items is given below. For convenience of reference throughout the thesis, each item is given a “nickname”, which is included in the parentheses. Items related to cleanliness, safety from crime, pleasurability of walking, choice of restaurants, and pleasurability of shopping were asked with reference to the city’s tourist areas.

6. The city’s climate/weather during the visit was pleasant (climate/weather).
7. The city is beautiful and scenic (scenic beauty).
8. Standards in hotel accommodations were adequate (hotel standards).
9. The city has beautiful parks and greenery (parks and greenery).
10. Destination appeared clean and free of trash in touristy areas of the city (cleanliness).
11. Destination appears safe from crime in touristy areas of the city (safety from crime).

12. It is easy to find and reach tourist attractions within the city (accessibility).
13. Tourist personnel appears friendly and welcoming to tourists (friendliness of personnel).
14. The city offers a wide choice of artistic and cultural amenities (cultural amenities).
15. It is very pleasurable to walk or stroll in touristy areas of the city (pleasurability of walking).
16. The amount of crowding and congestion in the city is NOT overwhelming (acceptable level of crowding and congestion).
17. There is a good choice of restaurants in touristy areas of the city (choice of restaurants).
18. There is a variety of nightlife and entertainment in the city (nightlife and entertainment).
19. Shopping in touristy areas is very pleasurable (pleasurability of shopping).
20. The price levels in Nizhny Novgorod are very attractive (price levels).
21. Citizens of Nizhny Novgorod are friendly and helpful to tourists (friendliness of locals).
22. In case of emergency adequate healthcare is available to tourists (availability of healthcare).

**Research Question 3 Survey Items: Perception of Travel Risks** consists of items, evaluating perception of risk for traveling in general and types of risk associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod, in particular. The general risks perception is evaluated by six items on the basis of a five-point Likert scale where 1 – “strongly disagree” and 5 – “strongly agree”. The following items (questions # 3.1) were adopted from previous studies (Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004; Floyd et al., 2004):

23. Generally, I feel nervous about traveling.
24. Traveling is risky right now.
25. Vacation travel is not safe.
26. Generally, I feel very uncomfortable traveling.

27. Domestic traveling is just as risky as international travel.
28. Safety is a serious consideration when I am choosing a destination

The items measuring risks perceptions associated with traveling to Nizhny

Novgorod were adapted from Floyd et al. (2004), Floyd & Pennington-Gray (2004), Qi, Gibson & Zhang (2009) and measured on the basis of a five-point Likert scale where 1 – “strongly disagree” and 5 – “strongly agree” (questions # 29-36). The English version of the risk associates with travel to Nizhny Novgorod items is given below. For convenience of reference throughout the thesis, each item is given a shorter version to refer by”, which is included in the parentheses.

29. The money spent on the vacation in Nizhny Novgorod will be a waste; (waste of money)
30. I will experience health-related problems while traveling to Nizhny Novgorod (health risks);
31. While I am in Nizhny Novgorod a crisis surrounding infrastructure (i.e. building, bridge collapse) will likely to occur (crisis of surrounding infrastructure);
32. It is likely that I will personally be a victim of crime (crime);
33. It is likely that I will become a victim of terrorist act while in Nizhny Novgorod (terrorism);
34. There is a risk of friends/family/associates disapproving of my choice of travel to Nizhny Novgorod because it is not safe (disapproval of others);
35. The trip to Nizhny Novgorod might be disappointing (disappointing trip);
36. While in Nizhny Novgorod the natural disaster is likely to occur (natural disaster);

This section also has an open-ended question asking to list the most risky thing about traveling to Nizhny Novgorod (question # 37).

**Research Question 4 Survey Items: Post-Visitation Behavior** includes items that measure post-visitation behavior including revisit intentions and positive word-of-mouth as reflected in actual recommendations (Lee et al., 2004; Jang & Feng, 2007).

The intention to revisit measure consists of three items adopted from the academic literature including (Lee et al., 2004) that are evaluated base on the five-point Likert scale (1 – “strongly agree”; 5 – “strongly disagree”). These items are measuring desire to revisit for a pleasure trip, in a short and medium term (Lee et al., 2004) (question # 38-40):

38. I want to come to Nizhny Novgorod again for a pleasure trip;
39. It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next three years;
40. It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next five years;

The measure of positive recommendations included five items (question # 41-45). Three of them were adopted from the previous academic studies (Lee et al., 2005; Zeithmal, Berry & Parasurman, 1996):

41. After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, generally I spoke positively about Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to my friends and/or family;
42. After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, overall I spoke positively of Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to other people (excluding friends and relatives);
43. After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I recommended Nizhny Novgorod to people who were seeking advice;

The other two items related to the word-of-mouth in the social networks were added:

44. After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I wrote and posted online a generally positive review about my experience in Nizhny Novgorod and posted it on the website of the hotel/restaurant etc. the services of which I used during my trip;
45. After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I spoke positively about Nizhny Novgorod on at least one social network sites, such as facebook, vkontakte, odnoklassniki, and twitter.

All five items on the word-of-mouth are “yes”/“no” type of questions.

Demographic included such socio-demographic questions as gender, age, level of income, level of education, and marital status.

The survey was tested using a group of five native Russian speaking students from the University of Florida to ensure the clarity of the instrument as well as to find out if there are any technical issues with the online survey. Based on this test, the phrasing of the survey was edited and minor technical problems were eliminated.

### **Population of the Study**

The target population for this study is adult (18 years of age and older) Russian domestic travelers who have been to Nizhny Novgorod within last 4 years (between 2008 and 2012), including both those who visited the destination once and repeat visitors. The population of the study was targeted through social networks Vkontakte, and Facebook which are the most popular social networks in Russia. Vkontakte (vk.com) was first launched in 2006 and is now the number two website in Russia on the basis of the average number of daily visitors and the number of pageviews in the last month (Alexa: The web information company, 2012a). For example, in January 2012 vk.com was visited by 21.5 million people from Russia (TNS Media Runet 2012 January report, 2012). And Facebook launched in 2006 is number eight website in Russia based on the average of daily visitors and the number of pageviews over the past month Alexa: The web information company, 2012b).

The demographic characteristics of the social network users were retrieved from the Alexa website ([www.alexa.com](http://www.alexa.com)), which is the web information company providing statistics on the usage and popularity of the websites. According to the Alexa analytical data, users of the Vkontakte website are on average people aged 18-24, mostly male with university degree (Alexa: The web information company, 2012a). The university degree according to the Russian system of higher education can include a five-year specialist degree, four-year bachelor's degree and two-year Master's degree. Based on

internet averages, the users of Facebook are mostly 18-34 years old, female, have children, and graduated from the university (Alexa: The web information company, 2012b). The full user demographics of these social network websites can be found in Appendix D.

Based on the demographics of the users of these websites, the population of the study was mostly people under 35 years old, both male and female, with kids, and those who graduated from the university. According to the Census of 2010 male and female 28-32 years old constitute the largest age group (Russia Census 2010, 2010). 44% of household with two or more people have kids under 18 years old (Russia Census 2010, 2010). The profile of a typical Russian tourist shows that an average Russian tourist is also comparatively young. Russian tourists are mostly people who are on average between 25 and 40 years old (Smith, Tatarinov & Trehleb, 2002; Russia: market & Trade profile, 2010). Exclusion of the older adults can be explained by the fact that Russian citizens who are over 50 rarely travel as they cannot afford it due to the low level of income. Statistical data show that an average income of the Russian citizen over 50 years old in 2002 constituted 2000-4000 rubles per month (approximately \$64-\$128 per month) for men and 2000-3000 per month (approximately \$64-\$96 per month) for women, while the income of man and women between 30 and 40 years old is at least twice as much (Roshina, 2005). Additionally, in general, those who are traveling are active Internet users (Hwang & Fesenmaier, 2004). As a result, people over 50 are not typical travelers as long as a Russian tourists' profile is concerned.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

### **Web-Based Survey**

There were two main reasons for selecting the online survey mode for this study: the absence of a sampling frame of domestic visitors to Nizhny Novgorod as well as physical distance between the researcher and the target population. Online mode was considered a suitable way to proceed when the following factors were taken into account. First, the internet penetration rate in Russia is relatively high. At the beginning of 2012, over 70 million people (58% of the Russian population) use the Internet; among the younger people (age group) online users make 79% (WCIOM, 2012). Secondly, popularity of social networks Vkontakte and Facebook makes it feasible to recruit participants online: more than 60% of those who use Internet in Russia are social network users with the majority preferring such social networks as Vkontakte and Facebook (WCIOM, 2012). Thirdly, the demographic profile of social network websites' members is consistent with that of domestic travelers (younger, mobile, and relatively well-off people (Alexa: The web information company, 2012a, b; Smith, Tatarinov & Trehleb, 2002; Hwang & Fesenmaier, 2004). And finally, given the actual distance between Florida and Russia, recruitment of participants and survey distribution is less expensive and more time-efficient using the online mode (Dillman, 2000). The online survey was built using the Qualtrics platform, and the data was directly downloaded from the Qualtrics website to the file which could be opened in SPSS for further analysis, thus reducing the error associated with data entry.

It should be noted that the sample which was obtained in this study is not a random sample. Moreover, while there is evidence that online social network websites'

users share some characteristics with Russian domestic travelers, there is no way to establish how big a coverage error was to occur in the study.

## **Selecting Online Groups**

The data was collected in January 17 – February 1, 2013 through social networks Vkontakte and Facebook. Several groups and communities, both open and closed, within these social networks were identified as suitable for this research project, based on their primary purpose and the number of participants:

- “Nizhny Novgorod ON-LINE” (approx. 52,000 participants) – an open Vkontakte group, general news and information about Nizhny Novgorod consisting of both residents and visitors.
- “Typical Nizhny Novgorod” (approx. 42,000 participants) – an open Vkontakte group, consists of both residents and visitors to Nizhny Novgorod.
- “Nizhny Novgorod – Privilzh’e” (approx. 2,400 participants) - an open Vkontakte group, consists primarily of local residents as well as actual and prospective visitors.
- “Nizhny Novgorod, Russia” (approx. 1,100 participants) – an open Facebook group, consists of the city residents, those who visited the city or prospective visitors.
- “Nizhny Novgorod, Russia” (approx. 800 participants) – a closed Facebook group, uniting city residents, those who visited the city or prospective visitors.
- Group of the one of the biggest cruise companies in Nizhny Novgorod “Vodohod” that organizes cruises on the Volga River and trips to Nizhny Novgorod. This is an open Vkontakte group that has approximately 2,000 members.

Open group means that anyone can become its member while to become a member of closed group your request has to be approved by moderator of the community.

## **Data Collection and Data Preparation**

The moderators of the above mentioned groups were contacted in order to obtain an authorization to approach community members with an invitation to participate

in the study. The message that was sent to moderators is in Appendix E. The permission was obtained from every moderator. The messages with the invitation to take part in “Destination Nizhny Novgorod Study,” by participating in the online survey, were posted on the wall of each group (Appendix E). All online groups had the same message inviting them to participate in the study that was posted by a moderator of each group. The message was posted only by moderators in order to avoid bias and to increase the credibility of the information posted. Reminders were posted again on January 24 and January 30 (Appendix E and Appendix F). The total number of Destination Nizhny Novgorod study hits was 1,126. The number of submitted responses was 845. The number of responses that were not disqualified based on the qualifying questions was 468. Then responses that were less than 50% completed as well as responses that were filled out by those who stayed in Nizhny Novgorod for more than 6 months were removed. The number of usable surveys was 283.

Since the survey design allowed respondents to skip questions, several submitted surveys contained missing data. The open-ended question “what is, in your opinion, the most risky about traveling to Nizhny Novgorod” (69.4 of missing values) had the least number of responses along with the question “how many nights in total have you spent in Nizhny Novgorod during your last trip” (51.2 percent of missing values).

## **Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This section lists the posited research questions and statistical analyses that were conducted to answer them.

### **Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.**

- What are the primary reasons for visiting Nizhny Novgorod

The categories from the question # 2 (cited in the Instrument Development section) were combined into three categories - business (business, education/academic trip), leisure (sightseeing, special event, entertainment, outdoor recreation, sporting event, shopping) and visiting friends and relatives. Frequencies were calculated for this item to find what the primary reasons for the last trip to Nizhny Novgorod respondents had.

- Are domestic tourists to Nizhny Novgorod primarily first-timers or repeat visitors?

The categories from the question # 1 were transformed into the first timers (those who visited Nizhny Novgorod once) and repeat visitors (those who visited the city two and more times). Descriptive statistics and frequencies were calculated for this question to find out the how many times respondents visited Nizhny Novgorod within last four years, and if they were mostly first-timers or repeat visitors.

- In what type of activities are they engaged while visiting Nizhny Novgorod?

For the question # 5 frequencies were calculated to find out what activities visitors engaged in during their last visit to Nizhny Novgorod.

- What parts of the country are they coming from?

All the zip codes from the qualifying question d were classified by oblast/region in Russia, and frequency analysis was conducted.

### **Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.**

- How do tourists evaluate destination performance?

For the items # 6 through 22 Chronbach's Alpha for destination performance scale was calculated to test internal consistency of the scale.

Descriptive statistics for each item # 6 through 22 was calculated to see how each attribute of the destination was evaluated.

- Is there a difference between the first-times and repeat visitors?

T-tests were conducted to compare destination performance evaluation for first-timers and repeaters for each destination performance scale item.

- Is there a difference between leisure, business, and visiting friends and relatives tourists?

One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare destination performance evaluation for the three groups (leisure, business and VFR travelers) generated from the question # 2 on each scale item #6 through 22.

### **Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks.**

- How do tourists perceive risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod?

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to test internal consistency of the travel to Nizhny Novgorod risk perception scale (items # 29-36). Average of these items was calculated to create the overall risk perception variable.

Descriptive statistics was calculated for each single item # 29-36 of the risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod scale.

Content analysis of the question # 37 was used to examine individual open-ended responses to better understand travel risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod.

- Is there a difference in perceptions of risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod between first-timers and repeat visitors? Leisure, business, and VFR tourists?

T-tests were conducted for each individual item of the risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod scale (items #29-36). The number of visits (first-timers/repeaters) was used as an independent variable. Perceived risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod were used as dependent variable.

One-way ANOVA was conducted. Primary reason of the trip (leisure, business, VFR) was used as independent variable. Dependent variable was perceived risks of travel to Nizhny Novgorod (items #29-36).

- Is there a difference in destination performance depending on general travel risk profile?

The average for the items # 23-28 section was calculated. Based on the average High and Low Risk Profile groups were generated. T-tests were conducted to compare High Risk and Low Risk respondents. General travel risk profile (High/Low) was used as an independent variable while individual items from the destination performance evaluation scale (items # 6 -22) were used as dependent variables.

#### **Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior.**

- How likely are the tourists to revisit the city?

Cronbach's alpha was used to test reliability of the scale for the items # 38-40. Descriptive statistics on each of these items were calculated. A composite score of the revisit intention was derived as the average of the three items # 38-40.

- What kind of word-of-mouth activity are visitors engaged in after travel to Nizhny Novgorod?

Frequencies of each single item comprising the word-of-mouth scale were calculated (items # 41-45). A composite score for each respondent was derived by summing up all "yes" responses of the WOM items scale (items # 41-45).

#### **Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod?**

To test for the relationship between variables, the regression analysis was conducted. The dependent variable was post-visitation behavior, namely, the intention to revisit and word-of-mouth composite scores. Based on the literature review

summarized in Fig. 2-2, post visitation behavior depends on primary reason of visiting the destination, how well tourists know the destination, how risky they perceive the destination to be for travel, and how they perceive that destination's tourism offer. The primary reason to visit (PR) was operationalized as a dichotomous variable, with "1" standing for VFR as the largest category and "0" standing for the remaining leisure, business, and other categories. The familiarity with the destination was operationalized as the number of previous trips to Nizhny Novgorod (NPV). The overall risk perception variable (RP) was used to represent visitors' perceptions of various risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod. The overall destination performance variable (OP) was used to represent visitors' perceptions of various aspects of Nizhny Novgorod tourism offer. Thus, the models were expressed as:

$$\text{Model 1: } IR = a + b_1 PR + b_2 NPV + b_3 RP + b_4 OP + e$$

$$\text{Model 2: } WOM = a + b_1 PR + b_2 NPV + b_3 RP + b_4 OP + e$$

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

### **Respondents' Demographic Profile**

Questions about respondents' gender, marital status, age, education, and income were analyzed to obtain the respondents' demographic profile. Among the sample of respondents who visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last four years two thirds were female (66.3 percent) and approximately one third was male (32.6 percent) (Table 4-1). A total of 57.6 percent of respondents were single while 34.6 percent were married or partnered. Age was reported as the number of full years ( $M=25.85$ ;  $std.dev=8.010$ ). For convenience of reporting, age was converted to an ordinal variable of 5 levels (Table 4-1). Most frequently reported age groups were between 18 and 24 (48.5 percent) and between 25 and 34 (35.2 percent). With respect to education, most respondents had a college degree (62.3 percent). As far as the financial situation is concerned, 51.1 percent of the respondents reported their financial situation as "neither good nor bad", while 38.4 percent reported it as "good," or "very good." Only 4.5 percent defined their financial situation as "bad" and "very bad."

### **Research Question 1: Domestic Tourist to Nizhny Novgorod.**

**What are the primary reasons for visiting Nizhny Novgorod?** To conduct the proposed analyses and in agreement with literature on tourist types, three groups of tourists were created by merging the original response categories: leisure tourists (sightseeing, special event, entertainment, outdoor recreation, sporting event, and shopping) (32.3%), business tourists (business and education/academic) (24.0 %), and VFR (37.3%) (Table 4-2).

**Are domestic tourists to Nizhny Novgorod primarily first-timers or repeat visitors?** In the survey, respondents were asked about the number of times they visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last four years ( $M=7.57$ , std.dev=10.682). For convenience of reporting, the number of visits was converted to an ordinal variable of 4 levels (Table 4-2): 35.4 percent visited Nizhny Novgorod 1-2 times, 18.6 percent visited the city between 3 and 5 times, 25.0 percent visited Nizhny Novgorod between 6 and 10 times, while 21.0 percent visited Nizhny Novgorod more than 10 times. The numbers of first-timers and repeat visitors were also calculated: most respondents were repeat visitors (75.0 percent), while only 25.0 percent were first comers. Most of the visitors stayed overnight (79.5 percent); 20.5 percent came on a one-day trip. Most of the repeat visitors were VFR (43.2 percent), while most of the first-timers were leisure travelers (44.3 percent) (Table 4-3).

**In what type of activities are they engaged while visiting Nizhny Novgorod?**

When asked to list all the activities that they were engaged into in the course of their last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, the majority of respondents reported that they were engaged in general sightseeing (84.8 percent), 57.6 percent visited architectural monuments, while almost half (49.8 percent) visited historic sites and museums. Shopping was another popular activity among respondents and 35.7 percent said that they went shopping during their last trip to Nizhny Novgorod (Table 4-2).

**What parts of the country are they coming from?** The geography of the study was vast (Appendix H) but the largest groups of respondents were from Moscow and Moscow Oblast (30.1 percent), Saint Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast (11.3 percent), and Nizhny Novgorod Oblast (17.2 percent).

## **Research Question 2: Evaluation of Destination Performance.**

**How do tourists evaluate destination performance?** Perceptions of destination performance were measured by 17 Likert-type scale items. Descriptive statistics for each item are given in Table 4-4; items are ranked from the most to the least favorably evaluated.

Attributes with the highest scores were Pleasurability of walking in touristy areas ( $M=4.43$ ,  $std.dev=0.970$ ), Scenic beauty ( $M=4.30$ ,  $std.dev=1.057$ ), and Parks and greenery ( $M=3.81$ ,  $std.dev=1.297$ ). The lowest evaluation was given to such attributes as Hotel standards ( $M=2.03$ ,  $std.dev=1.776$ ) and Availability of healthcare ( $M=1.91$ ;  $std.dev=1.791$ ).

Internal reliability of the Destination Performance scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha; the alpha was 0.860. Item-to-total correlations were also calculated: the analysis indicated that no item could be removed without decreasing the overall internal consistency of the scale. The variable "overall performance" was created by averaging means of all individual items for usage in subsequent analyses; descriptive statistics for the overall performance variable are given in Table 4-4.

**Is there a difference between the first-times and repeat visitors in evaluation of destination performance?** To provide the most detailed and interpretable results, each individual Destination Performance item was analyzed separately, using a t-test for independent samples. While departures from the normal distribution were observed for individual scale items, t-tests are quite robust to deviations from normality when sample sizes are sufficiently large (Pearson, 1931). In these analyses the sample sizes were 70 (first-timers) and 210 (repeat visitors). Conducting 17 similar statistical tests without correction is regarded as a limitation of the

study. Statistically significant difference was found for six items – Acceptable level of crowding and congestion ( $t(144.152)=2.270$ ,  $p=0.025$ ), Choice of restaurants ( $t(273)=-2.447$ ,  $p=0.015$ ), Nightlife and entertainment ( $t(101.743)=-2.954$ ,  $p=0.004$ ), Pleasurability of shopping ( $t(275)=-4.735$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), Price levels ( $t(275)=-2.874$ ,  $p=0.004$ ), and Availability of healthcare ( $t(275)=-2.580$ ,  $p=0.010$ ). Repeat visitors evaluated such attributes as Choice of restaurants, Nightlife and entertainment, Pleasurability of shopping, Price levels, Availability of healthcare higher than first-timers, while first-timers evaluated Acceptable level of crowding and congestion more favorably than repeat visitors (Table 4-5).

**Is there a difference between leisure, business, and visiting friends and relatives tourists in destination performance evaluation?** One-way ANOVA for each individual Destination Performance item was conducted to find out if there is difference in performance evaluation depending on the primary reason of the last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, i.e., leisure, business or VFR (Table 4-6). Statistically significant difference was found for the items – Hotel standards ( $F(2,254)=8.799$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) and Friendliness of personnel ( $F(2,254)=5.949$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). Range test showed that those who came to Nizhny Novgorod to visit friends and relatives evaluated the Hotel standards lower ( $M=1.50$ ,  $std.dev=1.735$ ) than those who came there for leisure ( $M=2.38$ ,  $std.dev=1.755$ ) ( $p=0.002$ ) as well as those who visited Nizhny Novgorod for business ( $M=2.48$ ,  $std.dev=1.618$ ) ( $p=0.001$ ). Range test also showed that VFR tourists evaluated the Friendliness of personnel ( $M=2.71$ ,  $std.dev=1.805$ ) lower than those who came there for leisure ( $M=3.49$ ,  $std.dev=1.509$ ) ( $p=0.004$ ).

### **Research Question 3: Perception of Travel Risks.**

#### **How do tourists perceive risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod?**

Descriptive statistics were calculated to find out how tourists perceived risks associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod (Table 4-7). Prior to their most recent trip to Nizhny Novgorod respondents thought of such risks as Crime ( $M=2.33$ , std.dev=1.076) and Terrorism ( $M=1.70$ , std.dev=0.928) as of risks that were most likely to occur. Disapproval of others ( $M=1.31$ , std.dev=0.674) and Health risks ( $M=1.42$ , std.dev=0.812) were reported as the least likely to occur. The survey also included an open-ended question “What is, in your opinion, the most risky thing about traveling to Nizhny Novgorod?”. This question had the lowest response rate (87 responses; 30.7 percent response rate). Among those who answered the most common answers were crime (7.0 percent), bad traffic (3.9 percent) and bad weather (3.9 percent).

**Is there a difference in perceptions of risks to Nizhny Novgorod between first-timers and repeat visitors? Leisure, business, and VFR tourists?** Independent sample t-test was conducted to find out if there is difference in risk perception of Nizhny Novgorod between first timers and repeat visitors (Table 4-8). First comers evaluated perceived risk of traveling to Nizhny Novgorod lower ( $M=1.48$ , std.dev=0.412) than repeat visitors ( $M=1.68$ , std.dev=1.676) ( $t(186.026)=-2.874$ ,  $p=0.005$ ). Independent sample t-test was conducted to find out if there is difference in risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod between first timers and repeat visitors. Analysis showed statistically significant differences between first comers and repeaters in evaluations of the following items – Health risks ( $t(212.325)=-3.687$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), Crisis of surrounding infrastructure ( $t(185.898)=-2.431$ ,  $p=0.016$ ), Disapproval of others ( $t(226.389)=-3.309$ ,

$p=0.001$ ) and Natural Disaster ( $t(163.770)=-2.863$ ,  $p=0.005$ ). First-comers evaluated these risks as the ones that are less likely to occur than repeaters (Table 4-8).

One-way ANOVA was conducted to find out if there is difference in perception of risk before travelling to Nizhny Novgorod between leisure travelers, business travelers and those who were visiting friends and relatives. No statistically significant difference was found ( $F(2,250)=1.746$ ;  $p=0.177$ ).

**Is there a difference in destination performance evaluation depending on general travel risk profile of visitors to Nizhny Novgorod?** Respondents risk profile was identified based on the average score of all general travel risk perception attributes. Reliability analysis showed that the scale is reliable (Chronbach's alpha=0.765). The average mean score was calculated for the general risk profile for each respondent. Respondents who received an average score below 3.00 were placed in the low risk profile group, those with the score equal or above 3.0 were placed in the high risk profile group (Table 4-9).

Independent Sample t-test was conducted to identify if there is a statistically significant difference between low risk profile and high risk profile tourists in their evaluation of the city's performance (Table 4-10). Statistically significant difference was found for the evaluations of the following attributes - Safety from crime ( $t(234)=2.785$ ,  $p=0.006$ ), Accessibility ( $t(270)=2.338$ ,  $p=0.020$ ), Acceptable level of crowding and congestion ( $t(269)=2.980$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), and Friendliness of locals ( $t(270)=2.136$ ,  $p=0.034$ ). Low general risk profile respondents evaluated all these attributes higher than high general risk profile respondents (Table 4-10).

#### **Research Question 4: Post-Visitation Behavior**

**How likely are the tourists to revisit the city?** There are two variables that were reflecting post-visitation behavior: intention to revisit that consisted of three items measured on a 5-point Likert scale and word-of-mouth that consisted of five yes/no statements.

Descriptive analysis of the intention to revisit the destination (Table 4-11) showed that people assessed intention to revisit to Nizhny Novgorod for pleasure trip ( $M=4.09$ ;  $std.dev=1.260$ ), intention to revisit the city in the short-term ( $M=4.06$ ;  $std.dev=1.371$ ) as well as their intention to revisit in medium term ( $M=4.04$ ;  $std.dev=1.442$ ) comparatively high. The internal reliability of the intention to revisit scale was calculated (Cronbach's alpha=0.860). The composite intention to revisit score was calculated by averaging the means of the individual items ( $M= 4.062$ ,  $std.dev=1.206$ ) (Table 4-13).

**What kind of word-of-mouth activity are tourists engaged in after travel to Nizhny Novgorod?** Frequency analysis of each WOM variable (5 items) showed that most visitors engaged in positive word-of-mouth after visiting Nizhny Novgorod (Table 4-12). The majority of respondents (92.9 percent) said that they recommended Nizhny Novgorod to their friends and relatives, 88.0 percent recommended it to other people excluding friends and relatives, and 80.5 percent of respondents recommended the city as a travel destination when someone asked for an advice. Fewer people engaged in electronic word-of-mouth: only 33.7 percent posted a positive review in one of the social network such as facebook, vkontakte etc., and 50.2 percent said that they wrote e review of the hotel, restaurant etc. the services of which they used.

A composite WOM variable was constructed by adding all “yes” answers to individual WOM items ( $M=3.456$ ,  $std. dev=1.257$ ) (Table 4-13).

**Research Question 5: Is There a Relationship between Post-visitation Behavior and Performance Evaluation, Risk Perception, Number of Previous Visits, and Primary Reasons for Visiting Nizhny Novgorod?**

Prior to testing Model 1 and Model 2, bivariate correlation analyses were conducted between (1) the overall performance evaluation and post-visitation behavior (intention to revisit and word of mouth) variables and (2) overall risk perception and post-visitation behavior variables. Since the overall performance, overall risk perception, intention to revisit, and word-of-mouth variables are of interval-ratio level of measurement, Person's r was chosen as a bivariate correlation indicator. Following Weber and Lamb (1970) and Mason, Lind, and Marchal (1983), the strength of association (r) was interpreted as:  $0 < r \leq 0.35$  low or weak correlation;  $0.36 \leq r \leq 0.67$  modest or moderate correlations;  $0.68 \leq r \leq 0.89$  strong or high correlations; and  $0.90 \leq r \leq 1$  very high correlations.

A weak positive correlation was found between the overall performance variable and intention to revisit composite score ( $r=0.337$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Bivariate correlation analysis also revealed weak positive correlation between overall performance evaluation and word-of-mouth variable ( $r=0.349$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) (Table 4-14). Weak negative correlation were found between overall risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod and intention to revisit composite score ( $r=-0.330$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Correlation between composite word-of-mouth activity and overall risk perception of Nizhny Novgorod were also weak ( $r=-0.253$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) (Table 4-15). The correlation analysis indicated the suitability of the overall performance and overall risk perception variables for inclusion into Model 1 and Model 2:

$$\text{Model 1: } IR = a + b_1PR + b_2NPV + b_3RP + b_4OP + e$$

$$\text{Model 2: } WOM = a + b_1PR + b_2NPV + b_3RP + b_4OP + e$$

IR – intention to revisit post-visitation behavior

WOM – word-of-mouth post-visitation behavior

PR – primary reason for visiting Nizhny Novgorod (VFR versus leisure, business, and other combined)

NPV – number of visits to the city in the last four years

RP – overall perception of risks associated with travel to Nizhny Novgorod

OP – overall perception of destination performance

The initial runs of Model 1 and Model 2 indicated that the data contained outliers, i.e., cases whose standardized residuals are greater than 3.3 (corresponding to the 0.001 alpha level). Four cases were removed from the data. The model was also examined to assure that the residuals are dispersed randomly (i.e., homoscedasticity assumption of linear regression). For Model 1, the plot of residuals against predicted values did not display a “funnel” shape, characteristic for non-constant variance. It was concluded that the homoskedasticity assumption was met for Model 1. For Model 2, moderate violations of homoscedasticity were detected, which may have had an impact on the regression estimates (Fox, 2005). Lastly, the data was examined for multicollinearity: the variance-inflation factor was around 1.0 indicated the absence of multicollinearity.

For Model 1, three independent variables were found to be significant predictors for intention to revisit, namely, overall performance, overall risk perception, and number of previous visits to the destination. For the overall performance variable, the association is positive: the larger the overall performance score, the higher the intention to revisit (beta coefficient is 0.436, p-value is 0.000). For the overall risk perception, the

association is negative: the higher overall risk perception, the lower the intention to revisit (beta coefficient is -0.634, p-value is 0.000). For the number of previous visits variable, the association is also positive: the larger the score, the higher the revisit intention (standardized beta coefficient is 0.024, p-value is 0.011). The dichotomous variable representing the primary reason to visit Nizhny Novgorod (VFR versus all other categories) was not significant. Overall, the four variables explained about 24% of all variance in the dependent intention to revisit variable ( $R^2 = 0.237$ ) (Table 4-16).

For Model 2, two independent variables were found to be significant predictors for word of mouth, namely, overall performance and overall risk perception. For the overall performance variable, the association is positive (beta coefficient is 0.519, p-value of 0.000), while for the overall risk perception, the association is negative (beta coefficient is -0.396, p-value is 0.005). The number of previous visits and the primary reason variables were not significant in the model. Overall, the four variables explained only 16.6% of the variance in the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.165$ ) (Table 4-17).

**Table 4-1. Respondents Profile**

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Percent %
Gender	Male	89	32.6
	Female	181	66.3
	Prefer not to answer	3	1.1
	Total	273	100.0
Education	Less than High School	3	1.1
	High School Graduate	12	4.5
	Some College	57	21.3
	College Degree	166	62.3
	Technical School	14	5.2
	Advance Degree	9	3.4
	Prefer not to answer	6	2.2
	Total	267	100.0
Age	18-24	128	48.5
	25-34	93	35.2
	35-44	16	6.0
	45-54	4	1.5
	65 and older	2	0.8
	Prefer not to answer	21	8.0
	Total	264	100.0
Marital Status	Single	155	57.6
	Partnered/Married	93	34.6
	Divorced	15	5.6
	Separated	2	0.7
	Prefer not to answer	4	1.5
	Total	269	100.0
Income	Very good	17	6.4
	Good	85	32.0
	Average	136	51.1
	Bad	11	4.1
	Very bad	1	0.4
	Prefer not to answer	16	6.0
	Total	266	100.0

Table 4-2. Characteristics of the Last Trip to Nizhny Novgorod

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Percent %
Number of visits in the last 4 years	1-2	99	35.4
	3-5	52	18.6
	6-10	70	25.0
	More than 10	59	21.0
	Total	280	100.0
	First-comers	70	25.0
	Repeat visitors	210	75.0
	Total	280	100.0
Length of stay	One-day trip	57	20.5
	Overnight	221	79.5
	Total	278	100.0
Primary reason	Leisure	90	32.3
	Business	67	24.0
	Visiting Friends and Relatives	104	37.3
	Other	18	6.4
	Total	279	100.0

Table 4-2. Continued

Variable	Levels	Frequency	Percent %
Activities (multiple answers were allowed)	Visiting historical sites and museums	141	49.8
	Visiting an art gallery	31	11.0
	Attending/participating in a sport event	28	9.9
	Attending/participating in the conference/convention	39	13.8
	Attending a personal special event	40	14.1
	General sightseeing	240	84.8
	Visiting architectural monuments	163	57.6
	River Cruise	31	11.0
	Attending/Participating in show/festival	36	12.7
	Shopping	101	35.7
	Visiting a community/city park	120	42.4
	Visiting a scenic area	57	20.1
	Fishing	4	1.4
	Other	15	5.3

Table 4-3. Primary reason of visitors vs. number of visits

Number of visits	Leisure		Business		VFR		Other	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
First-timers	31	44.3	18	25.7	15	21.4	6	8.6
Repeaters	58	28.2	48	23.3	89	43.2	11	5.3
All respondents	89	32.2	66	23.9	104	37.7	17	6.2

Table 4-4. City Performance Attributes

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Pleasurability of walking	280	4.43	0.970	-0.777	0.837
Scenic beauty	279	4.30	1.057	-1.749	2.615
Parks and greenery	279	3.81	1.297	-1.300	1.264
Choice of restaurants	278	3.69	1.436	0.075	-1.492
Acceptable level of crowding and congestion	279	3.66	1.387	-0.790	-0.204
Cultural amenities	279	3.66	1.315	-0.660	-0.724
Accessibility	280	3.60	1.311	-0.856	-0.022
Climate/weather	278	3.51	1.026	-0.735	-0.644
Cleanliness	279	3.49	1.319	-1.092	0.656
Friendliness of locals	280	3.49	1.287	-2.078	4.319
Nightlife and entertainment	280	3.38	1.549	-1.043	0.293
Pleasurability of shopping	280	3.33	1.528	-1.147	0.569
Price levels	280	3.29	1.286	-1.034	0.078
Friendliness of personnel	279	3.07	1.678	-0.840	-0.195
Safety from crime	277	3.03	1.656	-0.818	0.395
Hotel standards	279	2.03	1.776	-0.840	0.162
Availability of healthcare	280	1.91	1.791	0.169	-1.468
Overall performance	267	3.3935	0.78327	-0.606	0.314
Valid N (listwise)	267				

Table 4-5. Differences in evaluation of destination performance among first-comers and repeat visitors

N	Variable	First Comers		Repeat Visitors		Dif	df	t	p
		M	SD	M	SD				
1	Pleasurability of walking	4.49	0.959	4.40	0.980	0.085	275	0.629	0.530
2	Scenic beauty	4.32	0.962	4.31	1.072	0.005	274	0.033	0.974
3	Parks and greenery	3.80	1.346	3.82	1.287	-0.019	274	-0.107	0.915
4	Choice of restaurants	3.34	1.512	3.82	1.389	-0.482	273	-2.447	0.015***
5	Acceptable level of crowding and congestion	3.94	1.162	3.55	1.450	0.391	144.152	2.270	0.025***
6	Cultural amenities	3.64	1.372	3.66	1.300	-0.024	274	-0.132	0.895
7	Accessibility	3.57	1.430	3.62	1.275	-0.047	275	-0.258	0.797
8	Climate/weather	3.63	.920	3.48	1.065	0.146	273	0.308	1.022
9	Cleanliness	3.80	1.258	3.38	1.334	0.417	274	2.289	0.023
10	Friendliness of locals	3.56	1.471	3.48	1.218	0.074	275	0.416	0.677
11	Nightlife and entertainment	2.86	1.763	3.55	1.437	-0.689	101.743	-2.953	0.004***
12	Pleasurability of shopping	2.60	1.637	3.57	1.416	-0.965	275	-4.735	0.000***
13	Price levels	2.91	1.380	3.42	1.235	-0.506	275	-2.874	0.004***
14	Friendliness of personnel	3.23	1.800	3.02	1.629	0.208	274	0.893	0.373
15	Safety from crime	3.04	1.827	3.04	1.605	0.004	272	0.019	0.985
16	Hotel standards	2.24	1.861	1.96	1.750	0.282	274	1.145	0.253
17	Availability of healthcare	1.44	1.708	2.08	1.802	-0.634	275	-2.580	0.010***

Table 4-6. Differences between the primary reason of the last visit and performance evaluation

N	Variable	Leisure		Business		VFR		df	F	p
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
1	Pleasurability of walking	4.48	0.881	4.52	0.894	4.41	0.999			
	Between groups							2	0.310	0.734
	Within groups							255		
2	Scenic beauty	4.24	1.128	4.42	0.895	4.34	1.058	2	0.636	0.530
	Between groups							254		
	Within groups							254		
3	Parks and greenery	3.72	1.356	3.72	1.380	3.99	1.206			
	Between groups							2	1.357	0.259
	Within groups							254		
4	Choice of restaurants	3.76	1.374	3.91	1.111	3.60	1.595			
	Between groups							2	1.002	0.369
	Within groups							253		
5	Acceptable level of crowding and congestion	3.88	1.437	3.43	1.270	3.63	1.435			
	Between groups							2	1.963	0.143
	Within groups							254		
6	Cultural amenities	3.76	1.286	3.57	1.395	3.65	1.376	2	0.408	0.665
	Between groups							254		
	Within groups							254		
7	Accessibility	3.64	1.308	3.39	1.348	3.74	1.274	2	1.463	0.234
	Between groups							255		
	Within groups							255		
8	Climate/weather	3.56	0.965	3.37	0.998	3.58	1.084	2	0.940	0.392
	Between groups							253		
	Within groups							253		
9	Cleanliness	3.60	1.346	3.50	1.180	3.43	1.368	2	0.371	0.690
	Between groups							254		
	Within groups							254		
10	Friendliness of locals	3.43	1.356	3.43	1.270	3.59	1.230			
	Between groups							2	0.471	0.625
	Within groups							255		
11	Nightlife and entertainment	3.12	1.737	3.52	1.341	3.52	1.507			
	Between groups							2	1.910	0.150
	Within groups							255		
12	Pleasurability of shopping	3.30	1.605	3.37	1.496	3.35	1.480			
	Between groups							2	0.045	0.956
	Within groups							255		
13	Price levels	3.22	1.355	3.27	1.009	3.36	1.399	2	0.284	0.753
	Between groups							255		
	Within groups							255		
14	Friendliness of personnel	3.49	1.509	3.27	1.420	2.71	1.805			
	Between groups							2	5.949	0.003***

**Table 4-6. Continued**

N	Variable	Leisure		Business		VFR M	df	F	p
		M	SD	M	SD				
Within groups									
15	Safety from crime	3.14	1.706	3.15	1.490	2.93	1.734	254	
Between groups									
Within groups									
16	Hotel standards	2.38	1.755	2.48	1.618	1.50	1.753	252	0.497 0.609
Between groups									
Within groups									
17	Availability of healthcare	1.81	1.827	2.01	1.610	1.95	1.885	254	
Between groups									
Within groups									
							2	0.278	0.757
							255		

**Table 4-7. Risks associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Crime	277	2.33	1.076	0.397	-0.636
Terrorism	277	1.70	0.928	1.143	0.617
Waste of money	277	1.66	0.888	1.494	2.340
Disappointing trip	275	1.62	0.941	1.615	2.208
Crisis of surrounding infrastructure	277	1.54	0.890	1.751	2.612
Natural disaster	275	1.47	0.816	1.744	2.593
Health risks	276	1.42	0.812	2.032	3.957
Disapproval of others	276	1.31	0.674	2.846	9.969
Valid N (listwise)	274				

Table 4-8. Difference between first comers and repeat visitors in risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod

Variable	First comers		Repeat visitors		Dif	df	t	p
	M	SD	M	SD				
Overall risk perception	1.48	0.412	1.68	1.676	-0.196	186.026	-2.874	0.005***
Waste of money	1.60	0.824	1.67	0.902	-0.67	272	-0.545	0.586
Health risks	1.19	0.493	1.50	0.885	-0.316	212.325	-3.687	0.000***
Crisis of surrounding infrastructure	1.36	0.615	1.60	0.950	-0.241	185.898	-2.431	0.016***
Crime	2.14	1.067	2.40	1.081	-0.259	272	-1.736	0.084
Terrorism	1.59	0.825	1.74	0.950	-0.154	272	-1.212	0.226
Disapproval of others	1.13	0.380	1.36	0.732	-0.227	226.389	-3.309	0.001***
Disappointing trip	1.65	0.958	1.59	0.908	0.059	270	0.456	0.649
Natural disaster	1.26	0.610	1.53	0.852	-0.271	163.770	-2.863	0.005***

Table 4-9. Low and High Risk Profile

Group	Frequency	Percent
Low Risk Profile	216	79.4
High Risk Profile	56	20.6
Total	272	100.0

Table 4-10. Differences between low risk profile and high risk profile tourists in their evaluation of the city's performance

n	Variable	Low Risk		High Risk		Dif	df	t	p
		M	SD	M	SD				
1	Climate/weather	3.54	1.029	3.35	1.067	0.190	268	1.204	0.230
2	Scenic beauty	4.32	1.029	4.18	1.208	0.138	269	0.860	0.391
3	Parks and greenery	3.79	1.346	3.80	1.119	-0.13	269	-0.066	0.948
4	Hotel standards	2.01	1.785	2.07	1.725	-0.062	269	-0.234	0.816
5	Cleanliness	3.56	1.334	3.21	1.202	0.349	269	1.776	0.077
6	Safety from crime	3.15	1.621	2.45	1.659	0.695	267	2.785	0.006***
7	Accessibility	3.69	1.312	3.23	1.279	0.458	270	2.338	0.020***
8	Friendliness of personnel	3.13	1.679	2.80	1.612	0.331	269	1.326	0.186
9	Cultural amenities	3.66	1.268	3.61	1.423	0.053	269	0.273	0.785
10	Pleasurability of walking	4.47	0.920	4.21	1.155	0.258	74.039	1.548	0.126
11	Acceptable level of crowding and congestion	3.76	1.363	3.15	1.367	0.614	269	2.980	0.003***
12	Choice of restaurants	3.68	1.477	3.63	1.315	0.053	268	0.242	0.809
13	Nightlife and entertainment	3.32	1.613	3.43	1.305	-0.104	270	-.0448	0.654
14	Pleasurability of shopping	3.29	1.573	3.45	1.334	-0.159	270	-0.696	0.487
15	Price levels	3.30	1.278	3.14	1.327	0.153	270	0.795	0.428
16	Friendliness of locals	3.56	1.304	3.14	1.227	0.413	270	2.136	0.034***
17	Availability of healthcare	1.90	1.817	1.77	1.584	0.130	96.068	0.532	0.596

Table 4-11. Intention to revisit Nizhny Novgorod

Variable	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
I want to come to Nizhny Novgorod again for a pleasure trip	265	4.09	1.260	-1.516	1.552
It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next 3 years	264	4.06	1.371	-1.585	1.655
It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next 5 years	260	4.04	1.442	-1.608	1.603
Composite intention to revisit	258	4.06	1.206	-1.369	1.001

Table 4-12. Word-of-mouth activity

Variable		Levels	Frequency	Percent %
After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod I spoke positively about Nizhny Novgorod to my friends and/or relatives	Yes	249	92.9	
	No	19	7.1	
After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I spoke positively of Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to other people (excluding friends and relatives)	Yes	235	88.0	
	No	32	12.0	
After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I recommended Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to people who were seeking advice	Yes	214	80.5	
	No	52	19.5	
After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I wrote and posted online a generally positive review about my experience in Nizhny Novgorod and posted it on the website of the hotel/restaurant etc. the services of which I used during my trip.	Yes	89	33.7	
	No	175	66.3	
After my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I spoke positively about Nizhny Novgorod on at least one social network sites, such as facebook, vkontakte, odnoklassniki, and twitter.	Yes	133	50.2	
	No	132	49.8	

Table 4-13. Overall/composite scores of constructs

Variable	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Overall performance	263	3.39	0.783	-0.605	0.319
Overall risk perception	271	1.45	0.551	1.745	5.295
Composite intention to revisit	254	4.11	1.139	-1.375	1.068
Composite WOM	257	3.45	1.256	-0.644	0.053

Table 4-14. Correlation between performance evaluation of the last trip to Nizhny Novgorod and post-visitation behavior

Variables: Overall performance and	r	p
Composite intention to revisit score	0.337	0.000***
Composite word-of-mouth score	0.349	0.000***

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4-15. Correlation between risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod and post-visitation behavior

Variable: overall risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod and	r	p
Overall intention to revisit	-0.330	0.000***
Composite word-of-mouth	-0.253	0.000***

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4-16. Relationship between performance evaluations, risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod, primary reason, number of previous visits and intention to revisit the destination

	DF	SS	MS	F	p
Regression	4	71.555	17.889	17.519	0.000
Residual	226	230.771	1.021		
Cor. Total	230	302.326			
R Square/Adj R Square	0.237/0.223				
	B	SE B	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.311	0.402	8.235	0.000	
Primary reason	0.226	0.139	1.633	0.104	1.005
Number of previous visits	0.024	0.009	2.562	0.011	1.052
Risk perception	-0.634	0.126	-5.042	0.000	1.117
Overall performance	0.436	0.090	4.832	0.000	1.069

Table 4-17. Relationship between performance evaluations, risk perceptions of travel to Nizhny Novgorod, primary reason, number of previous visits and WOM

	DF	SS	MS	F	p
Regression	4	58.656	14.664	11.403	0.000
Residual	230	295.786	1.286		
Cor. Total	234	354.443			
R Square/Adj R Square	0.165/0.151				
	B	SE B	t	p	VIF
Constant	2.234	0.451	4.935	0.000	
Primary reason	-0.185	0.154	-1.203	0.230	1.005
Number of previous visits	0.014	0.010	1.376	0.170	1.047
Risk perception	-0.396	0.141	-2.811	0.005	1.114
Overall performance	0.519	0.102	5.108	0.000	1.064

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the finding of the study, their theoretical and practical implications, as well as limitations and directions for further research.

### **Discussion of Findings**

There is a constantly growing number of destinations that are competing for tourism, while customers tend not to stay loyal to one destination, instead they tend to seek novelty (O'Neill & McKenna, 1994). So, constant marketing efforts are needed for a destination to stay compatible in the tourist market. Nizhny Novgorod is a large city that has potential to become one of the most important tourist centers in Russia. It is a multifunctional city as it possesses the characteristics of a cultural and historic city, a fortress city, and an industrial center (Page, 1995). As the study found, visitors to Nizhny Novgorod were involved in various types of activities during their stay, such as general sightseeing, visiting architectural monuments and visiting historic sites and museums. It also supported the findings of Kolobova (2011) and Avralev and Efimova (2011) that historic and cultural heritage are among the main reasons that attract visitors to Nizhny Novgorod. Although the main reason for coming to Nizhny Novgorod for most of respondents was visiting friends and relatives, study showed that most people engaged in tourist activities such as sightseeing and visiting architectural monuments and museums.

The study looked at such constructs as destination performance, risk perceptions, and post-visitation behavior and investigated relationship between these constructs in terms of domestic tourism. Destination performance might influence the destination choice as well as post-visitation behavior (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Lee et

al., 2005). Visitors of a large city are likely to stay in some lodging facility, to eat in restaurants, interacting with people both personnel and locals as well as visit various attractions or participate in events (Haywood & Muller, 1988). That's why the analysis of the performance on various attributes was important. Analysis on 17 destination attributes in respect to Nizhny Novgorod showed that most aspects of destination performance were assessed quite favorably, with the mean higher than 3.0. Respondents evaluated pleasurability of walking, city's scenic beauty, and city's parks and greenery the highest; while hotel standards and availability of healthcare in case of emergency were evaluated the lowest. It is important to focus on attributes that are performing worse than others as consumers choice is most likely to be determined by the attributes the product possesses, not the product itself (Lancaster, 1966). As a result of certain attributes not performing as well as others the destination might not be included into consideration set or a potential traveler may proceed with another destination. On the one hand the study showed that Nizhny Novgorod generally performs well on the environmental type of attributes such as scenery, parks and greenery which were named to be one of the predictors of the quality of the trip (Murhy et al., 2000). However, low score received by the hotel standards attribute might be a serious concern as previous research showed that accommodation is one of the most important destination attributes as evaluated by tourists (Pritchard & Havitz, 2006).

This study dealt with primary images of domestic tourists; however, it is assumed that the level of familiarity with the destination and knowledge about it differed between the first-timers and repeat visitors. The literature suggests that people, who have already visited a destination and, therefore, have primary, first-hand images about it,

tend to have a more detailed and generally more positive images of the destination (e.g. Baloglu, 2001; Wang & Hsu, 2010; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). Differences between first-timers and repeaters was found in this study on several destination attributes such as choice of good restaurants in touristy areas, choice of nightlife and entertainment, pleasurability of shopping as well as attractiveness of price levels. First comers evaluated these attributes lower (i.e., less favorably) than those who visited Nizhny Novgorod multiple times. One of the reasons for that might be that the majority of repeat visitors were VFR traveler. So, they could be accompanied by the local residents or local residents could give them advice on the places to dine, to go out to and to shop. With respect to crowdedness and congestion, however, the first comers evaluated the amount of crowding and congestion lower (i.e. more favorably) than repeaters. One of the reasons for this tendency might be that those who visit the destination for the first time try to stay close to the tourist center; as a result they do not have to deal with traffic issues. Another reason could be that transportation was not found to be important predictor of the destination performance for first-timers (Fallon & Schofield, 2004). Based on this finding it can be suggested that first-timers do not pay a lot of attention to the traffic problems and they might be more tolerable towards congestion than repeat visitors. With respect to the primary reason for travel, there are indications in the literature that on-site evaluation of destination performance is likely to be influenced by it (Chen & Funk, 2010). However, the study found only two destination attributes which were perceived differently based on whether visitors were leisure, business, or VFR: the hotel standards and friendliness of personnel. Those who came to visit friends and relatives evaluated the adequacy of hotel standards lower than two

other groups. The VFR group also evaluated the friendliness of personnel lower than those who came there for a leisure trip. These findings are similar to those of Stepchenkova and Morrison (2008) about the Russian image: perceptions of Russia as a destination that are not substantiated by first-hand experiences (like in the case of VFR group which, presumably, stayed with their relatives, which is customary in Russia) tend to be lower than the actual tourism offer as evaluated by those who experienced it.

Risk perceptions have been primarily researched in the context of international tourism (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006; Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003). This study investigated the concept of risks perception in the context of Russian domestic tourism. Respondents were asked to report perceptions of risks associated with their travel to Nizhny Novgorod that they held prior to their most recent trip to the city. In general, risk perceptions were low on all individual items (mean scores are less than 2.0 for seven out of 8 items), but respondents evaluated risk of being a victim of a crime ( $M=2.33$ ) as the highest. Open-ended responses also mentioned the risk of being a crime victim most often. One of the reasons for low risk perceptions might be the fact that study was conducted among Russian domestic travelers. Being Russian residents they are more familiar with the destination and familiarity might reduce the level of risk associated with traveling to the destination. The fact that respondents did not express high levels of risk associated with visiting the destination is good from the practical point of view, because if risks were highly evaluated this could prevent people from coming to the city (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006). Although it was expected that people who have already been to a destination before tended to feel safer about traveling there (Floyd et al., 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2003), the results of this study showed that first comers evaluated the risks

associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod significantly lower than those who were repeat visitors on four out of eight risk attributes, as well as on the overall. The evaluation of crime as the risk that is most likely to happen as well as the higher risk perception of repeaters versus first-timers might be explained by the relatively high level of crime and familiarity of domestic tourists with it. Data show that there were 1,974.2 crimes committed per 100,000 people in Nizhny Novgorod region in 2011 while the average number of crimes in Russia was lower in the same year constituting 1,694.5 per 100,000 people (Smirnova, 2012). It is a serious concern as the previous research shows that no matter whether the tourist or a local resident was a target of crime, if crimes occur with a relatively high frequency, it will affect the destination image and result in decline in the number of visitations to the destination (Pizam, 1999).

The study also collected the data on the perceptions of risks associated with travel in general. Based on their answers, the survey participants were assigned to the Low and High risk profile groups, with the split in the sample of 79% vs. 21%, respectively. Evaluation of destination performance between the Low and High profile groups differed on four attributes: safety from crime, accessibility, level of crowdedness and congestion, and friendliness of locals, with the low risk group giving the higher, i.e., more favorable, scores for each of these attributes, as was expected. The study supported previous findings that different people perceive risks differently (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992); however, the study obtained this result in the context of domestic rather than international travel.

Analysis of post-visitation behavior showed that, in general, visitors were likely to revisit Nizhny Novgorod both in short and middle-term. It also showed that most of them

engaged in positive word-of-mouth activity after their last trip to the destination including such WOM as recommending the destination to friends and relatives, recommending Nizhny Novgorod to people other than friends and relatives and to those who were asking for advice. Online consumer reviews appear to become more and more important in the decision making process. Studies showed that more than 80% of web shoppers said they use other consumers' reviews when making purchasing decisions as well as that there is a preference of online peer reviews over editorial recommendations (Forrester, 2006; Smith et al., 2005). About 75% of US shoppers consider reading customer reviews before making a purchase as very important (eMarketer, 2007). Respondents reported that in general they got engaged in the electronic WOM such as writing reviews of hotels, restaurants and other service they used during their trip on the website as well as posting positive comment in social networks. But although the study was Internet-based, fewer people reported to get engaged in electronic word-of-mouth in comparison to regular recommendations. It can be explained by the low level of use of the tourist online review websites. For example one of the most popular tourist websites tripadvisor.com is ranked 3,381 in Russia based on the average number of daily visitors to the website and the number of pageviews in the country over the last month (Alexa, 2012c). The fact that the regular WOM is more popular than eWOM might also be explained by the number of Internet users in Russia. Data show that in 2012 58% of the Russian population uses the Internet and the majority of them are younger people (79%) (WCIOM, 2012). As a result people still have to use regular WOM to communicate to those who are not online users, which will most probably include their parents and older relatives. Another reason could be the feeling of

insecurity and untrustworthiness of the Russian population towards on-line resources as they developed recently in comparison to other countries.

Previous studies showed that such constructs as destination performance, primary reason for the trip, risk perception as well as previous experience with the destination including the number of visits influence the post-visitation which may result in future visits, positive or negative WOM, complaints or recommendations (Haywood & Muller, 1988; Um et al., 2006; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b; Milman & Pizam, 1995).

Revisit intention is important for destination loyalty and loyal customers tend to contribute to the destination economically as well as engage in positive WOM (Croes, Shani & Walls, 2010). And it is crucial to pay attention to and make sure that there is no negative WOM as previous studies showed that people tend to listen to negative assessments more than to positive ones (Weinberger, Allen & Dillon, 1981). Analysis indicated that destination performance influences post-visitation behavior. This study showed that people who evaluated performance of Nizhny Novgorod higher ended to report higher intentions to revisit and engage in WOM activity. This is similar to previous studies which showed that destination performance contributes to the overall satisfaction with the trip, and overall satisfaction in turn is a predictor of post-visitation behavior (Chi & Qu, 2008; Haywood & Muller, 1988). Overall risk perceptions of travel to the destination were found to have negative relationship with both revisit intention and WOM activity: the higher the risk perception of the destination was the less likely they were to revisit the destination and to engage in positive WOM activity. Since safety is one of the most important considerations for travelers, perceived risks have an influence on the destination attractiveness (Levantis & Gani, 2000; Sonmez et al.,

1999). Analysis revealed that the number of previous visits positively influences intention to revisit: the more times respondents visited the destination in the last 4 years, the higher they evaluated their likelihood of return. However, the relationship between previous visitation and WOM was not significant in the model. While previous research showed that repeaters tend to engage more in the positive WOM than those who came to the destination for the first time (Um et al., 2006; Opperman, 2000), the relationship between the previous visitations and WOM variables has not been extensively tested yet. Moreover, operationalization of the WOM variable adopted in this study as actual behavior, not as the likelihood of behavior, may have also played a role. This is one area of future research, which potentially could bring new insights into the relationships between theoretical constructs of familiarity and WOM. Finally, the results of regression analysis indicate that destination performance and perception of risks are the strongest predictors of post-visitation behavior, compared to primary reason for visiting Nizhny Novgorod and the number of previous visits to the city in the last four years. It should be pointed out, however, that both Model 1 and Model 2 explained just a portion of all variance in the behavior variable, specifically 24% and 16%, respectively. This is an expected result, since numerous other factors such as financial factor, time, initial motivation for the trip, as well as other demographic, external and internal factors, influence travelers' destination choice (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

### **Practical Implications**

In order to promote the destination, it is important to look at such factors as tourists' experience with the destination, destination performance, risk perception, and visitor profile. These factors influence destination image formation, which in turn, impacts the desire to revisit the destination and impacts the destination image

communicated to prospective visitors (e.g. Sonmez & Graefe, Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, Opperman, 2000; Kozak, 2001). But the research in the field of tourism in Nizhny Novgorod is lacking. So this research can be considered as one of the first steps to learn about domestic visitors to Nizhny Novgorod with the purpose of promoting and marketing the destination. It can potentially be helpful for the local authorities, responsible for tourism development, to better understand the target market strengths. Another possible use of the results of this study is for SWOT analysis of the city as a tourism destination. For example, this study revealed that respondents evaluated the adequacy of standards of hotels and healthcare as low, which indicates that these areas of the city's tourism offer need improvement. The obtained information is thought to aid in strategizing tourism development in Nizhny Novgorod from various perspectives. It may help allocate limited resources to the areas of tourism development perceived by tourists as central to the city's tourist offer. A more focused destination image can be communicated through the city's marketing channels. The information can be useful for better positioning Nizhny Novgorod among other historic Russian cities in the European part of the country. Ultimately such information will allow the local authorities to project an image of the destination to potential tourists so that it becomes desirable to them (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). This is particularly important for Nizhny Novgorod as a prospective host city of a sport mega-event such as the 2018 Soccer World Championship that can boost tourism there and differentiate the city among other tourist destinations.

This study also showed that the city of Nizhny Novgorod has a base of loyal visitors. . This benefits the destination for several reasons: (1) loyal customers are

believed to spend more at a destination; (2) they are less receptive to price changes; (3) they are a powerful source of WOM; (4) they represent more stable source of revenue; and (4) they are more forgiving in case of error (Croes et al., 2010).

Although the performance evaluations of Nizhny Novgorod were generally high, the highest scores were given to such attributes as beauty and scenery of the city, greenery and its parks. The attributes that were service-related were evaluated lower. It should be taken into account by the Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region and special attention should be paid to the attributes that were evaluated the least such as adequacy of standards of hotel accommodations and access to healthcare in case of emergency. The issue related to hotel accommodations can be related to low service quality. So, it is necessary to make sure that the expectations visitors have about a hotel are matching with performance (Tsaur & Lin, 2004). It is valuable to see if physical appearances and amenities of the hotels are not up to the declared standards or if the low evaluations are due to the human component (e.g., not trained staff) as these are the most influential factors that can determine visitors overall satisfaction with the experience (Gundersen, Heide & Olsson, 1996; Choi & Chu, 2001). It can be also helpful to match service quality and overall value as well as price perception of the customers for the types of accommodation provided. It can influence the evaluation of the hotel accommodation as well as overall satisfaction because customers tend to have different price perception in relation to the value of service that they receive (Varini, Engelmann, Cleassen & Scheusener, 2003). As far as the healthcare is concerned, it could be helpful to educate visitors about the options that are available in

the city for the tourists in need of urgent health care. One of the attributes (Amount of crowding and congestion) of Nizhny Novgorod was evaluated lower by repeater than by first-comers. The Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region should pay attention to this problem as it can have negative influence on the overall destination performance of repeaters and, consequently, their desire to revisit. To eliminate this problem, walking tours can be offered.

Another implication for the local tourist institution is that although risk attributes associated with traveling to Nizhny Novgorod were evaluated low, crime got the highest score. Moreover, repeaters evaluated risks higher than visitors. This should be alerting for the Ministry of the Development of Small Business, Consumer Market and Services in Nizhny Novgorod Region as it means that the primary, first-hand experiences with the destination (i.e., actual visitation) are less favorable than what was expected prior to the very first visit to the city. First comers evaluated overall risk perception of travel to Nizhny Novgorod higher than repeat visitors. This can happen due to the absence of policemen, not enough illumination in the touristy areas. The following methods that are relevant to this case were proved to be effective in reducing crime in tourist destinations: safety and security training for tourism employees, installation of security devices in tourism enterprises, and tourist education (Pizam, 1999). To make the destination safer for tourists Tourist Oriented Police program can be adopted. Tourism Oriented Police program aims to provide safe and secure environment for tourists visiting the destination. It can involve placing 24-hour tourist offices in the touristy areas of the city and increasing police visibility in touristy areas particularly during night time.

Such attributes as health risks, crisis of surrounding infrastructure, disapproval of others and natural disaster were evaluated higher by first comers than by repeat visitors. So, while the safety of tourists should be a priority, other factors such as the state of city's infrastructure, accessible and quality healthcare may need attention.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

The study has several limitations. First, the sample was not random, the study employed a convenience sampling method, and participants in the study were self-selected. While respondent profile in a number of characteristics (younger, educated, and financially well-off people) matched the general profile of Russian users of social networks, the gender composition of the sample was heavily tilted towards women. Studies by Dindia and Allen (1992) and Barrett et al (1998) found that women were more likely to disclose personal information to people whom they do not know, while men were more likely to share such information with those close to them. This difference in attitudes may explain, at least partially, the gender discrepancy in the obtained sample. Self-selection influenced the survey results because those interested in the topic are more likely to respond. As a result those who were interested in taking part in the study could differ in their evaluations and perceptions from those who did not show interest in taking this survey. So, caution should be exercised when applying the results of this study to the population with different socio-demographic characteristics. Future studies may include a more representative sample by conducting data collection in Russia, for example, intercepting people on the streets of the city or by means of a mailed survey. Second, a significant number of responses were not fully completed, and therefore were excluded from analysis. Respondents who filled out the survey completely could have particular interest in the topic and could be different from those who did not complete

the survey. Forth, there was an issue of translation. The survey items were initially formulated in English (adopted from other studies, adapted with minor changes, or written by the researcher herself) while the actual survey was in Russian. While care was taken to translate, items could have been influenced by translation. Finally, with respect to risks perception, respondents gave their answers about how they felt about their last trip to Nizhny Novgorod after their trip had actually happened. Time that passed from their last trip may have skewed their responses. It might be valuable to conduct a study measuring perceptions and expectations before the visit and post-visitation risk perception and performance evaluation of the destination, and then measure the perception gap.

In conclusion, as far as the author knows, the study conducted the first research about the city of Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, using respondents from popular Russian social network sites. The findings describe the domestic visitor to Nizhny Novgorod and the user of Russian social networks from the perspectives of their tourist type (leisure, business, or VFR), previous experience and familiarity with the destination (first-timers or repeat visitors), activities at the destination, preferred time to visit the city, and geographical region of tourists' permanent residence. The data was collected and analyzed on how visitors evaluated the destination on their most recent trip, how they perceived risks associated with travel to the destination, and in what type of post-visitation behavior they are engaged after their trip. The study tested several theoretically postulated relationships between concepts of destination performance, risk perception and post-visitation behavior in the context of domestic tourists. This is a theoretical contribution of the study, since previously these relationships were tested

primarily in the international context. From a practical angle, it is hoped that the study would be helpful for the city of Nizhny Novgorod to improve its tourist offer and make the destination more desirable for domestic tourists in preparation for the mega sport events that the city is to host in the near future.

APPENDIX A  
MAPS AND VIEWS OF NIZHNY NOVGOROD



The Nizhny Novgorod Region location



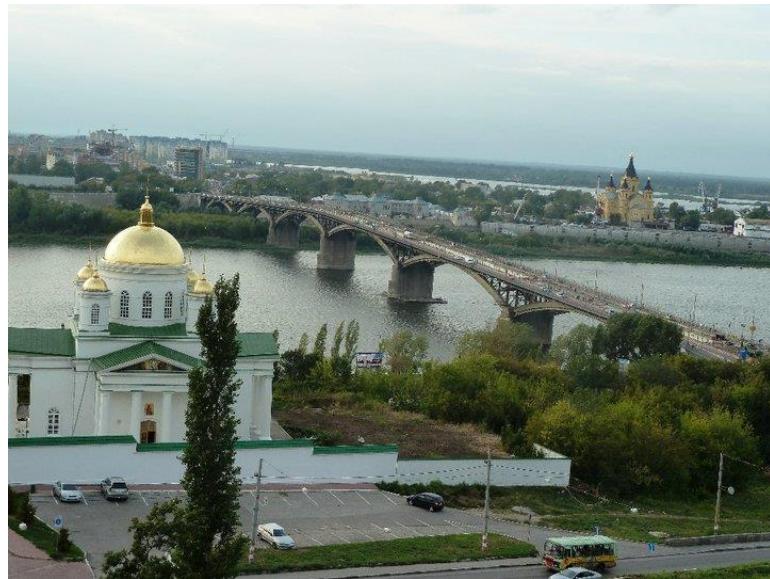
Location of Nizhny Novgorod within the Nizhny Novgorod Region



Makariev Monastery



The Kremlin



The confluence of rivers the Volga and the Oka

## APPENDIX B ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SURVEY

### Nizhny Novgorod, Russia Survey

#### CONSENT FORM

Hello,

---

My name is Galina Simanovskaya, I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. I would like to kindly invite you to participate in the research study which is a part of my Master's thesis. I am conducting a survey of tourists who visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years. Your responses will be very important in helping the city to meet your future recreational needs. The questionnaire should take less than 15 minutes to complete. The survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board that determines that the survey will not violate rights of respondents. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant rights may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; irb2@ufl.edu. Your responses will be completely anonymous, confidential and the findings will never discuss individual responses. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to. You have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation at any time without consequence.

*If you have any questions, please, address them to me or my supervisor at the address below.*

*Galina Simanovskaya, Master's student, University of Florida, galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph. D., Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management,  
Associate Director of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute, University of Florida, svetlanastep@ufl.edu*

**ELECTRONIC CONSENT:** Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- You have ready the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are at least 18 years of age

*If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button*

- Agree
- Disagree

#### QUALIFYING QUESTIONS

- A. Are you a resident of Russia? YES/NO
- B. Are you a resident of Nizhny Novgorod? YES/NO
- C. What is your zip-code? \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Have you been to Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years (2009-2012)? (YES/NO)

#### DOMESTIC TRAVELERS TO NIZHNY NOVGOROD TYPE

1. In the past 4 years, how many trips to Nizhny Novgorod did you have? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the primary reason for your last trip to Nizhny Novgorod? (CHECK ONLY ONE)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sightseeing                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor recreation                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business trip                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting event                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Academic trip           | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting friends and/or relatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Just passing through on the way to other destination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special event                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment                     |   |

3. Was your last visit....

- A day trip
- An overnight trip

A. If so, how many nights in total did you stay in Nizhny Novgorod? \_\_\_\_\_

4. During what season did you visit Nizhny Novgorod **last** time (check **the most** appropriate answer)?

- January-March  
 April-May

- June-September  
 October-December

#### EVALUATION OF CITY VISIT EXPERIENCE

1. Please check each activity you participated in during your last trip to Nizhniy Novgorod. (Check **all** that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Visiting historical sites and museums                          | • River cruise                                      |
| • Visiting an art gallery  | • Attending/participating in a show, fair, festival |
| • Attending/participating in a sporting event                    | • Shopping  |
| • Attending a personal special event (wedding, graduation, etc.) | • Visiting a community/city park                    |
| • General sightseeing  | • Visiting a scenic area                            |
| • Visiting architectural monuments                               | • Fishing   |
|  | • Other _____                                       |

6. Please rate, how much the attribute accurately describes Nizhny Novgorod on your **most recent trip** by checking what best describes your agreement. Some statements talk about touristy areas. We will understand touristy areas of Nizhny Novgorod as the Kremlin, Bolshaya Pokrovskaya Street, Verhne-Volzhskaya and Nizhne-Volzhskaya embankments as well as adjacent territories

	Do you agree that...?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know
a	The city's weather during the visit was pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	0
b	The city is beautiful and scenic	1	2	3	4	5	0
c	The city has beautiful parks and greenery	1	2	3	4	5	0
d	Standards in hotel accommodations were adequate	1	2	3	4	5	0
e	Destination appeared clean and free of trash in touristy areas of the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
f	Destination appears safe from crime in touristy areas of the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
g	It is easy to find and reach tourist attractions within the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
h	Destination appears friendly and welcoming to tourists	1	2	3	4	5	0
i	The city offers a wide choice of artistic and cultural amenities	1	2	3	4	5	0

j	It is very pleasurable to walk or stroll in touristy areas of the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
k	The amount of crowding and congestion in the city is NOT overwhelming	1	2	3	4	5	0
l	There is a good choice of restaurants in touristy areas of the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
m	There is a variety of nightlife and entertainment in the city	1	2	3	4	5	0
n	Shopping in the city is very pleasurable	1	2	3	4	5	0
o	The price levels in Nizhny Novgorod are very attractive	1	2	3	4	5	0
p	Citizens of Nizhny Novgorod are friendly and helpful to tourists	1	2	3	4	5	0
q	In case of emergency adequate healthcare is available to tourists	1	2	3	4	5	0

## RISK PERCEPTIONS

### Travel Risk Perceptions

7. This question asks you about your general perception of traveling. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. Generally, I feel nervous about traveling.	1	2	3	4	5
B. Traveling is risky right now.	1	2	3	4	5
C. Vacation travel is not safe.	1	2	3	4	5
D. Generally, I feel very uncomfortable traveling.	1	2	3	4	5
E. Domestic traveling is just as risky as international travel.	1	2	3	4	5
F. Safety is a serious consideration when I am choosing a destination	1	2	3	4	5

### Risk perception of the traveling to Nizhny Novgorod

8. Tell us about your risk perceptions related to your last trip to Nizhny Novgorod. Please rate your agreement with the following statements

Before my last trip to Nizhny Novgorod, I was thinking that:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) the money spent on the vacation in Nizhny Novgorod will be a waste	1	2	3	4	5

b) I will experience health-related problems while traveling to Nizhny Novgorod	1	2	3	4	5
c) While I am in Nizhny Novgorod a crisis surrounding infrastructure (i.e. building, bridge collapse) will likely to occur.	1	2	3	4	5
d) It is likely that I will personally be a victim of crime	1	2	3	4	5
e) It is likely that I will become a victim of terrorist act while in Nizhny Novgorod.	1	2	3	4	5
f) There is a risk of friends/family/associates disapproving of my choice of travel to Nizhny Novgorod because it is not safe	1	2	3	4	5
g) the trip to Nizhny Novgorod might be disappointing	1	2	3	4	5
h) While in Nizhny Novgorod the natural disaster is likely to occur	1	2	3	4	5

9. What is, in your opinion, the **most risky** thing about traveling to Nizhny Novgorod? \_\_\_\_\_

#### SATISFACTION AND POST VISIT BEHAVIOR

This section consists of questions regarding the overall quality of your experience in Nizhny Novgorod and your willingness to revisit and recommend it.

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being a perfect trip, how would you rate the overall quality of your experience during your **last trip**? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1-strongly disagree and 5- strongly agree.

Intention to Revisit	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer
a. I want to come to Nizhny Novgorod again for a pleasure trip	1	2	3	4	5	0
b. It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next three years	1	2	3	4	5	0
c. It is likely that I will revisit Nizhny Novgorod in the next five years	1	2	3	4	5	0

12. Please, indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- After my **last trip** to Nizhny Novgorod, **generally I spoke positively** about Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to my friends and/or family. YES/NO
- After my **last trip** to Nizhny Novgorod, overall **I spoke positively** of Nizhny Novgorod as a travel destination to other people (excluding friends and relatives). YES/NO
- After my **last trip** to Nizhny Novgorod, **I recommended** Nizhny Novgorod to people who were seeking advice. YES/NO
- After my **last trip** to Nizhny Novgorod, **I wrote and posted online a generally positive review** about my experience in Nizhny Novgorod and posted it on the website of the hotel/restaurant etc. the services of which I used during my trip. YES/NO
- After my **last trip** to Nizhny Novgorod, **I spoke positively** about Nizhny Novgorod on at least one social network sites, such as facebook, vkontakte, odnoklassniki, and twitter. YES/NO

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

Please take a moment to tell us who you are. This information will be kept in the strictest confidence and used for statistical purposes only.

13. What is your gender? [ ] Male [ ] Female

14. Your marital status? (Check only one)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single            | <input type="checkbox"/> Separated            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partnered/Married | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Widow/Widower     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced          |   |

15. How many children do you have of all age groups listed below? If you don't have children, please, check one answer "Don't have children".

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ younger than 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ 25 years than older |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ 5-13 years           | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Don't have children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ 14-18 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ 19-24 years          |   |

16. How old are you? If you do not want to answer put "999". \_\_\_\_\_

17. Please indicate the highest level of education you have obtained? (Check one)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than High School Graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> Some Graduate School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Degree      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some College                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical School     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduate           | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to tell   |

18. How can you describe the financial situation of your family?

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very good | <input type="checkbox"/> Good               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Average   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Bad  | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to tell |

**That completes our survey. Thank you very much for your assistance!**

If you have any questions or comments, please, address them to [galinasim@ufl.edu](mailto:galinasim@ufl.edu).

## APPENDIX C RUSSIAN VERSION OF THE SURVEY

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Здравствуйте,

Меня зовут Галина Симановская, я студентка магистратуры Университета Флориды (США). Я хотела бы предложить Вам принять участие в исследовании, которое является частью моей научной работы в рамках магистратуры. Я провожу опрос туристов, посетивших Нижний Новгород в последние 4 года. Ваше мнение очень важно для дальнейшего развития туризма в городе. Опрос займет у Вас приблизительно 15 минут. Опрос был одобрен Экспертным Советом Университета Флориды, осуществляющим контроль за соблюдением прав респондентов. Если у Вас есть вопросы по поводу своих прав как участника данного исследования, Вы можете направить их по следующему адресу: IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; irb2@ufl.edu. Результаты опроса будут обработаны статистически, и Ваши индивидуальные ответы нигде обсуждаться не будут. Участие в опросе не несет никаких рисков и не предполагает денежной или какой-либо иной компенсации. Вы не обязаны отвечать на вопросы, на которые Вы не хотите отвечать, и можете прекратить свое участие в любое время без каких-либо последствий.

Если у Вас есть какие-либо вопросы, обращайтесь ко мне или моему научному руководителю по нижеследующим электронным адресам.

Большое спасибо,

Галина Симановская  
Студентка магистратуры  
Университета Флориды (США)  
[galinasim@ufl.edu](mailto:galinasim@ufl.edu)

Светлана Степченкова, PhD  
Университет Флориды (США),  
Департамент Туризма и Спортивного Менеджмента  
[svetlana.step@ufl.edu](mailto:svetlana.step@ufl.edu)  
<http://trsm.hhp.ufl.edu/>

**ЭЛЕКТРОННОЕ РАЗРЕШЕНИЕ:** Пожалуйста, выберите один из нижеследующих вариантов.  
Выбрав "согласен/согласна", Вы соглашаетесь со следующими утверждениями:

- Вы прочитали вышеизложенную информацию
- Вы согласны принять участие в опросе
- Вам 18 лет или более

Если Вы не хотите принимать участие в этом исследовании, пожалуйста, нажмите "не согласен/не согласна".

согласен/согласна  
 не согласен/не согласна

>>

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%

 qualtrics.com®

Является ли Россия Вашим постоянным местом жительства?

Да  
 Нет

[>>](#)

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%

 qualtrics.com®

Является ли Нижний Новгород Вашим постоянным местом жительства?

Да  
 Нет

[>>](#)

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%

 qualtrics.com®

Если Нижний Новгород НЕ является Вашим постоянным местом жительства, укажите почтовый индекс места Вашего постоянного проживания

[>>](#)

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%

Qualtrics.com®

Посещали ли Вы Нижний Новгород в последние 4 года (2009-2012)?

Да  
 Нет

>>

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%

Qualtrics.com®

В течение Вашей последней поездки, что Вы сделали из нижеперечисленного (выберите все подходящие варианты)?

Посещение исторических мест и музеев  
 Посещение арт-галерей  
 Спортивные мероприятия/соревнования (участие/посещение)  
 Конференция/конвенция (участие/посещение)  
 Участие в личном мероприятии (свадьба, выпускной и т.д.)  
 Прогулки по городу  
 Осмотр исторической архитектуры

Круиз/прогулка по Волге  
 Шоу, ярмарка, фестиваль (участие/посещение)  
 Шопинг  
 Посещение городских парков  
 Посещение живописных уголков природы  
 Рыбалка  
 Другое

Сколько раз Вы посетили Нижний Новгород за последние 4 года (2009-2012)?

Какова была основная цель Вашей поездки в ходе Вашего последнего визита в Нижний Новгород (выберите один наиболее подходящий вариант)?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Посещение архитектурных и культурных достопримечательностей                             | <input type="radio"/> Отдых на свежем воздухе (например, турбаза, пляж) |
| <input type="radio"/> Деловая поездка/бизнес  | <input type="radio"/> Спортивное мероприятие                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Образовательная/ научная конференция  | <input type="radio"/> Шопинг  |
| <input type="radio"/> Посещение друзей и/или родственников  | <input type="radio"/> Проездом  |
| <input type="radio"/> Посещение праздника, фестиваля и т. п. (например, День Города, День Народного Единства) | <input type="radio"/> Другое <input type="text"/>                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Развлечение (например, ресторан, бар, театр)  |   |

Ваша последняя поездка была?

- Однодневная поездка  
 Поездка с ночевкой

>>

Завершение опроса

0%

100%

В какой период Вы посещали Нижний Новгород последний раз (Выберите наиболее подходящий вариант)?

- Январь-Март                            Июнь-Сентябрь  
 Апрель – Май                            Октябрь – Декабрь

>>

Завершение опроса

0%

100%

В течение Вашей последней поездки, что Вы сделали из нижеперечисленного (выберите все подходящие варианты)?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Посещение исторических мест и музеев                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Круиз/прогулка по Волге                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Посещение арт-галерей                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Шоу, ярмарка, фестиваль (участие/посещение) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Спортивные мероприятия/соревнования (участие/посещение)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Шопинг                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Конференция/конвенция (участие/посещение)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Посещение городских парков                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Участие в личном мероприятии (свадьба, выпускной и т.д.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Посещение живописных уголков природы        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Прогулки по городу                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Рыбалка                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Осмотр исторической архитектуры                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Другое <input type="text"/>                 |

Говоря о Вашей последней поездке в Нижний Новгород, насколько Вы согласны с нижеследующими утверждениями? Укажите наиболее подходящий вариант. Некоторые высказывания касаются туристического центра города. Под туристическим центром следует понимать Кремль, улицу Большую Покровскую, Верхне-Волжскую и Нижне-Волжскую набережные, а также непосредственно прилегающие к ним территории.

*Согласны ли Вы с тем, что*

	Абсолютно не согласен/ не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Нейтрален/ Нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ согласна	Полностью согласен/ согласна	Нет ответа
в Нижнем Новгороде хороший климат/погода	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Нижний Новгород красивый и живописный город	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде есть прекрасные парки и растительность	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде гостиницы соответствуют заявленным стандартам	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в туристическом центре Нижнего Новгорода чисто, нет мусора на улицах	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в туристическом центре Нижнего Новгорода безопасно, нет криминала	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Абсолютно не согласен/не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Нейтрален/ Нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ согласна	Полностью согласен/ согласна	Нет ответа
в Нижнем Новгороде добраться до достопримечательностей не составляет труда	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде дружелюбное и гостеприимное отношение к туристам со стороны работников туризма	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде широкий выбор для художественного и культурного отдыха	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
просто гулять по <b>туристическому центру</b> Нижнего Новгорода доставляет удовольствие	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде толчья и давка не превышают допустимых пределов	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в <b>туристическом центре</b> Нижнего Новгорода хороший выбор ресторанов и кафе	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Абсолютно не согласен/не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Нейтрален/ Нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ согласна	Полностью согласен/ согласна	Нет ответа
в Нижнем Новгороде много различных возможностей для вечернего отдыха	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в <b>туристическом центре</b> Нижнего Новгорода есть возможности устроить приятный шопинг	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде привлекательный уровень цен	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
жители Нижнего Новгорода дружелюбны и отзывчивы	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
в Нижнем Новгороде у туристов есть доступ к медицинским услугам при необходимости	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

>>

Завершение опроса



0% 100%

**Представления о рисках, связанных с путешествиями в целом**

Этот вопрос относится к тому, что Вы думаете про путешествия в целом. Насколько Вы согласны с нижеследующими утверждениями? Укажите наиболее подходящий вариант.

	Абсолютно не согласен/ не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Нейтрален/ Нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ согласна	Полностью согласен/ согласна
Я обычно беспокоюсь, когда мне нужно путешествовать	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
В настоящее время путешествовать рискованно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Проводить свой отпуск путешествуя сейчас небезопасно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Путешествуя, я обычно испытываю дискомфорт	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Путешествовать в своей стране и в другие страны одинаково рискованно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Я считаю безопасность важным фактором при выборе места поездки	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Представления о рисках, связанных с поездкой в Нижний Новгород**

Этот вопрос относится к Вашей последней поездке в Нижний Новгород. Насколько Вы согласны с нижеследующими утверждениями? Укажите наиболее подходящий вариант.

Перед своей поездкой в Нижний Новгород, я думал(а), что...

	Абсолютно не согласен/ не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Нейтрален/ Нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ согласна	Полностью согласен/ согласна
деньги, потраченные на поездку в Нижний Новгород, окажутся потраченными впустую	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
во время моего пребывания в Нижнем Новгороде я могу заболеть инфекционным заболеванием (например, птичим гриппом H5N1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
во время моего пребывания в Нижнем Новгороде может произойти кризис окружающей инфраструктуры (например обрушение зданий, мостов)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
во время моего пребывания в Нижнем Новгороде я могу стать жертвой преступления (например, кражи)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
во время моего пребывания в Нижнем Новгороде я могу стать жертвой террористического акта	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
мои друзья/родственники/знакомые не одобрят мою поездку в Нижний Новгород, т.к. там небезопасно	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
поездка в Нижний Новгород не оправдывает ожиданий	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
во время моего пребывания в Нижнем Новгороде может произойти стихийное бедствие	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Чего, по Вашему мнению, стоит **больше всего** опасаться при поездке в Нижний Новгород?

>>

Завершение опроса  
0%  100%



Как бы Вы в целом оценили по 10-балльной шкале степень удовлетворенности Вашей **последней** поездкой в Нижний Новгород, где 1 – совершенно не удовлетворен и 10-полностью удовлетворен?



Оцените, пожалуйста, насколько Вы согласны со следующими утверждениями.

	Абсолютно не согласен/ не согласна	Скорее не согласен/ не согласна	Скорее нейтрален/ нейтральна	Скорее согласен/ нейтральна	Полностью согласен/ согласна	Нет ответа
Возможно, я вернусь в Нижний Новгород снова с целью туризма/ отдыха	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Вероятно, я приеду в Нижний Новгород снова в течение ближайших 3-х лет	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Вероятно, я приеду в Нижний Новгород снова в течение ближайших 5-ти лет	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Пожалуйста, выберите, согласны ли Вы с нижеперечисленными высказываниями

После моей последней поездки в Нижний Новгород...

	Да	Нет
я в целом положительно рассказывал(а) о Нижнем Новгороде как о центре туризма своим родственникам/друзьям	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
я в целом положительно отзывался/отзывалась о Нижнем Новгороде как о центре туризма в разговорах с другими людьми (кроме друзей и родственников)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
если кто-либо спрашивал у меня совета, я рекомендовал(а) Нижний Новгород как место, которое бы стоило посетить	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
я написал(а) в целом положительную рецензию/комментарий о моей поездке в Нижний Новгород и разместил(а) ее/его он-лайн на сайте отеля, ресторана и т.п., услугами которых я пользовался/пользовалась	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
я разместил(а) хотя бы один положительный отзыв о Нижнем Новгороде хотя бы в одной из социальных сетей, таких как vkontakte, facebook, twitter, odnoklassniki и др.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Да	Нет

>>

Завершение опроса

0% 100%



Ваш пол

- Мужской
- Женский
- Воздержусь от ответа

Состоите ли Вы с браке?

- Не женат (не замужем)
- Женат (замужем), но проживаем раздельно
- Женат (замужем)/Гражданский брак
- Вдовец (вдова)
- Разведен(а)
- Воздержусь от ответа

Сколько у Вас детей, относящихся к каждой из нижеперечисленных возрастных групп?

- младше 5 лет
- 25 лет и старше
- 5-13 лет
- Детей нет
- 14-18 лет
- Воздержусь от ответа
- 19-24 лет

Ваш возраст (количество полных лет). Если вы хотите воздержаться от ответа, пожалуйста, поставьте «999».

Ваше образование (укажите самый высокий уровень)

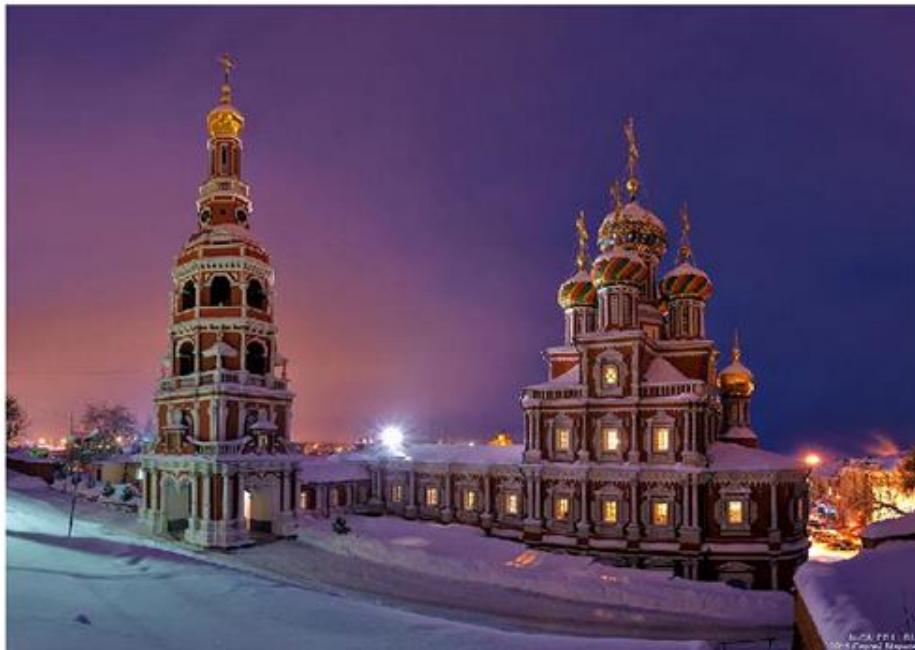
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Неполное среднее                 | <input type="radio"/> ПТУ (профтехучилище) / Среднее специальное |
| <input type="radio"/> Среднее (аттестат средней школы) | <input type="radio"/> Ученая степень                             |
| <input type="radio"/> Незаконченное высшее             | <input type="radio"/> Воздержусь от ответа                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Высшее                           |  |

Как бы Вы оценили в настоящее время материальное положение Вашей семьи?

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Очень хорошее | <input type="radio"/> Плохое               |
| <input type="radio"/> Хорошее       | <input type="radio"/> Очень плохое         |
| <input type="radio"/> Среднее       | <input type="radio"/> Воздержусь от ответа |

>>

На этом наш опрос окончен. Спасибо Вам большое!  
Если Вас интересует дополнительная информация или результаты опроса, обращайтесь по адресу:  
[galinasim@ufl.edu](mailto:galinasim@ufl.edu)



Спасибо за участие!

## APPENDIX D

### DEMOGRAPHICS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS (VKONTAKTE, FACEBOOK) USERS

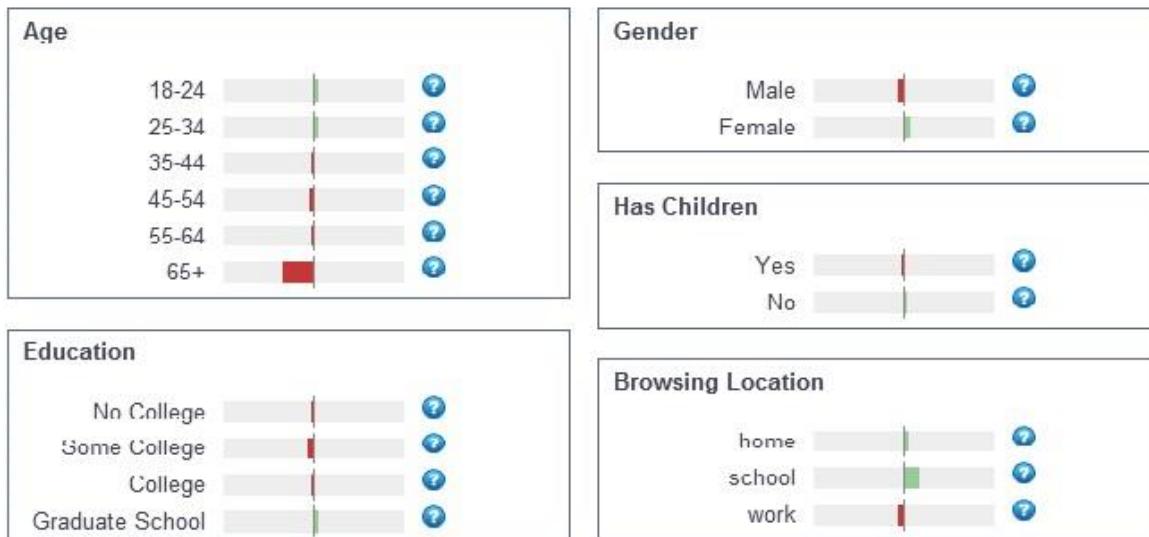
#### Audience Demographics for Vk.com

Relative to the general internet population how popular is vk.com with each audience below?



#### Audience Demographics for Facebook.com

Relative to the general Internet population how popular is facebook.com with each audience below?



## APPENDIX E

### MESSAGES FOR MODERATORS AND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

#### **Moderator/Administrator Message**

Dear Moderator of the XXX Community,

My name is Galina Simanovskaya, I am a graduate student at the University of Florida, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management. I did my Bachelor's degree at the State University of Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. As part of my Master's thesis, I am conducting a survey of tourists who visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years.

Study is aimed to help the city in developing domestic tourism. The study is conducted as a part of University of Florida – Nizhny Novgorod State University project. I am asking for your assistance in conducting the study by distributing my survey among the members of your group (posting the link to the survey on the wall of the group or sending private messages to group members). The survey has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Florida determining that the study does not violate rights of the survey respondents. All responses will be completely anonymous, confidential, and the findings will never discuss individual responses. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to participants in this study.

I will greatly appreciate your assistance with this study. If you give me your authorization, I will contact members of the community directly. I will also repeat the invitation to take part in the study a week after the first invitation.

If you have further questions, please contact me or my supervisor at the address below.

Thanks for your attention,

*Galina Simanovskaya  
Master's student  
University of Florida  
galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph. D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management  
Associate Director of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute  
University of Florida  
svetlanastep@ufl.edu*

Уважаемый модератор сообщества «XXX»,

Меня зовут Галина Симановская, я студентка магистратуры Университета Флориды (США), отделение Туризма и Спортивного Менеджмента. Я получила степень бакалавра в Нижегородском Государственном Университете. В рамках моей магистерской научной работы, я провожу опрос туристов-россиян, посетивших Нижний Новгород в последние 4 года.

Исследование направлено на развитие внутреннего туризма в Нижнем Новгороде, и проводится в рамках сотрудничества Университета Флориды и Нижегородского Государственного Университета. Я обращаюсь к Вам с просьбой помочь в проведении данного исследования, распространив опрос или ссылку на него среди членов сообщества «XXX». Опрос был одобрен Экспертным Советом Университета Флориды, осуществляющим контроль за соблюдением прав респондентов. Участие в опросе не несет никаких рисков и не предполагает денежной или какой-либо компенсации.

Я буду очень благодарна за помощь в проведении данного исследования и надеюсь, что Вы пойдете нам навстречу. Если Вы, как модератор сообщества, дадите свое согласие, я могу обратиться к членам сообщества напрямую, от своего имени. Для правильного проведения опроса мне нужно будет повторить приглашение через неделю после первого объявления.

Если у Вас есть какие-либо вопросы, обращайтесь ко мне или моему научному руководителю по указанным ниже электронным адресам.

Большое спасибо за внимание к нашей просьбе!

Галина Симановская  
Студентка магистратуры  
Университета Флориды (США)  
galinasim@ufl.edu

Светлана Степченкова, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management  
University of Florida  
svetlana.step@ufl.edu

Илья Куфтырев,  
Начальник Отдела Международных Связей  
Нижегородский Государственный Университет им. Н.И. Лобачевского -  
Национальный Исследовательский Университет  
Phone/fax: +7 831 462 31 02  
E-mail:

*Invitation to take part in the Study message.*

Hello,

---

My name is Galina Simanovskaya, I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. I would like to kindly invite you to participate in the research study which is a part of my Master's thesis. I am conducting a survey of tourists who visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years. Russian residents who are 18 years and older can take part in this survey. Your responses will be very important in helping the city to meet future recreational needs. The questionnaire should take less than 15 minutes to complete. The survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board ensuring that the study will not violate rights of respondents. Your responses will be completely anonymous, confidential and the findings will never discuss individual responses. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation at any time without consequence.

To take a survey, please, follow the link: [https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J](https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J)

*If you have any questions, please, contact me or my supervisor at the address below.*

*Thank You,*

*Galina Simanovskaya  
Master's student  
University of Florida  
galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph. D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management  
Associate Director of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute  
University of Florida  
Svetlanastep.ufl.edu*

Здравствуйте, уважаемый участник сообщества «XXX»,

Меня зовут Галина Симановская, я студентка магистратуры Университета Флориды (США). Я хочу предложить Вам принять участие в исследовании, которое является частью моей научной работы. Я провожу опрос туристов, посетивших Нижний Новгород в последние 4 года. В опросе могут принять участие лица, проживающие на территории Российской Федерации и достигшие 18 лет. Опрос займет у Вас приблизительно 15 минут. Результаты опроса будут обработаны статистически, и Ваши индивидуальные ответы нигде обсуждаться не будут. Опрос был одобрен Экспертным Советом Университета Флориды, осуществляющим контроль за соблюдением прав реципиентов. Участие в опросе не несет никаких рисков и не предполагает денежной или какой-либо иной компенсации. Вы не обязаны отвечать на вопросы, на которые Вы не хотите отвечать, и можете прекратить свое участие в любое время без каких-либо последствий.

Для прохождения опроса, пожалуйста перейдите по следующей ссылке:

[https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J](https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J)

*Если у Вас есть какие-либо вопросы, обращайтесь ко мне или моему научному руководителю по нижесуказанным адресам.*

Большое спасибо,

Галина Симановская  
Студентка магистратуры  
Университета Флориды (США)  
[galinasim@ufl.edu](mailto:galinasim@ufl.edu)

Светлана Степченкова, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management  
University of Florida  
[svetlana.step@ufl.edu](mailto:svetlana.step@ufl.edu)

Илья Куфтырев,  
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Нижегородский Государственный Университет им. Н.И. Лобачевского -  
Национальный Исследовательский Университет  
Phone/fax: +7 831 462 31 02  
E-mail: [intkig@unn.ru](mailto:intkig@unn.ru)

## APPENDIX F

### THANK YOU NOTE TO MODERATORS AND PARTICIPANTS

Dear moderators and members of the community “XXX”,

Thank you for your assistance with my research “Nizhny Novgorod as a tourist center”! We hope that your responses will help the city to improve city’s tourist offer for local and foreign travelers.

We are planning to close the survey on Friday (February 1, 2013) at 9:00 pm (Moscow time zone). Community members who would like to take part in the study and have not taken part in it yet can do it by following the link below:  
[https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J](https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J)

*If you have any questions related to this study, please, contact me or my supervisor at the address below.*

*Thank You,*

*Galina Simanovskaya  
Master's student  
University of Florida  
galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph. D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management  
Associate Director of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute  
University of Florida  
Svetlanastep@ufl.edu*

Уважаемые модератор и члены сообщества «XXX»,

Большое вам спасибо за оказанную поддержку в проведении моего исследования «Нижний Новгород как туристический центр»! Мы надеемся, что ваши ответы помогут городу улучшить его привлекательность для российских и иностранных туристов.

Мы планируем закрыть опрос в **пятницу 1-го февраля 2013, в 21:00** по московскому времени. Участники сообщества, которые хотели бы, но еще не успели принять участие в опросе, могут это сделать, перейдя по ссылке:  
[https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J](https://ufljour.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2b2H9PHAKQdam0J)

**С вопросами, касающимися этого исследования, пожалуйста, обращайтесь ко мне или моему научному руководителю по нижеуказанным электронным адресам.**

*Еще раз большое спасибо за поддержку,*

*Галина Симановская  
Студентка магистратуры  
Университета Флориды (США)  
galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Светлана Степченкова, PhD  
Университет Флориды (США),  
Департамент Туризма и Спортивного Менеджмента  
svetlana.step@ufl.edu*

## APPENDIX G IRB APPROVAL



PO Box 112250  
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250  
352-392-0433 (Phone)  
352-392-9234 (Fax)  
irb2@ufl.edu

---

DATE: January 8, 2013

TO: Galina Simanovskaya  
PO Box 118208  
Campus

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD, Chair *ISF:dl*  
University of Florida  
Institutional Review Board 02

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol #2012-U-1296

TITLE: Survey on Destination Performance, Risk Perceptions and Post-Visitation Behavior

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants, and based on 45 CFR 46.117(c), An IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all subjects if it finds either: (1) *That the only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each subject will be asked whether the subject wants documentation linking the subject with the research, and the subject's wishes will govern;* or (2) *That the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.*

The IRB authorizes you to administer the informed consent process as specified in the protocol. If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, ***including the need to increase the number of participants authorized,*** you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

This approval is valid through **December 11, 2013**. If you have not completed the study by this date, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. Additionally, should you complete the study before the expiration date, please submit the study closure report to our office. The form can be located at [http://irb.ufl.edu/irb02/Continuing\\_Review.html](http://irb.ufl.edu/irb02/Continuing_Review.html). It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

## CONSENT FORM

Hello,

My name is Galina Simanovskaya, I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. I would like to kindly invite you to participate in the research study which is a part of my Master's thesis. I am conducting a survey of tourists who visited Nizhny Novgorod in the last 4 years. Your responses will be very important in helping the city to meet your future recreational needs. The questionnaire should take less than 15 minutes to complete. The survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board that determines that the survey will not violate rights of respondents. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant rights may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; irb2@ufl.edu .Your responses will be completely anonymous and the findings will never discuss individual responses. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to. You have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation at any time without consequence.

*If you have any questions, please, address them to me or my supervisor at the address below.*

*Galina Simanovskaya, Master's student, University of Florida, galinasim@ufl.edu*

*Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph. D., Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management,  
Associate Director of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute, University of Florida, svetlanastep@ufl.edu*

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- You have ready the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button

- Agree
- Disagree

Approved by  
University of Florida  
Institutional Review Board 02  
Protocol # 2012-U-1296  
For Use Through 12-11-2013

**APPENDIX H**  
**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS**

Region	Frequency	Percent
Moscow and Moscow oblast	77	30.1
Nizhny Novgorod Oblast	44	17.2
Saint Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast	29	11.3
Kirov Oblast	9	3.5
Samara Oblast	8	3.1
Ivanovo Oblast	7	2.7
Republic of Tatarstan	6	2.3
Chuvash Republic	5	2.0
Komi Republic	5	2.0
Tver Oblast	4	1.6
Vladimir Oblast	4	1.6
Arkhangelsk Oblast	3	1.2
Chelyabinsk Oblast	3	1.2
Republic of Bashkortostan	3	1.2
Ryazan Oblast	3	1.2
Vologda Oblast	3	1.2
Yaroslavl Oblast	3	1.2
Irkutsk Oblast	2	0.8
Kaliningrad Oblast	2	0.8
Kemerovo Oblast	2	0.8
Kursk Oblast	2	0.8
Perm Oblast	2	0.8
Sakhalin Oblast	2	0.8
Smolensk Oblast	2	0.8
Bryansk Oblast	1	0.4
Buryat Republic	1	0.4
Kamchatka	1	0.4
Karachay-Cherkess Republic	1	0.4
Khabarovsk Krai	1	0.4
Kostroma Oblast	1	0.4
Krasnodar Krai	1	0.4
Krasnoyarsk Krai	1	0.4
Lipetsk Oblast	1	0.4
Mari El Republic	1	0.4
Murmansk Oblast	1	0.4
Novosibirsk Oblast	1	0.4
Omsk Oblast	1	0.4
Oryol Oblast	1	0.4
Penza Oblast	1	0.4
Primorsky Krai	1	0.4
Republic of Karelia	1	0.4
Republic of Mordovia	1	0.4
Republic of Udmurtia	1	0.4
Rostov Oblast	1	0.4
Saratov Oblast	1	0.4
Stavropol Krai	1	0.4
Sverdlovsk Oblast	1	0.4
Volgograd Oblast	1	0.4
Voronezh Oblast	1	0.4
Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug	1	0.4

## APPENDIX I COPYRIGHT AGREEMENT

### ELSEVIER LICENSE

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Feb 27, 2013

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Galina Simanovskaya was born in 1989, in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. She went to school in her hometown. Galina graduated with her bachelor's degree from the Department of International Relations of The State University of Nizhny Novgorod, Russia with the concentration on global security. She enrolled in the Master's Program in the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management at the University of Florida in 2011. Throughout her Master's Program Galina worked as the graduate assistant at the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management.