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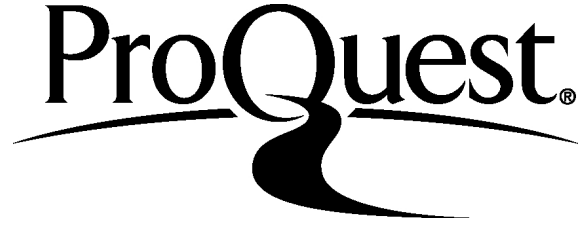
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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of Chinese babymoon tourism. This phenomenon is gaining popularity in China but has not received due attention in academic research and from the tourism industry. The study aims to identify the backgrounds of young Chinese couples who participate in babymoon tourism, uncover the factors that motivate them to do so, and examine their travel behaviors that take place during such trips.

The study adopts a qualitative approach due to the emerging nature of the phenomenon. In-depth interviews consisting of both demographic and open-ended questions were conducted in China with 31 qualifying participants who are defined as in the state of preparing for pregnancy and in the process of planning for babymoons. The data was collected and analyzed based on classic grounded theory.

The results provide a basic profile of the participants including their gender, age, education level, annual household income, occupation, religious belief, city of residence, whether they and their spouses were the only child in the family, whether they were preparing for their first baby, their travel interests and experiences, and

evaluation of their subjective well-being. Chinese babymoon tourists or babymooners are well-educated and well-to-do urban elites in the post-1980s generation. They are experienced travel enthusiasts who hold a negative evaluation of their subjective well-being. The results also provide evidence for nine propositions pertaining to the profile, travel motivations, and travel behaviors of Chinese babymooners. An empirical behavioral model of Chinese babymoon tourism was proposed as a result. Pull and push factors work together to motivate young Chinese couples to take a babymoon. For the push factors, they travel to relax and to escape and disconnect from daily routines. They also travel to improve the relationship with their spouse and to seek wellness and fertility benefits. For the pull factors, they travel for enjoyment, freedom, excitement, and to learn and discover new things. These motivations for taking babymoons are subject to constraints. They include time, travel cost, and travel safety. Chinese babymooners mainly prefer nature-based and culture-based destinations. They also prefer to participate in recreation-oriented, romance-oriented, wellness-oriented, and food-oriented activities on babymoons. Their choices are correlated with their travel motivations. Furthermore, they prefer customized all-inclusive travel packages with high quality accommodation, beneficial programs for wellness and fertility, romantic arrangements, customer-oriented service, and healthy and delicious food. Family, friends, and acquaintances, online travel sources, and travel agencies are the major sources of information for Chinese babymooners. The findings from the study, therefore, contribute to the knowledge of tourist typology.

The study makes a practical contribution as well. The demand for babymoon tourism exists in China, yet the potential of it is being neglected. The findings from this study show that no satisfactory travel products and packages are available in the market that can meet the needs of Chinese babymooners. Through the understanding of the backgrounds, travel motivations, and travel behaviors of Chinese babymooners, the industry practitioners can be better informed so that they can design their offerings to satisfy their needs and requirements. This study is also informative for various levels of the Chinese government to recognize the significance of this unique tourism typology and to develop appropriate policies to facilitate its development.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

It is commonly believed that rapid economic development in China secures the nation an increasingly important position in the world economy; however, the quality of life of the Chinese does not correspond with the economic development. The Chinese, especially those living in urban areas, have to deal every day with stress-filled lives. As an article from Newsweek suggested, “Chinese people are considered to be the most stressed group in the world” (Liu, 2008). The stress of overwork, a lack of leisure time, the high cost of living, and bad living conditions all contribute to stressful lives for Chinese urban residents. One of the most serious problems caused by stressful lives and unhealthy lifestyles for these residents is the difficulty to conceive after they get married, which helps to explain the increased infertility rate in present day China. While the infertility rate of the country was only 3% in the 1970s, it has increased to 12.5% today. In some areas, the infertility rate has even reached 18%. The reasons for the low fertility rate may be attributed to various factors: the government birth control policy (one-child policy), a change in people’s attitudes toward fertility (now preferring fewer children), and fertility difficulties (Lai, 2011). Among these factors, fertility difficulties have become a serious problem plaguing the Chinese people. According to a report from the China Population Foundation

conducted in 2012, more than 50 million people suffer from this problem. On average, one Chinese couple in ten is faced with the birth-giving problem, which has become a serious social issue for the Chinese society due to the extraordinary importance of children in the Chinese family and culture.

As a country with a long history and rich traditional culture, China is currently undergoing a process of transition, in both economy and politics. The instability and insecurity caused by the transition have contributed to the Chinese people's need for children because the births of newborns are essential for building a stable and happy family--the foundation for social stability in China. It has also been established that children play a crucial part in Chinese families and society because they play a critical role in the continuation of lineage in the traditional Chinese culture. However, a great number of Chinese people are currently suffering from fertility difficulties. Among these people, some are infertile due to physical problems; for many others, the fertility difficulties could be attributed to their stressful daily lives, which may include heavy workloads, environmental pollution, and unhealthy lifestyles.

Stress negatively influences the human reproductive system (see, for example, Barnea & Tai 1991; Basu, 2014; McGrady, 1984). Actually, it is believed that 70% of female infertility and 50% of male infertility result from stress. It could be argued that the lay public has begun to notice the relationship between stress and infertility. One indication of this growing awareness is that quite a number of Chinese couples who are preparing for pregnancy would like to participate in romantic and relaxing babymoon tourism activities, especially in nature-filled environments ("Traveling

while Preparing for pregnancy,” 2015). For example, according to a news report (The China Press, 2015), some Beijing couples during their preparation for pregnancy choose comfortable U.S. cities with great natural environments for a relaxing vacation. This phenomenon could be attributed to the public’s preliminary understanding of the restorative effects of nature on humans. As a fertility doctor mentioned (“Stress can cause fertility difficulties,” 2013), stress is considered as a major factor that can cause fertility difficulties. Taking a babymoon, defined as a romantic and relaxing vacation for couples during their preparation for pregnancy, and staying close to nature would be a very good choice for those couples because nature could effectively help humans reduce stress and also get away from their smoky cities full of noise and pollution. As a result, taking such a vacation may greatly increase the possibility of getting pregnant and the quality of the pregnancy.

In addition, in October, 2015, while this dissertation was under modification, China’s one-child policy was announced dead. China’ new policy is that couples may now have two children. This policy will be implemented at the provincial level (Buckley, 2015). The change of China’s family planning policy, brought about in part due to worries about an aging population and a shrinking workforce, will be welcome news for many urban couples who want a second child but are currently barred from having the additional child. For those couples, this new policy may also inspire them to take a relaxing baby-making vacation.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Babymoon tourism has just started to gain popularity among young Chinese couples but has not received adequate attention in academic research and the tourism industry. However, this phenomenon is worth scholarly attention because of the unique tourist segment involved and the possible important implications.

Young Chinese couples of child-bearing age who engage in babymoon activities are identified as a unique group. They are generally referred to as the post-1980s generation because their characteristics are closely related to the social and cultural contexts in which they were raised and because of their important role in Chinese society (Chen, 2008). An extended description of the post-1980s generation will be provided in Chapter 2.

Previous studies have investigated other types of tourism that bear surface similarities to what is studied in this dissertation. For instance, research looked at what was known as “fertility tourism” or “reproductive tourism.” These refer to infertile couples or individuals from one country who, in order to conceive and have a child, purchase reproductive or medical services from suppliers of such services in other countries (Howze, 2007). A different line of research investigated so-called “medical tourism,” which refers to treatment or surgery planned in advance to take place outside a patient’s usual place of residence (Mecir & Greider, 2007). Another phenomenon (honeymoon) studied in previous research usually refers to a trip taken by a newlywed couple to be alone together or to commemorate their marriage (Lee, Huang, & Chen, 2010). All these phenomena differ in fundamental ways from the

topic currently under investigation, i.e., babymoon, which is also defined differently from the same term as used in Western sources or dictionaries. The details will be discussed in Chapter 2.

This study focuses on young Chinese couples with the following characteristics:

1) they have been married for a while, 2) they have fertility difficulties due to various stresses but are not physically infertile, 3) they are preparing to have a child, and 4) they have a great desire for leisurely tourism activities in preparation for pregnancy.

The type of tourism activities initiated by this particular segment of people has not been adequately studied in tourism literature, and the present study aims to fill the gap by taking a close look at this segment and their travel motivations and behaviors. The results of this study will be of importance to both academia and the Chinese tourism industry. Theoretically, through the investigation of the backgrounds, motivations, and travel behaviors of this particular group, this study will attempt to contribute to the tourist typology field by establishing a classification of Chinese babymoon tourists.

In a practical sense, the study brings this emerging phenomenon to the attention of government and tourism companies. As discussed earlier, children play a key role in the Chinese family and society; hence, many couples who are unable to have children or those with fertility difficulties may consider adopting a child. This has boosted the market of illegal adoption since adoption by illegal means is much easier than adopting a child through the legal system. In recent years there has been a high rate of criminal cases related to children-trafficking in China. A report reveals that the children who were stolen and sold in China for illegal adoption numbered at least

70,000 (McDonald, 2012). These crimes have severely disturbed the social stability of the country. Therefore, babymoon tourism could possibly help reduce such crimes and maintain the stability of the Chinese society by providing infertile couples with a possible solution to their baby problem. For those couples with fertility difficulties due to various stresses, this study may provide useful information and suggest a possible solution for their problem. For tourism companies and marketers, the study will provide valuable information that can help them design babymoon products which could better satisfy the needs of Chinese babymooners.

1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of babymoon tourism in China. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the backgrounds of young Chinese couples who are engaged in a babymoon (who they are). The results will help to identify their characteristics.
2. To investigate the factors motivating those young couples to engage in a babymoon (why they do it). The study will draw on existing theories of motivation to account for the investigation's observations.
3. To examine how those young couples behave when engaged in a babymoon (how they do it). The current study will look at the participants' choice of babymoon destinations and activities, the sources from which they obtain relevant information, their budgets for a babymoon, the average duration of such activities, and the desired babymoon tourism package.

1.4 Organization of the Study

The current study will be organized in the following manner. Chapter 1 provides the background information and justification of the research. Chapter 2 details the literature review undertaken in order to comprehend the Chinese babymoon tourism phenomenon. Chapter 3 introduces the methodology and procedures of the study. Included in this chapter are the instrument design, data collection, and data analysis. In this study, an in-depth interview, a qualitative research method, is adopted. Chapter 4 describes the findings from the data analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the findings and the conclusion of the study. The implications of the present study and suggestions for future research are also provided in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Stress and Infertility in China

China is known not only as the country with the largest population but also for the extreme policies it has implemented to curb its population growth. Although China is still the country with the largest population worldwide, it may have started to face a serious population crisis and demographic changes: the very low fertility rate and a rapidly increasing aged population.

An accelerated population decline is already very evident in present-day China. In the beginning of the 1970s, China's fertility rate, i.e., the number of births per woman per lifetime, was 5.9. The nationwide census conducted in 2010 revealed a steeply decreasing fertility rate and a decreasing average annual population growth rate. The fertility rate in present-day China is just about 1.4; this compares with an average of 1.7 in developed countries and 2.0 in the United States (Wang, 2011). The nation's low fertility rate will lead inexorably to a rapid ageing of society: currently, 13.3% are older than 60, a 3% increase since 2000. Concurrently, individuals younger than 14 have declined from 23% in 2000 to 17% today. That means a substantial decline in the supply of labor to power the economy and a rapidly escalating number

of old people. As a result, China will gradually lose its productive advantage brought about by a large labor force and also lose the sustainable growth of its economy.

Because of the serious consequences brought on by the low fertility rate, it is worthwhile to study both its causes and solutions. Wang Feng, a well-known Chinese academic and director of the Brookings-Tsinghua Centre for Public Policy, revealed that at the inception of the one-child policy, the fertility rate had already decreased from 5.8 in 1950 to 2.3 in 1980, slightly above zero population growth (Lindsay, 2012). In addition to the contributions of the one-child policy, the low fertility rate in China may also be explained by the serious fertility difficulties facing Chinese people. These difficulties will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

2.1.1 “Birth-giving Problem” in China

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), when a couple having regular intercourse cannot conceive within a year, they are considered infertile. Additionally, WHO, substantiating a worldwide crisis of infertility, expects infertility and sterility to be the third most serious disease in the 21st century, after cancer and cardiovascular diseases (Perkowski, 2012).

Currently, many Chinese are suffering from the difficulty of conceiving. Based on a report from the China Population Foundation, the number of people who have fertility difficulty has reached 50 million (2012). While the infertility rate of the country was only 3% in the 1970s, it has increased to 12.5% today, and in some areas,

the infertility rate has even reached 18%. On average, one in ten Chinese couples suffers from difficulty conceiving.

According to Huang Hefeng, director of the Zhejiang Province Reproductive Medical Center, except for those who are infertile due to physiological reasons, many Chinese people suffer from problems conceiving due to heavy workloads, stress, environmental pollution, and unhealthy lifestyles (Perkowski, 2012). It is believed that 70% of female infertility and 50% of male infertility are the result of a stressful life (Perkowski, 2012). Under these circumstances, taking a romantic and relaxing babymoon in a nature-filled environment seems a good solution to this problem. Doctor Huang also suggested that it could be very helpful for those couples to get away from the hustle and bustle of the big cities where they live, to relax in a nature-filled environment, and to rekindle passion for their spouses because this kind of vacation may effectively help people release stress and greatly increase the possibility of getting pregnant and the quality of the pregnancy.

2.1.2 Stress, Wellness, and Fertility

The present study focuses on Chinese babymoon tourism prompted by the birth-giving problem facing Chinese couples who have a great desire for children. It is necessary to look at the factors that might cause fertility difficulties, among which stress may be a crucial one. Many existing studies have already pointed out the negative influences on people's health brought on by stress and the potential

relationship between stress and fertility difficulties, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

2.1.2.1 Stress and Health

Stress is defined as a process in which “environmental demands strain an organism’s adaptive capacity resulting in both psychological demands as well as biological changes that could place at risk for illness” (Cohen, Kessler, & Gordon, 1995, as cited in Salleh, 2008, p. 9). Things that cause us stress are called stressors. Everyone--young or old and rich or poor--deals with stress on a daily basis. Stress comes in many forms and intensities; it is neither predictable nor controllable; and it often invites itself. Sometimes even one’s own thoughts can cause stress, making the body more susceptible to illness. As Cohen, Kessler, and Gordon (1995) suggested, stress could be categorized into the following three types: environmental, psychological (or emotional), and biological. Environmental stress considers environmental conditions or encounters requiring significant adaptation. Psychological stress signifies how people judge their own capacity to handle the pressures of various life events. Biological stress relates to how various physiological systems deal with both psychological and physical stress.

The link between stress and wellness is not straightforward because how people deal with stress varies. For one person, a certain event may cause stress negatively influencing the person’s wellness; however, for another person, the same event may not generate stress. Events must interact with a wide variety of background factors to

trigger stress that in turn causes a health problem or an illness. Coping style, genetic vulnerability, type of personality, and social support are the crucial factors that influence susceptibility to stress. When people face a problem, they first assess its seriousness. Next they decide if they can deal with the problem. If they cannot, they feel stressed (Lazarus, 1996). In other words, it is one's reactions to situations that makes a difference in susceptibility to illness and overall well-being caused by stress.

It is worth noting, however, that not all stress has a negative effect. Stress is positive, healthy, and challenging when the body can tolerate stress and use it to overcome lethargy or enhance performance. Helpful stress is called eustress. In contrast, when we cannot deal with stress, it wears us out and affects our behavior and health. This kind of damaging stress is called distress, and it leads to overly sensitive reactions, inability to think clearly or to focus, worry about being able to perform our required tasks, and poor performance. During the recent past decades, there has been increasing concern about the negative effects and prevalence of stress-related disorders, especially in the workplace. Many countries that are renowned for their long working hours have come to realize the harm brought by work stress. Japan and China each have an expression for death caused by overwork--karoshi (in Japanese) and guolaosi (in Chinese). Both Japan and Korea recognize suicide caused by work stress as an official and compensable work-related condition (JOSHRC Newsletter, 2001). "In the United Kingdom, the estimated prevalence of stress and stress-related conditions rose from 829 cases per 100,000 workers in 1990 to 1,700 per 100,000 in 2001/2002" (Salleh, 2008, p. 10). Salleh also reported that the British Health and

Safety Executive revealed that 1.3% of workers suffer from stress, depression, or anxiety. Furthermore, he substantiated that 80% to 90% of industrial accidents may result from employees' own problems and be stress related. Finally, based on a report from The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Salleh revealed that stress resulted in approximately 50% of absences from work.

An alarming fact is that stress also causes serious morbidity and mortality. In the United States, emotional stress is a major contributing factor to the six leading causes of death including "cancer, coronary heart disease, accidental injuries, respiratory disorders, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide" (Salleh, 2008, p. 10). Based on information from the Meridian Stress Management Consultancy, Salleh reported that in the U.K., per year almost 180,000 people die from illness caused by stress, and in the U.S., The Center for Disease Control and Prevention roughly calculated that 75% of visits to doctors are related to stress, while Occupational Health and Safety and the National Council on compensation of insurance came up with the higher figure of up to 90%. The cases include "an extremely wide span of physical complaints including but not limited to headache, back pain, heart problems, upset stomach, stomach ulcer, sleep problems, tiredness, and accidents" (Salleh, 2008, p. 10).

2.1.2.2 Stress and Human Reproduction

In the past 30 years, most studies on the relationship between stress and infertility have found that stress may work as an important factor underlying infertility. According to some research (Barnea & Tai, 1991; Basu, S. C., 2014), stress will

impede pregnancy because it can affect the functioning of the hypothalamus. Stress affects a large number of biological systems, including the reproductive system.

Defined by McGrady (1984) several decades ago, “the term stress has been used to include a variety of responses elicited by noxious or potentially noxious stimuli” (McGrady, 1984, as cited in Mahdi et al., 2011, p. 1). Many of the stimuli come from the environment: some from individuals’ levels of sensitivity to the environment and others from their state of mind. Sometimes the stimuli result from individuals’ perceptions of the environment and their responses to their perceptions.

The existing studies and literature have suggested that “chronic or severe stress leads to anovulation and amenorrhea in women and to a decrease in sperm count, motility, and morphology in men (Barnea & Tal, 1991; McGrady, 1984, as cited in Maddah, 2013, p. 934). Other studies have maintained that the effects of stress on individuals is not easily observable because of other interrelated factors that may not seem obvious at first glance. Stress affects and changes not only reproductive systems but also other regulatory systems, such as the endocrine system, and stress is associated with syndromes leading to abnormal reproductive functions. The following discussion will focus on the influences of stress on different sex groups with respect to fertility.

➤ Stress and Female Infertility

Much evidence has been found that shows the negative influences of stress on female fertility. One study published in the journal of Marriage and Family (McQuillan, 2003) found that women who frequently worry about aspects of their

lives such as work or money are not as likely to conceive as women who do not. “Excessive emotional stress, alone or in combination with changes in eating and nutrition patterns and exercise, can cause chronic anovulation for females” (Maddah, 2013, p. 934). This disorder in reality represents a wide spectrum of reproductive disorders. Studies have often seen and detected chronic anovulation associated with hypothalamic (or psychogenic) amenorrhea, although they have not been able to establish a direct link between chronic anovulation and stress (Barnea & Tal, 1991). Nonetheless, “studies have found associations between elevated cortisol levels and amenorrhea in women who suffer from chronic stress, and abnormal responses to CRF (i.e., corticotropin-releasing hormone or factor) have also been established in these studies” (Berger et al., 1989; Biller et al., 1990, as cited in Maddah, 2013, p. 935).

It is generally recognized that infertile couples experience high levels of psychologic distress, a crucial contributing factor to infertility (Wright, Allard, Lecours, & Sabourin, 1989). Furthermore, women under stress are more likely to suffer from psychologic amenorrhea. These women tend to be “underweight, single, and have a history of using psychoactive drugs” (Maddah, 2013, p. 935).

Studies focusing on female patients with anovulation and amenorrhea have often found a close association between stress and eating disorders (Maddah, 2013). As Maddah explained,

[S]evere eating disorders (i.e., anorexia nervosa, bulimia) clearly involve several of the same systems that are affected by stress, such as CRF, LHRH

(luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone), opioid peptides, and aminergic systems, which are normally involved in the control of many functions, including reproduction, feeding, or eating behavior and autonomic functions. (p. 935)

Apart from eating disorders, intense exercise is also found to be a relevant factor in studies on the association between stress and infertility. In fact, the triad, (i.e., stress, diet, exercise) is found associated with infertility or fertility difficulties: Just like eating disorders, exercise triggers many key body systems, especially the opioid, aminergic, and CRF systems. Thus, for women athletes, stress from intense exercise can cause amenorrhea which will negatively influence their fertility. The detrimental effect of stress is manifest in various ways: It reduces the possibility of pregnancy, as discussed above, and it may also lead to early pregnancy failure because many of the brain hormones involved in stress responses and reproductive functions (e.g., CRF, LHRH, opioids) are also present in the placenta and can thus affect placental hormone secretion and function. Thus, more and more attention has been paid to the role of stress in early pregnancy failure.

To summarize, female reproduction is highly vulnerable to stress because of its reliance on a series of precisely coordinated endocrine interactions to reproduce effectively. Any disturbance to the sequence of these interactions means reproduction will not occur.

➤ Stress and Male Infertility

The mechanisms discussed above in relation to stress and female infertility--especially the neurohormones involved in mediating the effects--are also applicable to males. Findings from existing studies show that stress could decrease sperm count, motility, and morphology in men. Studies have also reported an association between some other disturbances, such as impotence, sham ejaculation, retrograde ejaculation, oligospermia, and psychological factors underlying male infertility (Palti, 1989).

For males who often participate in a variety of occupational activities with high levels of stress, including business, combat, or combat training, a decrease in their plasma testosterone levels has been found (Steeno & Pangkahila, 1984). Physical stress negatively affects male fertility since it leads to low testosterone levels due to a reduction in LH (luteinizing hormone) pulse frequency (Aono et al., 1972). Studies have not been able to determine whether these effects are mediated only centrally by CRF /opioid systems; it also remains to be seen if marginal production of ACTH (adrenocorticotropin hormone)/cortisol by the testicles affects semen quality (Maddah, 2013). For males with fertility difficulties, in addition to occupation-related stress, they face other types of stress. For example, they need to deal with emotional stress caused by the evaluation and treatment of infertility. This kind of emotional stress has also been found to be associated with oligospermia (Moghisi & Wallach, 1983), as it may contribute to the variations in semen quality observed in the course of evaluation.

As in the case of females, males are affected by diet or intense physical exercise in terms of fertility. Decreases in gonadotropin and testosterone levels as well as

gonadal atrophy have been reported in adult men as well as in adolescents who suffer from chronic malnutrition (Smith et al., 1975). Studies have also found a significant reduction in LH and testosterone pulse frequency in male rhesus monkeys after short-term food withdrawal, whose body weight may have only minimally changed (Cameron & Moshbisch, 1991). The opioid system also appears to be involved in the mediation of these effects. A similar pattern of changes observed in this kind of experiment appears to occur during exercise and physical activity.

In summary, for both females and males, the effect of the triad of stress, diet, and physical activity can exert similar individual and, more often, complementary effects on the reproductive system that lead to infertility or fertility difficulties.

2.1.3 Stressful Life of Chinese People

As the aforementioned report from Regus shows, Chinese people are currently the world's most stressed-out group. Results of surveys sent to 16,000 professionals in 80 countries and regions around the world since April 2012 revealed that of the mainland Chinese workers, 75% reported their stress as having increased during the past year, a figure much higher than the global average of 48%. In Shanghai and Beijing, the number even reached 67% and 80%, respectively. The pressure facing Chinese people mainly derives from three factors: stressful jobs, high living cost, and cultural beliefs about work and about psychotherapy.

2.1.3.1 Stressful Job

Chinese people are confronted with more stress from their jobs, compared to people in other countries. This can be ascribed to the speed at which China has been developing. The unprecedented development of the nation that the past several decades have seen has both benefited from the hard work on the Chinese workers' side and contributed to the stress facing these workers. To help maintain China's economic growth rate, Chinese workers have to face multiple times the stress their Western counterparts do. For example, Chinese workers have to work for a much longer time per day and deal with a much heavier work load. The Regus survey showed that 36.3 % of the Chinese respondents worked nine to 10 hours a day, longer than the legal working hours. However, more than 60% of those surveyed Chinese workers regarded long working hours as normal. As a developing country, China still needs much improvement in the systems of health care, education, and welfare, making things even worse for Chinese workers. For instance, it is difficult for Chinese workers suffering from stress to get emotional or medical support from their companies since the latter rarely provide psychological consulting service to their employees. The serious job stress often causes health issues among Chinese workers; work-related stress has even caused sudden deaths in China.

2.1.3.2 High Living Cost

In China, the living costs have been increasing in the past decades, especially in the urban areas. This expansion can be seen in the ever-rising growth rate of China's

Consumer Price Index (CPI). The increase in the living costs also brings stress to Chinese people. This could be a serious stressor for them, especially for those living in China's big cities. According to a survey published by ECA International in 2012, Beijing and Shanghai have become Asia's fifth and seventh most expensive places to live ("Beijing and Shanghai overtake Singapore in ECA International's Cost of Living ranking," 2012).

2.1.3.3 Cultural Beliefs about Work and Psychotherapy

In China, stress can also stem from people's beliefs about work and/or study and about how negative feelings can be managed. On the one hand, Chinese are generally inculcated with the idea that it is their responsibility to bring glory to their family. To that end, they have to study and work hard to be competitive, even when they are still kids. On the other hand, it is the Chinese belief that one should keep their feelings to themselves. Consequently, they are not used to discussing their feelings with others, and it is even less likely for them to seek psychotherapy when they feel depressed. In sum, stressful jobs, high living costs, and cultural beliefs about work and psychotherapy combine to contribute to the stressful life that Chinese people are living.

2.2 Restorative Effects of Nature on Human Wellness

As discussed earlier, a considerable number of Chinese people are living a stressful life and suffering from serious fertility difficulties due to the stress,

especially those who live in big cities. According to some fertility doctors, these Chinese people may consider going to some natural places and having a relaxing vacation, which may improve their wellness and possibility of pregnancy. Actually, it is not a very new idea that people engage in tourism activities, especially tourism involving natural elements that help maintain their wellness and deal with some of their health problems. For instance, doctors usually advise patients with depression or other mental problems to enjoy a vacation in a natural environment, believed to be beneficial to such patients. In addition, many people also believe that engaging in nature-related tourism activities will help to improve their physical wellness as well. In fact, all the beliefs about the positive effects of nature-related tourism on human wellness have not been unfounded and could find their basis in the restorative effects of nature on human wellness that have been testified to in previous research (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995; Frerichs, 2004). The details will be discussed in the following sections.

2.2.1 The Theoretical Foundation—Attention Restoration Theory

People who live in cities believe that interacting with nature helps to alleviate stress and fatigue and enhances their health. According to van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats (2007), results of a recent nationwide survey of the Netherlanders by Frerichs (2004) found that 95% think that interacting with nature helps to reduce stress. Additionally, the researchers noted that a survey by Grahn and Stigsdotter (2003) of Swedes in nine urban areas revealed that if they felt stressed and worried, most

respondents gave the first rank to taking a walk in the forest. To explain the presumed restorative qualities of nature, van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats maintained that attention restoration theory (or ART) (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995) would be a good starting point. The theory posits that when an individual focuses intensely over a long period of time, it becomes difficult for that individual to maintain focus, causing directed attention fatigue characterized by inability to concentrate, less tolerance, and more mistakes on work requiring focus. Van den Berg, Hartig, Staats referred to Kaplan's (1995) assertion that directed attention fatigue leads to increased stress because individuals cannot deal with their usual responsibilities. If individuals can remove themselves and rest away from an environment causing directed attention fatigue, the inhibitory mechanism that directed attention depends on can be restored.

Van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats (2007) explicated that ART proposes that because of its health-benefitting characteristics, interactions with nature offer better possibilities for psychological renewal than interactions with other environments. First, a natural environment provides an escape from everyday responsibilities demanding directed attention. Second, nature stimulates the senses, mesmerizes, and draws one in to look deeper into the environment, a process called soft fascination. Nature also creates a sense of an unlimited, seamless vastness to be further discovered. Finally, individuals tend to be congruent with the natural environments with which they interact in the sense that an individual is prepared to adapt to the environment and the environment provides what is needed by the individual.

Van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats (2007) referred to research based on ART that has examined the apparent restorative characteristic of nature (Bagot, 2004; Berto, 2005; Hartig, Korpela, Evans, & Gärting, 1997; Hartig, Mang, & Evans, 1991; Herzog, Maguire, & Nebel, 2003; Korpela & Hartig, 1996; Laumann, Gärting, & Stormark, 2001). To substantiate the restorative effects of nature on individuals, various studies have compared natural and urban environments and have found that, over-all, individuals consider natural environments to be more restorative than urban environments. Recently, for instance, participants in Berto's study ranked the restorative quality of slides of natural and urban environments. The highest ranked slides were those depicting natural environments such as lakes, rivers, the sea, and hills, and the lowest ranked were of urban environments such as city streets, industrial zones, and housing areas (van den Berg, Hartig, & Staats).

Van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats (2007) introduced another widely used theory investigating the restorative effects of nature--Ulrich's psycho-evolutionary stress reduction theory (1983, 1991). According to van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats, Ulrich (1983) posited that interacting with or just viewing natural environments activates physical and psychological reactions enabling stress reduction, such as lowered blood pressure, reduced muscle tension, and lowered pulse rate. Ulrich compared this process to one in which earlier humans through the danger-alert function of the limbic system perceived natural environments as safe. The safety of the environment, in turn, led to positive emotions.

Van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats (2007) posited that Ulrich's (1983, 1991) and Kaplan's (1995) theories differ primarily in that they theorize stress differently and they explain interactions between stress, attention fatigue, and recovery differently. Ulrich used the term 'autonomic physiological arousal' to describe attention fatigue caused by stress. Kaplan, on the other hand, construed attention fatigue and stress as different elements. In an attempt to reconcile the differences in the two theories, Hartig et al. (2003) surmised that the theories differed in their methods of measurements and timing. Bird, 2007 (as cited in van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats) concluded that the two theories differed primarily in that:

ART is a more voluntary method (in the right frontal cortex of the brain) which affects thought processes and so is measured by psychological parameters, whereas the psycho-physiological stress recovery theory is an involuntary reaction based much deeper in our brain (limbic system) which is measured physiologically. (p. 45)

Although these two theories are different, both have confirmed that natural environments would effectively reduce stress.

2.2.2 Nature's Restorative Effects and Human Mental Wellness

In addition to Kaplan's and Ulrich's studies, a growing amount of work has explored the links between the natural environment and mental wellness. In her 2007 report, Newton disclosed that these studies researched the links from various perspectives to discover how natural environments improve cognition, concentration

and attention, how they help one to feel emotionally better and reduce stress, how they help individuals at both ends of the life spectrum to maximize personal development, and how they help to reduce aggression.

Newton (2007) also reported that in 1984, Wilson introduced the biophilia hypothesis that describes an innate emotional connection between humans and nature in which nature provides more than basic needs. Nature, apparently, also creates in humans “the need for aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive and spiritual meaning, and satisfaction” (Bird, 2007; White & Heerwagen, 1998; as cited in Newton, 2007, p. 13). This theory argues that people have a natural instinct to desire contact with nature that is evolutionary and inherited. The theory proposes that human identity and personal fulfilment are dependent on their relationship to nature. Newton revealed that according to the theory, this relationship is not limited to humans taking from nature resources needed for basic living (objective well-being), but the relationship includes how nature affects “human’s emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, and spiritual development (subjective well-being)” (p. 13).

Burns (2006, as cited in Newton, 2007) proposed that nature provides many, pleasant stimuli; thus, nature works with humans to mutually alleviate depression. Nature is not harsh like built environments; it is organic and appeals to and meshes better with humans for whom the organic property of nature creates an environment in which it is easier to not feel depressed. “[Burns] concludes that the psychological or mental benefits gained from human-nature interactions can be found at the cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels” (Newton, 2007, p. 24). Newton further reported that

Burns (2006) referred to the work of McAndrew (1993) and Fredrickson (2000) to support his assertion of the inherent pleasing and soothing attributes of natural landscapes.

In practice, according to Parr (2005) and Smyth (2005) (as cited in Newton, 2007), health care institutions have customarily used natural environments such as gardens and walks in woods and parks to treat those with mental health issues as well as weaker individuals. In fact, according to Newton, the charity Mind (2007) has advocated for “eco-therapy as a clinically valid treatment for mental distress” (p. 26). Consequently, it could be inferred that going to natural environments or interacting with natural elements could positively influence the possibility of fertility because it will help reduce stress that is at the root of fertility difficulties.

2.2.3 Nature’s Restorative Effects and Human Physical Wellness

Apart from the benefits of contact with nature on human mental wellness, researchers have also investigated the link between the natural environment and people’s physical wellness. Newton (2007) again reported on two famous studies on this topic that were carried out in the Netherlands and one study carried out in Japan. In the first Dutch study (de Vries et al., 2003), health problems of 17,000 people were examined along with the participants’ perceptions of their mental and physical health problems over a two-week period. “The collected data was then mapped across the amount of green space in the patients’ neighborhoods using a database of environmental characteristics” (Newton, 2007, p. 17). Results showed that, “overall,

people living in areas with more green space experienced better general health. The relationship was particularly significant for older people, housewives, and lower socio-economic groups” (p. 17).

The second study (Maas et al., 2006) on the relationships between natural environments and people’s physical well-being was also implemented in the Netherlands. This study (also cited in Newton, 2007) involved 250,000 people and compared people's subjective rating of health and examined that in relation to how much green space existed in neighborhoods. Results indicated that people related their general health to the quantity of green space close to their neighborhoods, and older and younger members of lower socio-economic groups tended to perceive the relationship as more potent. The Japanese longitudinal study investigating over a five-year period the link between walkable green spaces and mortality rates among 3000 elderly Tokyo residents over 70-years-old (Takano et al., 2002, as cited in Newton) found that living in green spaces correlated positively with health and mortality rates. Researchers, however, neglected to ascertain if the participants actually walked in the green spaces.

Some scholars have investigated the relationship between nature and the physical wellness of a specific group of people, in particular, people in the workplace. For instance, in 1993, Kaplan recruited 615 office workers for his study to examine the impact of views of nature from the workplace. The result of his study showed that, among other factors, views of natural elements were linked to fewer health problems. Some other studies have also demonstrated that plants in working settings make

people calmer and more relaxed (Lewis, 1992; Ulrich & Parsons, 1998, as cited in Newton, 2007). Newton also reported that in a study of office workers in Oslo, Fjeld et al. (1998) found plants added to the work environment helped to lower the number of health problems. Fjeld & Bonnevie (2002), in two studies, found that adding daylight lamps and plants to the work environment caused workers to report fewer health issues (as cited in Newton). Taken together, these studies seem to suggest that in a work environment, a closer proximity to nature seems to benefit workers.

Newton (2007) reported on Ulrich's (1983) study, also the most cited research project that demonstrated nature's effects on physical well-being. His study examined the impact of a view of nature from a hospital window on recovery following gallbladder surgery. The researcher compared the patients with a view of nature to those with only a view of a wall and found that patients with a view of nature exhibited better results than those with only a view of a wall. Patients exposed to nature required a shorter hospital stay, needed fewer and less potent medications, and were perceived by nurses as being less negative. Newton recounted that in a similar study, Diette et al. (2003) examined how scenery including "the sounds of birdsong and a babbling brook [affected] patients preparing for a bronchoscopy" (as cited in Newton, p. 18). Patients who did not have the opportunity to see the scenery were not as able to control their pain as those who did. Newton also described a study by Moore (1981) who observed that prisoners with views of only prison walls visited the doctor more frequently than those with views of farms and woods.

To summarize, there have been many studies confirming a positive relationship between natural elements and human physical wellness from which we can infer that engaging in tourism activities involving natural elements might also be beneficial to people's physical wellness.

2.3 Chinese Babymoon Tourism and Babymoon Tourists

2.3.1 The Emerging Phenomenon of Chinese Babymoon Tourism

Accompanying the research findings in academic studies about the restorative effects of nature is a growing understanding among many ordinary people of the benefits of contact with nature. This may help to explain the emerging phenomenon that many young Chinese couples would choose to have a relaxing vacation in a nature-filled or nature-related environment during their preparation for pregnancy.

According to a news report (Jilin Guojian Maternity Hospital, 2015), a Chinese couple had been trying to get pregnant for a year, but they never succeeded. After another failure, they felt so depressed that they went to a beautiful destination and had a vacation without thinking about the pregnancy issue. Surprisingly, the wife found herself pregnant not very long after their vacation. This may also be attributed to the restorative effects of nature, which helped them deal with all the stress of getting pregnant and also depression due to the prior failure. Another news report revealed that many young Chinese couples have recognized the importance of preparing for pregnancy in a much healthier way. More specifically, the news report pointed out

that some young Chinese couples would go to a peaceful nature-filled environment with clean air and clear water to have a relaxing vacation with the hope of having a healthy baby. In Beijing, those couples usually select the Beidaihe River as their destination because the Beidaihe is not far from Beijing and also has a satisfying natural environment for them (“Traveling while preparing for pregnancy,” 2015).

Besides the aforementioned news reports, many fertility experts have also suggested that couples preparing for pregnancy get away from their stressful routine life and go to nature for a relaxing vacation. For example, Professor Ren, a fertility expert in Guangzhou Changtai Fertility Center, advised a couple suffering from fertility difficulties for more than a year to escape from the big city to get rid of all the stress and enjoy the beautiful natural views and romantic moments with their partner. After they returned from the vacation, they finally got pregnant (Lin, 2014).

To summarize, an increasing number of young Chinese couples during their preparation for pregnancy would consider taking a vacation in a nature-filled or nature-related environment with the hope of increasing the possibility and also the quality of pregnancy.

2.3.2 Defining the Babymoon

2.3.2.1 Extant Definitions and Terms

Before discussing the emerging phenomenon mentioned before, it is necessary to elaborate on some relevant terms. Previous studies have used terms similar to the topic of interest in this dissertation, i.e., babymoon tourism. These terms include

reproductive tourism, fertility tourism, procreative tourism, fertile tourism, medical tourism, and honeymoon tourism. However, a closer look reveals the fundamental differences between these terms and babymoon tourism as defined in this study.

“Reproductive tourism refers to those infertile couples or individuals from one country purchasing reproductive or medical services from suppliers of such services in other countries in order to conceive and have a child” (Bassan & Michaelsen, 2013, p. 2). Ikemoto (2009) mentioned that infertile couples seek assisted reproductive technology (ART) access for the purpose of becoming parents. ART gives the infertile couples hope to have children and become parents. Ikemoto listed various reasons why these couples leave home to use ART. It could be that these couples may not be allowed to use ART in their countries, or it might be much cheaper for such couples to use ART in a country other than their own. In some cases, couples travel to other countries for ART just to keep it secret; and in some other cases, couples seek to use the fruits of third parties’ bodies—eggs, sperm, or wombs. According to Ikemoto, the willingness to travel for ART and the practices that facilitate fertility travel are known as reproductive tourism. Other terms like fertility tourism, procreative tourism, or fertile tourism all refer to the same practices (Bassan & Michaelsen). To use ART, couples will go through various procedures such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF), egg and sperm donations, surrogacy, sex selection, and pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD).

Similar to reproductive tourism, medical tourism involves couples leaving their cities to receive medical intervention or treatment for the purpose of dealing with their

health problems, which may include infertility. In previous studies, “the terms ‘medical tourism’ . . . [have] been used to describe treatment or surgery planned in advance to take place outside a patient’s usual place of residence” (Bassan & Michaelsen, 2013, p. 2). This kind of tourism focuses on the medical treatment of the participants and may not involve the type of leisure activities that are common in other kinds of tourism (e.g., spa, sunbathing). Another term that bears surface similarity to the topic under investigation in this study (i.e., babymoon tourism) is honeymoon tourism, which usually refers to a just-married couple’s vacation away from family and friends. This may be the first opportunity just-wed couples have to be together by themselves, or this may be an opportunity to reflect on their wedding in a vacation setting (Lee, Huang, & Chen, 2010). This type of tourism provides an opportunity for a newlywed couple to have a private and romantic break with the purpose of establishing their love and focusing on each other; however, unlike babymoon tourism, the focus is not on getting pregnant.

2.3.2.2 The Western Definition of Babymoon

There is no clear definition of babymoon tourism in the Western world although the word babymoon has already appeared in some Western news or fertility reports. An overview of those news articles and reports shows that the term babymoon in the Western world usually means the pre-baby escape, a vacation taken by expectant couples. In some Western countries, such couples usually take a vacation during the second trimester or the beginning of the third and enjoy a last vacation before the

baby comes. The reason for choosing the second trimester or the beginning of the third is because it is safe for both the baby and the expectant mother to travel during those periods. Furthermore, they are also the last sliver of time when the couples can dedicate themselves only to each other.

2.3.2.3 The Definitions of Babymoon and Babymoon Tourism in the Current Study

There exist many terms that look similar to the topic under investigation in this study, including reproductive tourism, fertility tourism, procreative tourism, fertile tourism, medical tourism, and honeymoon tourism. In effect, all these differ fundamentally from babymoon tourism as defined in the current study: The former differ from the latter in terms of the tourist groups and the activities in which the tourists participate when they travel. For instance, in reproductive tourism, the target groups are couples who are infertile due to physical problems and who are traveling to use the assisted reproductive technology to have a baby; in medical tourism, the target groups are people who need medical treatment and surgeries to deal with their health problems; and in honeymoon tourism, the target groups are newlywed couples who would like to have a private and romantic break to establish their love. In contrast, babymoon tourism in this study targets young Chinese couples with the following characteristics: 1) they have been married for a while, 2) they may have fertility difficulties due to various stresses but are not physically infertile, 3) they are preparing to have a child but are not already pregnant, and 4) they have great desire for leisurely tourism activities in their preparation for pregnancy.

In this study, a babymoon refers to a vacation taken by young Chinese couples who are eager for babies but having difficulty conceiving due to various stressors. This vacation is expected to help the couples reduce the stressors and rekindle the romance with their partner through participating in leisurely tourism activities together; the final purpose is to increase the possibility and quality of conception. While babymoon in the west is defined as a vacation a couple takes during pregnancy, in this study, a babymoon occurs while the couples are preparing for pregnancy but not after they are already pregnant. Babymoon tourism is used to refer to the general phenomenon, i.e., a number of Chinese couples participating in such leisurely tourism activities for the aforementioned purposes after recognizing the negative influence of stress on fertility. Following such definitions, Chinese babymoon tourists or babymooners refer to the couples who are engaged in babymoon tourism in China.

2.3.3 Prospective Chinese Babymoon Tourists

2.3.3.1 Unique "Post-1980s" Generation

In this study, a reasonable speculation is that the Chinese couples who desire a babymoon are mostly from the “post-1980s generation” because this generation falls into the child-bearing age group: those born in the late 1980s are at the commonly believed ideal age for childbearing, and those born in the early 1980s are probably past this ideal childbearing age but still have quite a bit of hope in this respect. The market of the Chinese babymoon tourists is definitely worth research attention for the

reasons shown below: the uniqueness of the segment itself, the great potential and value of this market, the important role of this segment in Chinese society, and the benefits brought to couples in this segment by having a baby. Details are discussed in the following paragraphs.

According to Chen (2008), the term post-1980s generation refers to a unique generation of approximately 200 million born between 1980 and 1989. “They are also [labeled] as ‘China’s Me Generation,’ the ‘China’ Y Generation,’ and the ‘Ku Generation’” (p. 12). Famous Chinese writer Xiaobing Gong first used this term to describe the group of fledgling writers born from 1980 to 1989. The meaning of post-1980s generation was subsequently broadened to include many contexts to refer to the whole generational cohort born in the 1980s. Chen (2008) posited that the post-1980s generation is considered to be unique for the following reasons: 1) Unlike their parents who lived through turbulent political movements like the Cultural Revolution, the post-1980s generation grew “up in a relatively stable and affluent society characterized by economic growth, material prosperity, and cultural diversity. They are seen as a demographic cohort that ‘serves as a bridge between the closed, xenophobic China of the Mao years and the globalized economic powerhouse that it’s becoming’” (Elegant, 2007, as cited. in Chen, 2008, p. 12). Chen also asserted that they are argued to be “a hybrid generation, mixing tradition and modernity, conciliating Eastern thoughts and Western cultures, with distinctive characteristics differentiating them from previous generations” (p. 12). 2) China began its one-child policy in 1978; thus most of the post-1980s generation are only children, not only

cosseted by their parents, but also pampered by their grandparents. Consequently, a post-1980s couple will face more pressure about getting pregnant because they are the only hope for their parents for having grandchildren and continuing the family line.

It could also be inferred that this market is of great potential and value.

Post-1980s Chinese are more concerned about their quality of life, and they tend to spend more money on making themselves happy. They believe “the liked one is the best” (Computer World, 2006, p. 4). Compared with their parents, their average annual income is higher. They also like trying different new products and use more modern technologies. Chen (2008) informed that “87% of post-1980s Chinese have access to computers, 88% have used computers, and every three in four have used the Internet” (p. 13). The huge population (about 300 million), considerable discretionary money, and distinctive consumption pattern, make the post-1980s a rising star of today’s market.

Another important point is that the post-1980s generation has already become the major force in the political, economic, and social development in Chinese society. Their life quality will play a key role in influencing the development of this country. Having a babymoon will help them improve their quality of life to a large extent; for example, it may bring great benefits for the post-1980s couples who are struggling in their marriage. The youngest in the post-1980s generation have turned 27 at the time of this paper’s writing (2016), which means that this generation has come to the stage of getting married and having their own families. For this unique segment, their marriage also has some noteworthy features: As the single child of a Chinese family, a

typical post-1980s child grew up under his or her parents' meticulous care and protection. They generally have very close relationships with their parents, both emotional and economical. As a result, parents get rather involved in the marriage of their post-1980s children. It is also noted that there is indeed a high divorce rate for this group, which may be attributed to several factors: First, this generation did not have much opportunity to practice or experience love relationships during their adolescence or even in their early grown-up years. The special situation facing the post-1980s generation in China, as a famous post-1980s writer Hanhan once mentioned, is that most parents don't allow them to fall in love during school and even in universities. But soon after their graduation from universities, all the parents hope that a talented and rich guy or sweet girl who owns a house will appear and is willing to marry their daughter or son. (Chen & Ma, 2015)

Another reason for the high divorce rate for the post-1980s generation may be the special social, political, and economic contexts in which they grew up. Different from their parents who could better accept compromises in marriage, the post-1980s, who grew up in a society undergoing transition in many respects, are greatly influenced by the egoist values and attitudes towards romance and marriage coming from other parts of the world. The co-existence of two sets of values of two different individuals and the conflicts between two differing ideals and reality put them in an awkward position. Hence, there is a higher divorce rate for this group than for their parents' generation. For a post-1980s couple in their marriage, having a baby may

provide them with a good opportunity to understand each other and work together for their family.

Therefore, it is necessary to investigate and understand the phenomenon of the Chinese babymoon and also the babymoon tourists if both researchers and practitioners aim to get a better understanding of this particular and valuable segment and provide some insights that will help this segment facing the above mentioned predicaments.

2.3.3.2 The Subjective Well-being (SWB) of Chinese People

To investigate the prospective Chinese babymoon tourists, an examination of the subjective well-being (SWB) of the Chinese is necessary because it is one of the key factors that influences the demands and behaviors of tourists (McCabe, Joldersma, & Li, 2010). According to Evers et al. (2012), subjective well-being includes every kind of assessment, good and bad, made by individuals regarding every aspect of their own life. “[Subjective well-being] includes reflective cognitive evaluations, such as life and work satisfaction, interest and engagement, and affective reactions to life events, such as joy and sadness” (Diener, 2006, p. 153, as cited in Evers et al., 2012, p. 1). “Subjective well-being is used as an umbrella term to describe people’s lives, the events happening to them, their bodies and minds, and the circumstances in which they live” (Diener, as cited in OECD, 2013, p. 29). In many studies, researchers use the word happiness to refer to subjective well-being because of its important historical and popular roots. Happiness is described as undergoing fewer undesirable emotions

and more that are desirable (Bradburn, 1969) and perceiving that one is making progress in regard to essential life objectives (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Global affective self-appraisals and affect ratings, which are inherently subjective, are involved in the judgement of happiness (Myers & Diener, 1995).

It is believed that almost all modern societies are making an effort to improve the individual well-being of their members. It is an important goal of governments, of many service organizations (such as universities, churches, hospitals), and of the individuals concerned. Governments are concerned about the well-being of their citizens, and more and more companies have started to pay attention to the welfare of their employees. Some more enlightened corporations have even started to show concern for the welfare of “outside” people who are affected by their operations. Moreover, an increasing number of individuals have shown a better awareness of the importance of their own well-being and have also started to concern themselves about the well-being of certain other individuals, for example, their families and friends.

Subjective well-being serves as an index for the well-being of individuals and of societies, along with some other economic and social indicators. Positive subjective well-being among the majority of individuals of a society is considered to be necessary for maintaining social harmony and stability. As Diener (2006) suggested, assessing subjective well-being can be helpful to determine if particular policies are needed and for assessing the results of policy implementations. Subjective well-being and ill-being can also be applied to assess policies in various areas, including

healthcare, public health, social services, parks and recreation, work life, transportation, families, and the environment.

According to Diener and Suh (2000), to experience good feelings is an important element of subjective well-being. However, the definition of feeling good may vary greatly in different cultural settings. In Western cultures, such as some European cultures or North American cultures, self-enhancement, which involves personal success, promotion, and pursuit of happiness, is a significant element in the mode of being (Diener & Suh). In contrast, in East Asian cultures, it is self-criticism, a relative focus on negative aspects, and one's own sufferings that constitute the mode of being. That is to say, for East Asian people, good feelings or a sense of well-being may be more closely associated with a self-critical stance and, thus, an ensuing interpersonal engagement of the self with others in a social relationship (Diener & Suh).

Several studies investigating the subjective well-being of some specific Chinese groups have been conducted. Those studies have looked at different age groups (e.g., young and old adults) and region-based groups (e.g., rural and urban residents) and have revealed some interesting characteristics about Chinese subjective well-being. One of the studies focused on the subjective well-being of elderly Chinese (Li, Chen, & Wu, 2008). This study reported that the average rating scores of life satisfaction and affective experience in the oldest age group (80- to 120- year-olds) were well above the neutral level. The study also showed that the oldest of the old with relatively high levels of fulfillment and positive emotions tended to have good educations, lived in

cities, were fiscally independent because of their own retirement income or that of their spouse, resided with a spouse, and lived in a retirement home.

In order to examine and evaluate the subjective well-being of young Chinese, Zheng, Sang, and Wang (2004) investigated the subjective well-being of Chinese students in Australia. The study revealed that host and co-national identification predicted enhanced subjective well-being and that acculturation styles were related to the subjective well-being of this group. To be more specific, the study found that Chinese students who were integrated into the local communities had significant stronger subjective well-being than their peers who were separated from or marginalized by the local communities or cultures.

2.3.3.3 Tourism and Tourism Practices in China

The development of tourism and tourism practices in China has greatly encouraged Chinese people to engage in tourism activities and gain more travel experience. In China, the great role of tourism in promoting human well-being has been recognized by experts and the common public alike. To further encourage the Chinese to participate in tourism and recreational activities, in 1999, in a revision of the Regulation on Public Holidays for National Annual Festivals and Memorial Days, the Chinese government stipulated that people enjoy a seven-day holiday in the first week of October--the Golden Week (Liu, 2012). The modified law shifted weekend days from adjoining weekends to the week of public festivals thereby establishing three week-long breaks each year. In 2007, the government revised the 1999

regulation again, extending the total length of official national public holidays to 11 days by taking away two days from the May Day Holiday and adding three 1-day holidays that celebrate traditional Chinese festivals. Therefore, from 2008 onwards, China's official national public holidays include New Year (1 day), Spring Festival (3 days), Tomb Sweeping Festival (1 day), Labor Day (3 days), Dragon Boat Festival (1 day), National Day (3 days), and Mid-Autumn Festival (1 day). The one-day holiday can become a three-day vacation by working on the weekends and taken instead as days that are adjacent to the holiday. The three-day holiday can be extended to a seven-day vacation in the same way. These holidays give the Chinese more chances to engage in tourism activities throughout the year.

Both the current regulation and policies concerning public holidays and the increased household income have encouraged the Chinese to travel during holidays. However, some problems have also emerged from the rapid development of tourism in China. As a country with the largest population in the world, the high demand for material and human resources as well as the heavy traffic generated by these tourism activities cannot always be properly handled with the limited resources. It is not surprising that during the national holidays the tourism industry would be confronted with a myriad of complaints about overcrowding, poor service, a scarcity of hotel rooms, and damage to scenic spots. The extreme seasonality of the Golden Week has caused an unmanageable strain on existing tourism resources and infrastructure, deviating from the original policy objective of promoting domestic tourism consumption (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2006). It is for this reason that the

World Travel and Tourism Council suggested China quickly add to the existing three week-long periods two more weeks of paid vacation that may be used any time during the year based on the needs and wants of business owners and workers. This policy will lessen the burden on the tourism and other related industries during these periods. The proposed policy could help spread holiday-taking throughout the year, reducing the seasonality of national holidays and creating a more stable and sustainable year-long industry (World Travel and Tourism Council). The policy could also help employees effectuate the legal right to rest. However, in present-day China, taking paid vacations is not only discouraged by most employers but also has little regulatory protection. For these reasons, the policy proposed by the World Travel and Tourism Council is not a viable alternative to help alleviate the above mentioned problems with respect to tourism development in China.

2.3.4 Motivations of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

2.3.4.1 Human Needs and Human Needs of Reproduction

According to Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, and Kasser (2001), “[p]sychologists have long speculated about the fundamental psychological needs of humans and the ways in which they fulfill those needs, beginning with McDougall (1908) and Freud (1920) and continuing on through Murray (1938) and Maslow (1954) to the present” (p. 325).

Needs concepts fascinate because they may help to reveal that innate characteristics account for the broad diversity of human behaviors (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, as cited in Sheldon et al., 2001). To clarify, needs concepts enable us to

delve into the motives intrinsic to individuals' behaviors, e.g., motivation for people to engage in tourism activities.

Maslow's Theory of Human Needs, widely used to investigate and explain human needs, proposed that the basic set of human needs is innate. Maslow (1954) classified these needs as "conative, cognitive, [and] aesthetic" (p. 51), and he grouped them into five levels of a pyramid. The five levels can be understood as the following five needs: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization. Maslow called the first four layers of the pyramid "deficiency needs" and claimed that if those needs were met, the individual would not feel anything, but if those needs were not met, the individual would feel anxious and uncomfortable. The needs beyond the deficiency needs in the pyramid are "growth [needs] . . . [or] being values" (p. 73), which when realized motivate people to pursue higher goals and seek further personal development. Specifically, the base of the pyramid is formed by the physiological needs, which are the very fundamental and basic needs for survival, including the biological requirements for food, water, air, and sleep. According to Maslow, the physiological needs are dominant, consistently afforded primacy over needs such as safety, love, or esteem. Once the physiological needs are met, an individual can concentrate on those of a higher level. Included in the second level that consists of the need for safety and security are the needs for structure, order, security, and predictability. Maslow saw humans' attempts for safety as similar to an infant seeking security. In daily life, people are always pursuing the needs of safety. For example, people will choose to

live in a safe environment or drive a better quality car to keep themselves safe. When they travel, they pay much attention to the safety of their trip. These are all perfect examples that show how we all seek security and safety in all possible areas.

Following physiological and safety needs, the third level in Maslow's (1954) pyramid of needs is the need for love and belonging, a need compelling an individual to crave human affection. To be more specific, he or she will develop a yearning to connect with a group, friends, close family members, and to initiate an intimate relationship. The fourth level consists of esteem needs that demand acknowledgment from others contributing to feelings of self-respect, self-acceptance, prestige, and self-esteem that, in turn, lead to feelings of self-sufficiency, capability, and self-assurance. Humans crave strength--the feeling of mastery and competency which can fulfill their esteem needs. Unsatisfied esteem needs lead to discontent and assessments of inadequacy.

At the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the need for self-actualization. After all lower needs are satisfied, people will start to search for what they can do or can be. That means the self-actualization needs are choices or possibilities for people instead of necessities. People will eventually reach this state once other needs are served and satisfied. However, as Maslow stated, individual differences will be manifested to a greater degree at this stage.

According to Tepanon (2006), Pearce (1983) suggested that Maslow's model could be used to explain tourist motivation. Pearce, however, believed that the model's description and sensitivity should be fine-tuned. Furthermore, to serve the

task of accounting for tourist motivation, Pearce favored a more objective or outside perspective. Pearce primarily espoused two aspects of Maslow's motivational theory: First, it reveals the hierarchy of human needs. Second, "the concept of self-actualization, as defined by Maslow, contains an inherent notion of individual choice and self-determination" (Pearce, 1983, as cited in Tepanon, 2006, p. 20).

Human needs of reproduction may serve as a starting point to understand babymoon tourists' motivations because these needs lead to a major purpose of engaging in babymoon tourism: to increase the possibility and also quality of pregnancy. Hence, it is important to look into the human needs of reproduction. According to Maslow's Theory of Human Needs, people will try to meet five levels of needs in their lives. Reproduction is an approach to help people meet those needs. First, it is human nature to reproduce to keep and expand the human race. Also, sexual needs are one of the basic human needs leading to reproduction.

We are generally predisposed to seek sexual relations. . . . It is possible to find many people who want sex but who do not want to have children, but there is no significant group of heterosexuals who want children but do not wish to have sex. (Potts, 1997, as cited in Basten, 2009, p. 6)

In support, Basten (2009) noted that Augustine (known as Saint Augustine, an early church theologian) apparently considered sex as the original sin; the only moral reason for engaging in sex was to conceive children. Nevertheless, even Augustine acknowledged that "he had never met a married couple who had sex purely for procreation" (Basten, 2009, p. 6).

In addition, reproduction has social significance. As Schoen and his colleagues remarked, works such as Bledsoe (1980) and Handwerker (1986) “emphasize the ability of children to create access to critical material resources through ties of kinship and other personal relationships made possible by children” (as cited in Basten, 2009, pp. 11-12). For this reason, they claim, “children thus constitute a form of investment capital: the larger their number, the greater the potential return”(Schoen, Kim et al., 1997, p. 336). These scholars argued strongly against overlooking how the kinship and other personal relationships created by children continuously play an important role in “providing adults access to strategic social resources” (Schoen, Kim et al., 1997, p. 336). Following their reasoning, one could claim that families with children will have more resources and feel safer than those without children.

According to Basten, long-established traditions practiced by some cultures, such as the Kpelle of Liberia, include the practice of using children to form relationships with other families. Sometimes sons are given to other families as wards, and young girls are used either to tempt penniless young men into years of bride service or to marry influential men. Kvamme (2000) “provocatively suggested that people choose to have children out of cowardice and for egoistic reasons – ‘adults use children to get on with their lives, to grow up, and to accomplish a full circle of life experiences’”(as cited in Basten, 2009, p. 13). Contrary to the traditional perception of the parents as givers of safety and comfort, Kvamme argued that parents are at the receiving end as it is children who offer them “the only stable and lasting relationship possible in an otherwise uncertain and all-demanding world” (as cited in Basten, p. 13). In the

process of having and raising children, people will also satisfy their needs of love and belonging. Moreover, having a happy family with children could help people gain recognition in the mainstream cultures, especially in the mainstream Chinese culture that attaches great importance to children. Furthermore, raising a child can give parents a sense of self accomplishment and thus satisfy the need for self-actualization.

2.3.4.2 Motivations and Tourist Motivations

As mentioned before, needs concepts could help to understand the inherent motives behind individuals' sets of behavior. The following paragraphs review literature relevant to the terms of motivation and tourist motivations. According to Iso-Ahola (1980), motivation is an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates behavior. In fact, cause (motives) and effect (behaviors) have frequently been perceived as the bases for motivation, especially within the social sciences. According to Crompton and McKay (1997), it is the starting point in the decision making process and considered to be one of the critical variables as it is the impelling and compelling force behind all behavior--although it is not the only variable which explains tourist behavior (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Crompton, 1979). It has been asserted that the focus, drive, and strength of purpose-oriented behavior is impelled by motivation (see, e.g., the seminal paper by Iso-Ahola, 1982; also see McCabe, 2000; Passer & Smith, 2008), giving rise to the notion that biological, psychological, and social elements that trigger, help focus, and stabilize mild to intense behavior might be subsumed under the broad category of motivation. In the field of tourism, motivation has been a

predominant theme to understand what drives people to travel (Todd, 1999). As Dann (1977) posited, motivation is at the root of the question of why tourists travel or what makes tourists travel. It is generally agreed among psychologists that “a motive is an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates a person’s behavior” (Iso-Ahola, 1982, p. 230). According to Mill and Morrison (1985), tourists are motivated to travel to satisfy their needs and wants. When an individual starts to have needs, the process begins. And then the wants occur when the individual is aware of his or her own needs or possibly before the individual becomes aware of the needs. This awareness, whether conscious or sub-conscious, motivates the individual to act, and the action taken will be motivated by the desire to fulfill the individual’s needs or wants that in the case of travel are assumed to be vacations or trips. To put it another way, according to van Vuuren and Slabbert (2011), when needs or wants surface, tourists will become motivated; the specific needs and wants, in turn, lead to specific choices in terms of travel decisions and, ultimately, will lead to degrees of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In all, the internal psychological factors that are needs and wants will cause disequilibrium or tension within the individual, and then actions such as taking a vacation or participating in recreational activities will be taken to restore homeostasis by fulfilling the required needs (Crompton, 1979; Crompton & McKay, 1997).

However, it should be noted that according to Crompton and McKay (1997), usually more than one need motivates individuals who travel for pleasure, that is, tourists are motivated for a variety of reasons. As Crompton and McKay argued, the

multiplicity of tourists' motives could be understood at two levels. At the individual level, a tourist may have multiple needs to satisfy through tourism activities. At the aggregate level, different tourists from the same package tour may also seek to satisfy different demands from the travel experience, which implies that tourist products are multi-faceted in nature, capable of meeting different needs. Pearce and Lee (2005) identified "novelty, escape/relax, relationship (strengthen), autonomy, nature, self-development (host-site involvement), stimulation, self-development (personal development), relationship (security), self-actualization, isolation, nostalgia, romance, and recognition" (as cited in Teichmann and Zins, 2009, p. 2) as factors of general tourist motivation. "Mak et al. (2009) found five motivation factors, friendship and kinship, health and beauty, self-reward and indulgence, relaxation and relief, and escape, among Hong Kong spa-goers" (as cited in Konu & Laukkanen, 2009, p. 3). Additionally, travel motivations significantly affect the psychology of tourist behavior (George, 2004; March & Woodside, 2005, as cited in van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011). To more thoroughly comprehend travel behavior, numerous studies have examined travel motivations (Crompton, 1977; Huang & Xiao, 2000; Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004; Law, Cheung, & Lo, 2004; Correia, Oom do Valle, & Moco, 2007; Saayman, Slabbert, & van der Merwe, 2009, as cited in van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011). Their studies focus on the concept of push and pull factors--one of the most widely accepted approaches in investigating tourist motivations. The push and pull theory will be explained in detail in the following section.

2.3.4.3 Push and Pull Theory

Push and pull theory is the most widely accepted approach to examining tourist motivations in the literature. It has the most flexibility and explanatory power necessary for studies in different contexts and has proved to be effective in explaining tourist motivations across studies (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Pyo, Mihalik, & Uysal, 1989; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). According to Uysal, Li, and Sirakaya-Tu`rk (2008), the basic idea of this theory is that “people travel because they are ‘pushed’ by internal and ‘pulled’ by external forces” (p. 414). In other words, push factors push individuals from home, and pull factors pull individuals toward a destination (Konu & Laukkanen, 2009). Most of the push factors that are origin-related refer to intangible or intrinsic desires of the individual travelers (e.g., escape and nostalgia; Dann, 1977). On the other hand, according to Mohammad & Som (2010), pull factors draw travelers through the perceived allure of a destination. Pull factors have always been conceptualized as relating to the features, attractions, or attributes of the destination itself (Kim, Lee, & Klenosky, 2003). “They include tangible resources and travelers’ perceptions and expectations such as novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image of the destination” (Mohammad & Som, p. 41).

Ideas about what drives people to travel that touch on the aforementioned factors in tourism research have long been proposed and discussed. Nevertheless, Dann (1977) was the first to propose a systematic framework for studying such factors. He proposed two basic tourism push motivators, namely, anomie and ego-enhancement.

Dann posited that tourists travel to escape the “anomie” society, meaning that with an absence of norms and lack of purpose (as cited in Tepanon, 2006). Anomie is defined in Dann as an individual affected by his/her social situation. To be more specific, a human’s feelings will be affected by the changes and disorders around them and, hence, can be considered as a reason motivating people to travel. The push factors, according to Dann, are factors predisposing them to participate in tourism activities, whereas the pull factors are the features related to the attractiveness of the destinations or resorts. It should be noted that one pull factor is the desire for ego-enhancement triggered by the feeling of superiority while traveling. In other words, individuals feel better about themselves when getting out of their usual environment and visiting other places where their background of achievement or failure is unknown. Crompton (1979) built on Dann’s framework to propose seven socio-psychological, or push motives: “escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction” (p. 408) and two cultural, or pull motives: “novelty and education” (p. 408). According to Crompton, these socio-psychological and cultural factors would influence the selection of a destination, and the destination can also have some degree of influence on vacation behavior in meeting an aroused need. According to Yoon and Uysal (2005), “push motivations such as excitement, relaxation, achievements, family time, escape, safety, and curiosity have a direct positive effect on behavioral intentions” (as cited in Konu & Laukkanen, 2009, p. 3).

Since Crompton's initial empirical effort, many studies have attempted to better understand push and pull motivational factors in different settings. Hallab (1999) wrote his dissertation on the relationship between healthy living and travel behavior. Uysal and Hagan (1993), as reported by Hallab, described push and pull factors as internal and external forces exerting dynamic stimuli on people's travel decisions. For some other scholars, "push factors are interpreted as the 'socio-psychological constructs of tourists and their environments that help explain the desire to travel'" (McGhee, Loker-Murphy, & Uysal, 1996, as cited in Hallab, p. 48). Hallab reported that previous research has found that push factors decipher by what means individuals are "pushed to making a travel decision;" [similarly, pull factors explain the means by which individuals] are pulled or attracted by the destination area" (Uysal & Hagan, as cited in Hallab, p. 48). Again citing Uysal and Hagan (1993), Hallab (1999) explained that push factors are likely to be inherent in individuals, "such as the desire to escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure, and social interaction" (p. 48). Another perspective was espoused by Lundberg (1990), who suggested that push factors are "intangible desires" that the individual brings to the light (as cited in Hallab, p. 48). Cohen and Taylor (1992) considered push factors from the perspective of holidays or vacations for "the nurturance and cultivation of human identity" (as cited in Hallab, p. 48). They posited that taking a vacation might be a way to take a break from the stress of everyday life. Additionally, vacations frequently consist of activities one is particularly interested in and that one would like to do. Other studies have reported on the value of vacations. For example, Hill (1965) described their

value “as ‘internal goods’ being carried with visitors coming back home after a trip” (as cited in Hallab, p. 48) Elaborating further, Hill (1965) was interpreted as suggesting that “the internal goods are the intrinsic rewards felt after satisfying certain psychological needs” (as cited in Hallab, p. 48).

The push factors received more attention in studies on this topic conducted in the early stages. Dann (1977) summarized three reasons as to why more emphasis should be placed on push factors:

First, while a specific resort may hold a number of attractions for the potential tourist, his actual decision to visit such a destination is consequent on his prior need for travel. An examination of push factors is thus logically and often temporally antecedent to that of pull factors. Second, and by corollary the question of what makes tourists travel can only relate to the push factors as it is devoid of destination or value content. Finally by examining what makes tourists travel, one is looking at a more elementary need than a specific reason for choice of resort. (p.186)

Even though Dann’s (1977) explanation sounded reasonable, more and more attention turned to both push and pull factors as well as their interactive process. In the 1990s, researchers began to explore the destination attributes and motivations that simultaneously compel people to take a vacation. They attempted to find a relationship between push and pull factors and their interplay in order to provide a better understanding of the marketing implications. Hallab (1999) reported that pull factors had been identified by Smith (1983) with “tangible components, such as

beaches, recreation facilities, and cultural attractions as well as travelers' perceptions and expectations that may be composed of novelty, benefit expectation, and marketed image of destinations" (p. 49). Thus, serving and assisting the driving push factors, pull factors provide constituent elements in a tourism system.

Writing of pull factors, Ekonomou, Neofitou, and Matsiori (2014) referred to three important tourist-attractive components of destinations posited by Kosuta, Witt, and Mountinho (1989):

[(1)] static factors including climate, distance to travel facilities, historic/cultural features, and natural and cultural landscapes; [(2)] dynamic factors including accommodation and catering services, personal attention, entertainment/sports, political atmosphere, and trends in tourism; and [(3)] current decision factors including marketing strategies and prices. (p. 4)

The destination capitalizes on its pull factors as the drawing power as perceived by the traveler (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). In other words, such factors are considered attractive only when certain weights and values are attached to them by the potential traveler. In order for this to happen, such pull factors need to cater to the potential travelers' needs that motivate them to travel, i.e., the push factors. Put in a different way, a destination's characteristics may "respond to, stimulate, and reinforce the inherent push factors" (McGehee, Loker-Murphy, & Uysal, 1996). It is generally agreed that push motives are used to account for the desire to take a vacation, while pull motives are used to explain the destination choice. Put another way, push and pull motives are distinct from each other in that they lead to diverse choices at discrete

times. Furthermore, their foci are unique in that push motives result from the impetus to go and pull motives result from the choice of destination. Marketers, researchers, and promoters of destinations strive to understand the implications of the relationship and interaction between push and pull factors.

2.3.4.4 Babymoon Tourist Motivations in the Chinese Context

To investigate the Chinese babymoon tourist motivations, it is necessary to look at the special Chinese context that exerts a major impact on the babymoon motivations of young Chinese couples. In the mainstream Chinese society and/or culture, much importance is attached to having children in a marriage, especially in the early years of the marriage. Most Chinese females will consider getting pregnant and having their own children after they get married. The strong desire for having children may be understood as the prerequisite for those young Chinese couples taking a babymoon. To understand this strong desire, the special Chinese context has to be considered and will be examined from four different perspectives: cultural, economic, social, and emotional.

2.3.4.4.1 Cultural Perspective

In China, family has long been a key component within the society, and many aspects of Chinese life can be tied to the family and its children (Upton, 2013). The five basic human relationships (the relationships between sovereign and subordinate, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger, and between friends)

espoused by Confucius were directly centered on the family (Hwang, 1999). The relationship between father and son was considered as one of the most basic human relationships in Confucianism; thus, it could be easily inferred that children serve as an essential component for a typical Chinese family. The Chinese have also considered having children in their marriage as a way to show filial piety to their own parents (Deutsch, 2006). In the traditional Chinese culture, filial piety has been rigidly observed. Confucius once stated that there was nothing more important than to continue the family line if a person truly valued and practiced filial piety. To bear children was also deemed a duty for women in ancient China, and a man could demand a divorce from his wife if she committed one of the so-called “seven faults,” one of which was the failure to bear children. This failure could lead to divorce because women were sought in marriage for the purpose of giving men posterity (Park & Cho, 1995).

2.3.4.4.2 Economic Perspective

As a nation with a long history of an agricultural economy, China in ancient times developed on the basis of family-based agricultural activities and business. If a family had more children than others, it would be much easier for them to cultivate and acquire more living materials and resources. China's economy depended traditionally on wet rice agriculture (Perkins, 2013), which was a labor-intensive method of cultivation with uneven demands for labor input. To satisfy labor demands, Chinese farmers would need to have more children and expand their family size so

that they could use their families as their labor force. Thus, traditional agricultural technology and population growth became closely related.

In modern China, the advantage of having more children still holds true. For example, during the land reform in 1947, the government distributed land to each household based on the number of people in the household (Shillinglaw, 1974). A multitude of family-based companies that constitute an important part of the modern Chinese economy also depend on their next generation to continue and expand their businesses.

2.3.4.4.3 Social Perspective

The social importance of having children in a family can be summarized by an old Chinese saying, “rearing children for help in old age.” In fact, many people in China still believe that if they have and raise children, their children will take good care of them when they get old (Lee & Xiao, 1998). This kind of idea could be ascribed to the fact that China is currently still in a transitional period and has not established a good social welfare system for the elderly, especially in the rural areas. Most rural residents have to depend on their children for support when they get old and lose the ability to work. Under such circumstances, it is essential that they have children after getting married.

One social factor that has fueled the desire for children in China is the one-child policy which has been in place since the 1970s. This policy was implemented in an attempt to curb population growth when resources were limited. The one-child policy

has caused various unexpected social problems including the situation of an unusual dilemma called the "4-2-1" problem--four grandparents and two parents doting on only one child. The post-1980s generation is the first generation born after the introduction of the one-child policy. Thus for them, the pressure to have children after getting married is even greater because their parents are eager to have grandchildren. The gender-ratio imbalance is another social problem brought to China by the one-child policy: "China's 2010 census found that 118 boys were born for every 100 girls—a gap that stayed nearly steady from 2000, when the census found 117 boys per 100 girls" (Hvistendahl, 2015, p. 1). Also, the negative impact of the one-child policy on China's demographics is quite tangible (Peng, 2011): China's annual average population growth rate decreased from 1.1% over the period of 1991-2000 to 0.57% from 2001-2010, and its total fertility rate dropped from 5.9 in 1970 to 1.5 in 2010, far below the replacement level of 2.3. The proportion of the population 0- 14-years-old has steadily declined since the 1980s (33.6% in 1982, 22.9% in 2000, and 16.6% in 2010), while the population 65-years-old and above increased from 7.0% in 2000 to 8.9% in 2010 and is expected to reach 20% by 2035.

Hoping to solve the problems resulting from the one-child policy, China just updated its family planning policy in October 2015. According to the new policy, all Chinese couples are allowed to have two children, no matter whether the couples themselves are the only child in their family or not. This new policy is believed to be good news for the couples who want a second child but are currently barred from having one. The new policy may also work as a factor to positively encourage those

couples to have a relaxing and romantic vacation during their preparation for the pregnancy of their second child.

2.3.4.4.4 Emotional Perspective

According to a report from *Regus*, one of the world largest corporations that provides serviced office accommodations in business centers, the Chinese are the most stressed people in the world (China Daily, 2012). Studies published in *The Lancet*, the world's leading general medical journal, and specialty journals in oncology, neurology, and infectious diseases have also shown that one in 10 Chinese suffer from mental diseases (Xiang, 2012). These studies support that it is very common for the Chinese to feel depressed, lonely, and stressed.

Under these circumstances, having and raising children might be helpful for the Chinese people's emotional wellness because children will bring them feelings of hope, love, and belonging. Many Chinese parents put great expectations on their children and hope their children will fulfill the dreams that the parents failed to realize when they were young. In addition, it is generally agreed that the Chinese culture is more collective and less individualistic in nature than some Western cultures (Triandis, 1989). That means the Chinese care what other people think and how they are evaluated by others (Wang, 2013), and, consequently, they will make great effort to educate their children in order to help the children become successful, which would in turn satisfy their own emotional needs of being respected and admired by other people.

2.3.4.5 Travel Constraints

As previously discussed, people participate in tourism to satisfy their desire or needs. However, some people do not travel even if they have such needs or desires. A number of researchers have noticed the impact of constraints in the process of making travel decisions. They argue that motivation is only one of the many variables that explains tourists' preferences as to destinations. Other variables such as travelers' perceived inhibitors and situational constraints in their decision making process should also be considered when destination marketers determine marketing strategies (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Oh et. al, 1995; Pyo et. Al., 1989).

In tourism research, travel constraints have been recognized implicitly. When individuals choose whether or not to travel, Chick and Dong (2004) suggested that a "lack of money, time, poor health, and family support or interest [are] the primary constraints" (p. 338). Blazey (1987) found that, in a senior travel program, there were significant demographic differences between senior travelers and non-travelers as well as differing constraints for these two groups. Another study in which Tian, Crompton, and Witt (1996) investigated the constraints that prevented people from visiting museum attractions found six constraining factors including cost, time, difficulty of access, repetition, product failings, and a lack of interest.

Most research on tourist decisions to date is still somewhat limited in how it deals with space-time constraints (Dellaert, Ettema, & Lindh, 1998). According to Ryan and Page (2000), the concept was first introduced by Hägerstrand in 1970. In his study, Hägerstrand distinguished three types of constraints:

(1) Authority constraints imposed by law (e.g., opening hours of shops) or institutions (e.g., work or school hours); (2) Coupling constraints stemming from household members, friends, and colleagues; and (3) Capacity constraints caused by the availability of travel options . . . and money resources. (as cited in Ryan & Page, p. 12)

2.3.5 Behaviors of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

As mentioned earlier, motivations influence the travel behaviors of tourists for they have a direct impact on the decisions tourists make (George, 2004). Both tourist motivations and behaviors are important topics in tourism research literature (Huang & Xiao, 2000; Lam & Hsu, 2006) because the investigation of a particular type of tourism and a particular type of tourist group should be based on a good understanding of both tourist motivations and tourist behaviors that constitute and underlie the former. The previous sections have reviewed studies on motivations and their roles in tourism. In the following passage, research on tourist behaviors will be discussed. It is also hoped that by investigating and understanding tourist behaviors, strategies and policies can be developed and implemented to increase the demand for tourism (March & Woodside, 2005). McColl, Kiel, Lusch, and Lusch (1994) defined consumer behavior as “the actions a person takes towards purchasing and using products and services, including the decision-making process that precedes and determines those actions” (p. 116). As tourists are the consumers in the tourism industry, their decisions and actions affect the industry significantly. Therefore, a

successful manager in the tourism industry should be capable of recognizing and meeting tourist demands (Anon, 1985). The following sections discuss some of the key components of tourist behaviors.

2.3.5.1 Destination Choice

Destination choice is regarded as the starting point in an individual's decision-making process with respect to a trip. Several definitions of destination have been offered: Buhalis (2000) cited Leiper (1995) to define destinations as “places towards which people travel and where they choose to stay for a while in order to experience certain features or characteristics—a perceived attraction of some sort” (p. 97). Buhalis also noted that Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd, and Wanhill (1998) defined “destinations as a focus of facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourists” (as cited on p. 98). Pike (2004) defined destination as “places that attract visitors for a temporary stay, and as such can range from continents to countries to states and provinces to cities to villages to purpose built resort areas” (p. 11).

It is difficult to find consistency in regard to the definition of the term destination across studies in tourism literature because the extant studies have defined destination using different scales and attributes. For example, in Muller's (1991) study on the vacation planning of U.S. citizens who traveled to Toronto, the city of Toronto was regarded as the destination. In contrast, in Shih (1986), the focus was on the state of Pennsylvania and how this state as a travel destination was perceived by tourists. In

some other cases, individual attractions may also be regarded as tourism destinations. For example, when Kim et al. (2003) conducted their research on the influence of push and pull factors, they chose to carry out the survey in the national parks in Korea, with the implicit assumption that these parks were the travel destinations. The lack of agreement on the definition of destination was discussed by Williams (2004); he concluded that “concepts, models, and techniques that are applicable in the study of one destination category might not be applicable in others” (p.142). Hence, some scholars have argued that a clear destination hierarchy based on size and function needs to be established so that future research can be carried out in a more consistent theoretical framework that allows valid comparison across studies (Pearce & Lee, 2005).

In spite of the aforementioned problem with the definition of destination, research on this topic has unanimously recognized the importance of studying destination attributes that play a key part in influencing tourists’ destination choice. Nicolau and Mas (2004) investigated 17 data sets in an attempt to find the important destination attributes in relation to destination choice and found the following attributes as important: entry prices, accessibility, parking areas and shops, infrastructure, hotel size and services, time of journey, destination reputation, programmed activities, population of species, and navigation restrictions. Nolan and Keller (2006) tried to determine whether there was any difference in preferred destination attributes between different visitor groups to Arkansas City. In this study, 85 respondents identified 183 destination attributes that were grouped into three

categories as natural resources, cultural resources, and commercial resources.

Drawing on previous research, Buhalis (2000) proposed that there were some core components for the destination attributes. He categorized these components into a 6A framework including:

Attractions (natural, hand-made, artificial buildings, special events),
 Accessibility (entire transportation system, terminals, and vehicles), Amenities
 (accommodation, catering, retailing, and other tourist services), Available
 packages (pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals), Activities
 (all the activities in which tourists could participate while at the destination), and
 Ancillary services (banking, telecommunications, posts, and hospitals). (p. 2)

2.3.5.2 Information Acquisition

A second important aspect of tourist behaviors is the acquisition of information pertaining to their trip. Pan and Turner (2010) reported that Shannon (1948) conceptualized information as “something reducing uncertainty” (as cited on p. 3). By exchanging information, recipients acquire knowledge from the sender. Social psychologists examine information by studying an individual’s consciousness. According to Kubey and Csikszentmihalyi (1990), information is “anything that produces changes in consciousness of the human being—a perception, a sensation, an emotion, a memory, a thought” (as cited in Pan & Turner, p. 3).

In the tourists' decision making process, information plays a very important role. According to Lee (2004), information serves different purposes throughout various components of vacations:

- (1) It may be used to sensitize people favorably to the idea of having a vacation by engendering particular expectations and creating 'fantasies'.
- (2) It may persuade a house-hold or a reluctant partner to take a particular vacation.
- (3) Back-ground information on geographical, historical, or cultural aspects may assist choices and heighten appreciation of the vacation destination.
- (4) Some information may be used to rationalize, justify, or legitimize the vacation decision. (p. 30)

According to Pan and Turner (2006), "in consumer behavior literature, studies on an information search are based on information processing theory (Bettman, 1979)" (p.

- 4). Furthermore, because an information search is a critical component of the decision making process, research on information searches provides vital knowledge to marketing and advertising specialists. Pan and Turner reported that consumer behavior researchers consider the information search as a precondition leading to a decision. The decision maker needs to know the attributes of each option in order to evaluate them against each other. According to Pan and Turner, when necessary information is not accessible, tourists will search for information through the process of "an internal information search--information retrieval from long-term memory [or through] an external information search--information searching through outside information sources" (p. 4). Furthermore, according to Pan and Turner, tourists look

for information for several reasons: to make a better choices, to accumulate information for making future choices, or simply because they enjoy the process of searching for information.

Information sources can be generally classified into marketer-dominated and non-marketer-dominated. As information technology develops, businesses and organizations in the tourism industry have learned to interact with consumers by various means. “Besides traditional call centers, mass media, tourist brochures, and travel consultants, they have built web sites, email-lists, newsgroups, and online community in order to market their products and build relationship with their customers” (Pan and Turner, 2006, p. 2). Additionally, aside from tourism industry professionals, travelers obtain travel information from family, friends, and their own experiences.

2.3.5.3 Preference of Tourism Activities

Preferences have been regarded as one of the most critical elements in explaining tourist behaviors at a destination, and tourism professionals have endeavored to learn more about tourists’ activities. Existing studies have approached this problem by segmenting the market by activity preference. The activity-based segmentation categorizes tourists based on activities or visiting patterns. For instance, some tourists want to explore their surroundings or study historic sites, and some prefer less culture-based activities, for example, sports or beach-going. When activity is used to categorize tourists, it is assumed that the international market is diverse and that

various kinds of attractions will interest various kinds of visitors (Hsieh, O' Leary, & Morrison, 1992; Morrison, 1994). Activity preference segmentation is frequently combined with variables of motivation, benefit, behavior, socioeconomics, and demographics to study group characteristics (Sung, Morrison, & O'Leary, 2001).

Ingen and Eijck (2010) classified leisure activities into productive versus consumptive types based on the criterion of sociability.

[While] productive activities are characterized by an active dedication of the participant and working (together) towards a certain goal.... Consumptive activities are a passive form of spending time, characterized by the 'utilization' of certain goods (consumption in its narrow meaning), but also of experiences. (p. 198)

Lehto (2012) and her colleagues researched family vacation activities and found seven factors of family vacation activities including city interests, active nature pursuits, shopping, dining and entertainment, family social events, outdoor skill-based sports, and farm-based activity. Among these seven factors, city interests, shopping and dining/entertainment may be more aligned with the consumptive tendency while active nature pursuits, family social events, outdoor skilled-based sports, and farm-based activities may be considered as more productive.

2.3.5.4 Travel Mode

The choice of travel mode is a crucial component of a traveler's decision regarding trip-making. At an aggregate level, tourists' choices of their travel mode

have a direct bearing on the type of tourism services and products that tourism enterprises and organizations design and provide for tourists. According to Bhat (1998), studies on choice of travel mode have predominantly examined work-related travel. However, Bhat reported that travel not related to work, about 75% of urban-area travel, has not received much attention. Furthermore, with more people moving to suburbs and being willing to commute further to work, more urban-area travel is projected.

The current study will investigate how Chinese babymoon tourists choose the travel mode for their trip. To be specific, the author of this study is interested in finding out how they would like to travel for their babymoon. The goal is find answers to the following questions: Do Chinese babymooners like to go for a holiday just on their own? Or do such tourists prefer to participate in a package tour?

2.4 Conceptual Framework and Model

Based on the previously discussed literature, a conceptual framework was developed as the basis of the investigation in this study. This framework consisted of three components: fertility difficulty, stress, and babymoon tourism. According to the literature, many Chinese suffer from fertility difficulties, possibly caused by their stressful lives. This situation has triggered demands for participation in relaxing and romantic babymoon activities, especially in a natural setting because of the believed restorative effects of nature on human wellness. This conceptual framework reveals

the inner connections among fertility difficulty, stress, and babymoon tourism in nature.

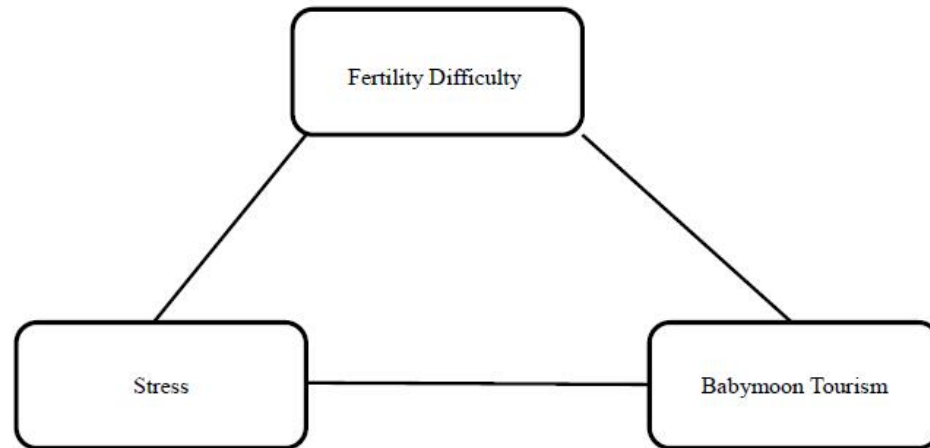


Figure 2.4.1 The Conceptual Framework

Starting from the conceptual framework, a conceptual model was developed based on the existing studies with the purpose to help better understand and investigate the group of Chinese babymooners and the phenomenon of babymoon tourism. The conceptual model is composed of three basic components--motivations, backgrounds, and travel behaviors of young Chinese couples engaged in babymoons.

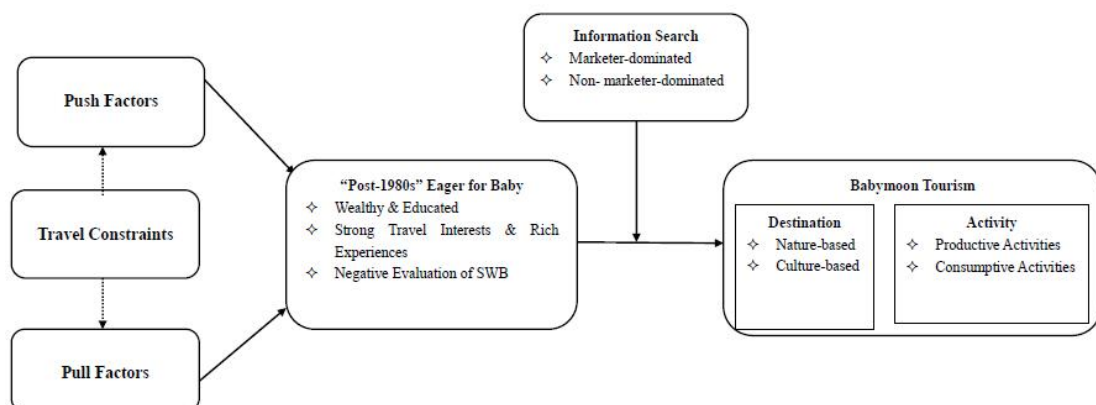


Figure 2.4.2 The Conceptual Model

Based on the conceptual model, some propositions were made to specify the relationships among the components and also guide the data analysis:

1. Propositions about Chinese babymooners' (tourists) backgrounds:
 - 1a. Chinese babymooners are well-educated and rich urban elites in the post-1980s generation.
 - 1b. Chinese babymooners are experienced travel enthusiasts.
 - 1c. Chinese babymooners mainly hold negative evaluations of their subjective well-being (SWB).
2. Propositions about Chinese babymooners' (tourists) travel motivations:
 - 2a. Chinese babymooners are pushed to have a babymoon by internal factors.
 - 2b. Chinese babymooners are also pulled to have a babymoon by external factors.
 - 2c. Chinese babymooners' motivations for taking a babymoon are subject to some constraints.
3. Propositions about Chinese babymooners' (tourists) travel behaviors:
 - 3a. Chinese babymooners will mainly use marketer-dominated sources and non-marketer-dominated sources for their babymoon information search.
 - 3b. Chinese babymooners would mainly prefer nature-oriented and culture-based destinations.
 - 3c. Chinese babymooners would mainly participate in productive activities and consumptive activities in their babymoon.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on a new phenomenon that has not been explored in the literature; thus, qualitative methodologies are considered more appropriate than quantitative. The following justifications for using a qualitative methodology are based on Creswell's research (1998). First, prior to the current study, the topic of babymoon tourism within the Chinese context was still relatively new and had not yet been fully investigated. Therefore, the initial step for the study was to describe and understand the phenomenon. The exploratory nature of the study lent itself to qualitative methodologies. Second, qualitative methodologies allow more flexibility in research design and have the potential of eliciting more details from research participants and consequently providing a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Quantitative methodology is frequently used in the social and behavioral sciences; however, it was not used in the current study for the following reasons: Quantitative methods normally look at respondents' answers objectively and quantify and analyze them as numbers or models. This means that the richness of detail will be lost in the process of data analysis. Besides, in a quantitative study, a participant is wholly detached from a researcher; this means that it is inappropriate for the researcher and the participant to interact with each other. As a result, the researcher is unable to interactively explore the problem or the phenomenon in the

process of data collection by asking the participant follow-up questions. The author of this study intended to provide a comprehensive and in-depth description and analysis of babymoon tourism; thus, it was necessary to obtain as much detail about the phenomenon as possible. This ruled out the use of quantitative methodologies for the purpose of this study.

In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with the qualified participants. The laddering technique is used to provide guidelines for collecting primary data (Veludo-de-Oliveira et al., 2006). Laddering interviews are often semi structured, one-to-one interviews where probing questions are used at first to analyze why a particular factor is important to the respondent (Klenosky, 2002; Klenosky et al., 1993, 1998). The response to the first question helps to formulate the next question. This approach can help participants define and express their personal values and attitudes in their own words (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2009). The interview questions were closely related to the research questions. Within the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 2, three major research questions were formulated for this study:

A. From what backgrounds do Chinese babymoon tourists come?

The first research question is further divided into three questions:

- A1. What are the socio-demographic backgrounds of these people?
 - A2. How is the travel experience of these people?
 - A3. How do these people evaluate their own subjective well-being?
- B. Why are Chinese babymoon tourists engaged in babymoons?

C. What are the behavioral characteristics of Chinese babymoon tourists when they are engaged in babymoons?

The third research question has four sub-questions:

C1. Where do Chinese babymoon tourists get the travel information they need to choose a babymoon destination?

C2. What kind of travel destinations will Chinese babymoon tourists consider as the babymoon destination?

C3. What babymoon activities would Chinese babymoon tourists like to participate in?

C4. What are the ideal babymoon products for Chinese babymoon tourists?

3.1 An Overview of the Steps Involved in the Study

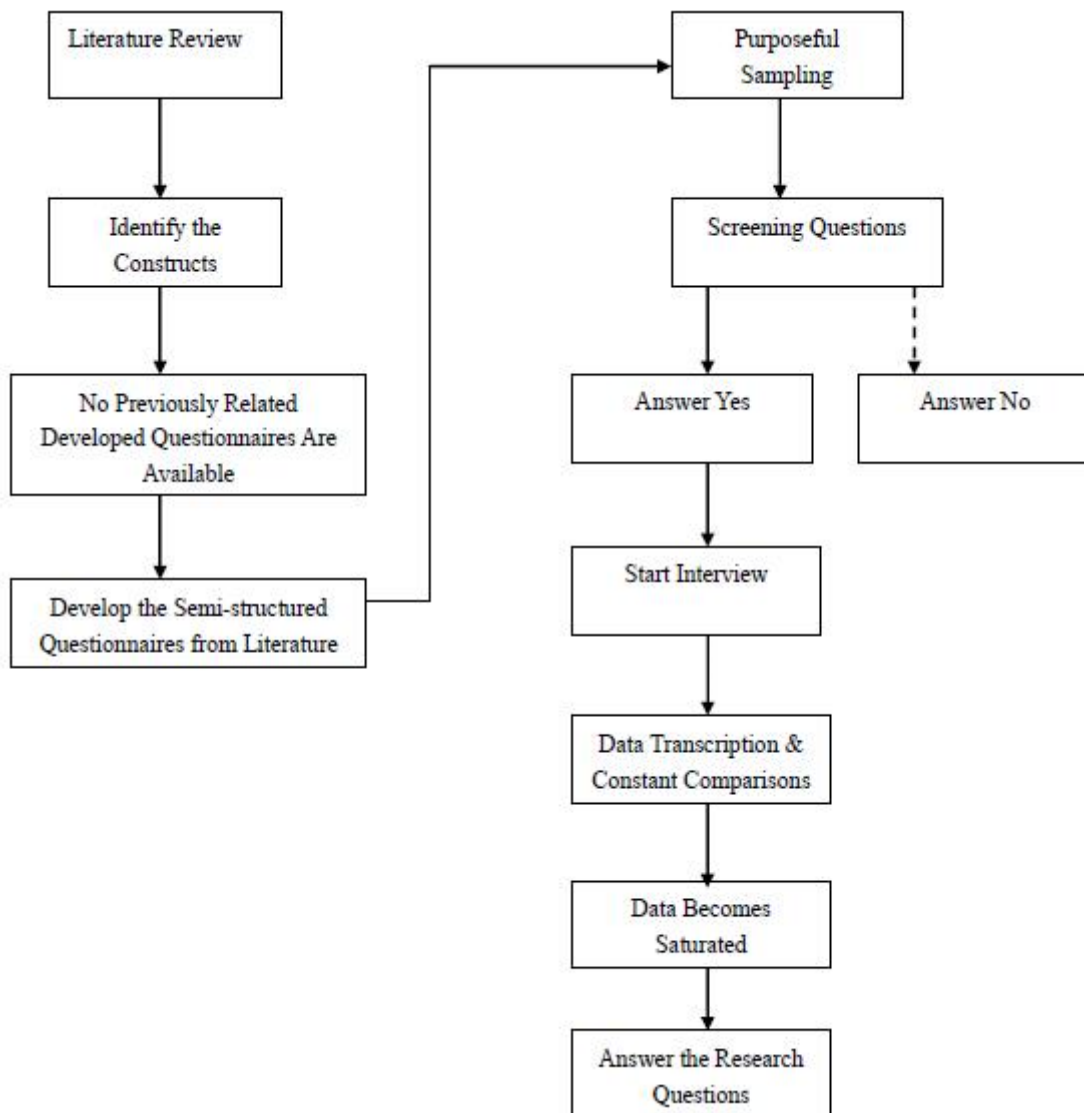


Figure 3.1 Steps Involved in the Study

This study began by reviewing previous literature related to tourist motivation and, more specifically, to babymoon tourism and babymoon tourists motivations. Due to the exploratory nature of the topic of interest, qualitative methodologies were developed for the study: Semi-structured interviews were adopted for the collection of data, and grounded theory was used for the analysis of data. Both on-site interviews

and phone interviews were conducted. Adhering to grounded theory methodology, in order to discern the themes and categories contributing to tourist motivation, constant comparisons were made. The interviews persisted until the information was saturated, that is, “the interviews stopped when they did not produce any new information or they reached the redundancy stage” (Tepanon, 2006, p. 66). When the information had been saturated, the data was analyzed very carefully to search for patterns and/or themes that could be used to develop a theoretical framework for investigating the phenomenon.

As for the recruitment of participants, first, two criteria were used to identify qualifying Chinese babymoon tourists. The actual search for qualifying participants first started in the author’s own circles of friends and acquaintances and was later extended beyond those circles by means of snowballing. Participants who consented to take part in the study were then interviewed. All the above procedures were conducted after an approval from the Purdue Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained, in compliance with university regulations.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Identifying and Selecting Participants

Purposeful sampling was used to select “information rich” (Patton, 2002) participants who might provide profound perspectives on the Chinese babymoon tourism phenomenon and its rationale. This kind of sampling was achieved in this study by using two criteria to identify the babymooners. Those preparing for

pregnancy and also with travel plans during such preparations were identified as prospective babymoon tourists and were considered qualifying participants for this study. The researcher first looked for qualifying participants from among her friends and acquaintances. During this period, the researcher used multiple ways to collect information and find the qualifying participants, for example, posting relevant information on social network sites (e.g., Renren, Weibo) to inform potential participants and calling friends to see whether they could satisfy those two criteria.

In addition, the snowball sampling approach was utilized to help the researcher recruit more qualifying participants. According to Mahesh and Neena (2011),

Snowball sampling . . . is a non-probability sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. Thus the sample group appears to grow like a rolling snowball. As the sample builds up, enough data are gathered to be useful for research. (p. 25)

Snowball sampling can often help researchers recruit participants that might otherwise not be reached. For example, in this study, one qualifying couple (Couple A) may have known other couples (Couple B and Couple C) who were also suitable for this research, and the latter could also bring new qualifying couples to the attention of the researcher. One additional benefit of using this kind of recruitment technique was that the participants would be more willing to share personal information with the researcher who was introduced to them by friends or acquaintances. To be more specific, when the researcher finished an interview with qualifying participants, the researcher would ask if they knew other people who might qualify. If they happened

to know such people, the researcher would then ask for their help to connect with those people. Thus, the new participants were mostly introduced by their own friends and acquaintances, which made it easier for them to get involved in the study.

One of the major goals of this research project was to understand Chinese babymoon tourists without making generalizations at this point; thus, the number of participants in this study was smaller than that in a purely quantitative study. The primary reason for fewer participants is that data collection consisted of the interviews that were only continued until the information became saturated.

3.2.2 Approaching the Participants

The researcher would first make a self-introduction and then inform the participants of the nature of this research project. After that, the respondents were asked two screening questions: 1) “Are you and your husband/wife preparing for pregnancy?” and 2) “Do you and your husband/wife have travel plans during your preparation for pregnancy?”

Only couples who answered both questions affirmatively were included in the study. Those who answered “no” to either question were excluded. If the qualifying couples agreed to participate in the study, they would then be interviewed. A semi-structured personal interview was utilized in this study, including face-to-face interviews and phone interviews. The interviewing process would continue until no more new information was produced or the data became saturated. More details on the interview process is provided below in sections 3.2.3 and 3.3.

Considering that in the Chinese context taking a babymoon (as defined in this study) is a sensitive issue because it is related to participants' privacy (i.e., fertility difficulty) and that the participants might be reluctant to discuss this with an outsider, the researcher encouraged participation by assuring the participants that their opinions regarding the issue were valued and would not be judged. The researcher also made it clear to the participants that this study was purely for educational purposes, and the information obtained would not be used for any other purposes. The researcher emphasized that their participation would be absolutely confidential.

The interviews were conducted in China. Since the researcher is a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese, there was no language barrier in the communication between the researcher and the participants.

3.2.3 The Interview Questions

The interviewer presented the questions orally to the qualifying participants. The responses were either written down by the researcher or recorded with an audio recorder, upon the participants' permission. Most of the questions utilized in the interviews were adapted from previous studies on tourist motivation and also from some news reports on babymoon tourism. Some new questions were developed by the researcher in order to answer the specific research questions raised in this study, and some demographic questions were also included in order to better investigate the backgrounds of the participants. The interview questionnaire is presented below:

Interview Questionnaire

Hello – my name is Ruoyang Zhang. I'm a graduate student from Purdue and I'm doing this research project for my PhD dissertation. I want to know why some Chinese couples want to take leisurely tourism activities during their preparation for pregnancy. I am not affiliated with any commercial organizations or authorities. I'm doing this solely for educational purposes.

I know this may be a very sensitive issue. However, if you choose to participate, your participation is much appreciated and will be absolutely confidential. Your participation will be reported anonymously. And you will make a great contribution to this research project; I would really appreciate your help.

Part 1 Demographic Questions

1. In what year were you born? (Specify birth-year)
2. What is your education level?
3. Do you have any religious belief?
4. What is your average annual household income?
5. What is your occupation?
6. Will this child be your first child or not?
7. Are you and your spouse the only child in your families?
8. Which city are you living in now?

Part 2 Open-ended Questions

1. Could you tell me a bit about your childhood and family? (What kind of household were you brought up in? Where are you from--the cities or the rural area? Do you think your family/your husband (or wife)'s family are very open or conservative? Do you and your husband (or wife)'s family still keep a lot of traditions? Are you the only child in your family? How about your husband (wife)? Do you or your family members have any religious belief?)
2. Do you get pressure from your family members about getting pregnant? If yes, from whom?
3. Do you love to participate in tourism activities? How often do you do that?
4. How do you like your current life? Are you happy? Why?
5. Why do you have travel plans during your preparation for pregnancy? Please list all the factors that apply.
6. What factors will you consider when you choose the destination if you plan to travel during your preparation for pregnancy? Please list all the factors that apply.
7. What activities would you like to participate in for this kind of travel (i.e., travel during the preparation for pregnancy)?
8. Where do you get the information you need to choose a destination or make travel plans for this type of travel?

9. Do you think there exist in the market any tourism products for this type of travel which could satisfy your needs? If yes, please describe the products; if not, please describe what you think would be the ideal tourism products for this type of travel.
10. How long do you plan to spend on this type of travel and how much do you plan to spend on it?
11. What factors may prevent you from participating in this type of travel?

3.3 Data Collection

In this study, 31 qualifying participants were interviewed to help the researcher understand Chinese babymoon tourism. The interviews were conducted during December 2014 and January 2015. Information from the interviews was collected and analyzed to see whether it could answer the three major research questions: 1) What are the profiles of the Chinese babymoon tourists? 2) Why are Chinese babymoon tourists engaged in babymoons? 3) What are the characteristics of the Chinese babymoon tourists' behavior when they are engaged in babymoons?

The interviews were conducted with each qualifying participant either over the phone or at a mutually agreed location, usually a public place (e.g., a coffee shop, a park). In the interviews, the researcher went over the questions listed above at a moderate rate with each qualifying participant and recorded their responses to each question. The researcher asked each participant if the responses could be recorded by means of an audio recorder. It was crucial to the transcription process to be able to record not only the interviewees words but also any silences indicating pauses or hesitations that might help the researcher to better understand the participants' meaning. Participants were assured that the recordings would be shared only with the

researcher's chairperson and committee members and would be destroyed subsequent to the study's completion. Unfortunately, almost two thirds of the participants refused to be recorded. They said it would make them feel more nervous and influence their performance in the interview. Therefore, for those participants who did not consent to be recorded, the researcher took field notes of their responses. At the conclusion of each interview, the researcher expressed gratitude to the participant(s). The average time of interview for each participant was around 45-60 min.

3.4 Data Analysis

In this dissertation, the three initial research questions were used to structure the data analysis. The data analysis mostly followed processes described in grounded theory as presented by Glaser and Strauss in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). They asserted that grounded theory “is derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of data” (as cited in Tepanon, 2006, p. 77). “The focus of analysis is not merely on collecting or ordering ‘a mass of data’, but on organizing many ideas which have emerged from [sic] analysis of data” (Strauss, 1987, p. 22-23, as cited in Tepanon, 2006, p. 77). Glaser and Strauss (1967) offered the rationale for the theory that was grounded, i.e., generated and developed through interplay with data collected during research topics. As Glaser and Strauss argued, the purpose of using the grounded theory approach is not to find the perfect product but to develop a new theory. To put it differently, grounded theory helps scholars generate theories that are grounded in data instead of testing some existing theories. This kind of

approach is particularly suitable to investigate the “how” questions as well as the “why” questions. Questions can focus on actions, re-actions, and interactions at the micro-level and can, further, reveal minute changes. Grounded theory is especially useful for revealing root causes when viewed from the perspective of the individuals having agency.

Since Glaser and Strauss (1967) first advanced grounded theory, it has expanded in scope and in trajectory; thus, one perspective does not adequately illuminate all approaches to the theory as it is currently espoused. Therefore, in this section, only the key features of grounded theory are highlighted while recognizing that considerable variation exists in practice. After the research questions are formulated, the important components of grounded theory may include theoretical sampling, data collection, data analysis, and theoretical saturation. In this particular study, three research questions concerning the backgrounds of Chinese babymoon tourists, their motivations for taking such tourism activities, and their behaviors during the tourism event were investigated utilizing grounded theory. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory furthers theory development. Consequently, sampling is not pre-determined; instead it is modified as the theory develops. For instance, in this current study, to explore the phenomenon of Chinese babymoos, couples who were preparing for pregnancy and also planning to travel during this period were identified as the qualifying participants. When collecting data, grounded theory can involve multiple data collection methods including in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. According to Rose, Spinks, and Canhoto (2015), multiple data

collection sources enable triangulation. Furthermore, the sources provide “rich data [that] get beneath the surface of social and subjective life” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 13, as cited in Rose, Spinks, & Canhoto, 2015, p. 3). In this dissertation, in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data that could be used to answer the study’s three main research questions. In the interviews, the participants were asked eight demographic questions and 11 open-ended questions. Furthermore, the rationale for maintaining open-ended, in-depth interviews was to facilitate participants’ responses and perspectives that might trigger further areas of interest to be explored.

In the stage of data analysis, grounded theory adopts a coding approach. According to Rose, Spinks, and Canhoto (2015), “activities, happenings, or events in the raw data are treated as indicators of some phenomenon which is then given a conceptual label, called a code” (p. 3). Further indicators that exemplify the same phenomenon are sought and correspondingly coded. Sbaraini, Carter, Evans, and Blinkhorn (2011) specified the essentiality of coding to the unfolding of a grounded theory. Quoting Charmaz (2006) they wrote, “coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain these data. Through coding, you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means” (p. 46, as cited in Sbaraini, Carter, Evans, & Blinkhorn, 2011, p. 5). Tawil (2011) divulged that coding comprises first analysis and then categorization of the data. No “formulas or cookbook recipes” (Yin, 1994, p.102, as cited in Tawil, 2011, p. 161) are provided for the researcher to follow. Instead, the researcher needs to read and re-read the transcripts and field notes in order to begin the process of structuring

and organizing the data into meaningful units. The researcher then constantly compares the information gained from the transcribed data with the discovered themes and categories. This process usually occurs simultaneously with the data collection process. Later, revealed properties are added into the themes and categories that have been established. In this study, the researcher first did an open coding in order to produce concepts based on the data that could account for the phenomenon. For example, for the question about the travel motivation of the babymooners, the researcher looked for any motivation-related information in the participants' responses and then summarized and conceptualized such information. Once the concepts were formed, they were categorized into themes and categories respectively, their relationships were scrutinized, and the themes and categories were deemed to follow the conventions of grounded theory. Then the researcher proposed a theory incorporating all the themes and categories along with their relationships. The stages of data collection and data analysis continued until no new dimensions to the discovered categories were identified. This is the point of theoretical saturation. Strauss (1987) mentioned that each research project may have its own sequences to achieve the final results because each study is unique; that is, what data and how much is accessible to the researcher and how the data is explained will be different for every study. The current study conformed to principles and processes proposed in grounded theory in terms of data collection and categories (or core categories and properties), data sorting, and analysis with an aim to deriving an in-depth explanation for Chinese babymoon tourism.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Based on the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 2, there were three main research problems to be examined: 1) From what backgrounds do the Chinese babymoon tourists come? 2) Why are the Chinese babymoon tourists engaged in babymoons? 3) What are the behavioral characteristics of the Chinese babymoon tourists when they are engaged in babymoons? The three research questions could be summarized the following way, “Who are the Chinese babymoon tourists?” “Why do they take a babymoon?” and “How do they behave in a babymoon?” Under the umbrella of these three main research problems, three major propositions with several sub propositions were used to guide the data analysis.

4.1 Backgrounds of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

In order to answer the first research question, both basic demographic questions and open-ended questions were utilized to help the researcher identify the characteristics of the group of interest. The demographic information includes their age, gender, education level, annual household income, occupation, religious belief, city of residence, whether they are the only child or not in their family, and whether they were planning to conceive their first child. Two more open-ended questions were also adopted to investigate the participants’ travel interests and experiences and their

evaluation of their subjective well-being. Table 4.1 summarizes the basic demographic information of the participants. The details are discussed in the following sub sections.

Table 4.1 Summarization of Participants' Demographic Information

| ID | Age | Gender | Education | Annual Household Income (rmb/year) | Occupation | Religious Belief | City of Residence |
|----|-----|--------|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 30 | F | Master | 15W | Civil Servant | Buddhism | Qingdao |
| 2 | 29 | M | Bachelor | 25W | Bank Employee | NA | Qingdao |
| 3 | 29 | M | Master | 40W | Private Business Owner | NA | Beijing |
| 4 | 27 | F | Junior College | 20W | Elementary Teacher | NA | Qingdao |
| 5 | 29 | M | Master | 20W | Civil Servant | NA | Weifang |
| 6 | 28 | F | Bachelor | 15W | Private Business Owner | NA | Qingdao |
| 7 | 31 | F | Bachelor | 18W | Company Employee | NA | Dalian |
| 8 | 29 | F | Bachelor | 25W | Civil Servant | NA | Zibo |
| 9 | 28 | F | Bachelor | 27W | Company Employee | NA | Qingdao |
| 10 | 29 | M | Master | 16W | Company Employee | NA | Lanzhou |
| 11 | 27 | F | Bachelor | 15W | Company Employee | NA | Xi'an |
| 12 | 32 | F | Master | 25W | University Faculty | NA | Jinan |
| 13 | 26 | F | Bachelor | 25W | University Staff | NA | Jinan |
| 14 | 27 | F | Master | 30W | Company Employee | Christian | Guangzhou |
| 15 | 30 | M | Bachelor | 40W | Company Employee | NA | Beijing |
| 16 | 29 | M | Bachelor | 18W | Civil Servant | NA | Qingdao |
| 17 | 30 | M | Doctor | 25W | University Faculty | NA | Qingdao |
| 18 | 28 | F | Master | 30W | Civil Servant | NA | Beijing |
| 19 | 28 | F | Master | 30W | Bank Employee | NA | Hangzhou |
| 20 | 27 | F | Master | 33W | Company Employee | NA | Shanghai |
| 21 | 29 | F | Master | 24W | Company Employee | NA | Chengdu |
| 22 | 29 | F | Bachelor | 30W | Bank Employee | NA | Shenzhen |
| 23 | 28 | F | Master | 25W | Civil Servant | NA | Shanghai |
| 24 | 32 | M | Bachelor | 30W | Bank Employee | NA | Beijing |
| 25 | 29 | F | Master | 35W | Bank Employee | NA | Guangzhou |
| 26 | 29 | M | Master | 16W | Company Employee | NA | Jinan |
| 27 | 30 | F | Bachelor | 30W | Bank Employee | NA | Qingdao |
| 28 | 29 | F | Master | 40W | Bank Employee | NA | Beijing |
| 29 | 33 | M | Bachelor | 33W | Company Employee | NA | Shenzhen |
| 30 | 28 | M | Master | 30W | University Faculty | NA | Guangzhou |
| 31 | 28 | F | Bachelor | 25W | Private Business Owner | NA | Guangzhou |

4.1.1 Age and Gender

Among the 31 participants, 19 of them are female, and the other 12 are male. The participants ranged in ages from 26- to 33-years-old with an average age of 28.9. A

medical study (Coale & Trussel, 1974) suggested that the best age for people to get pregnant and have babies is from 25- to 33-years old. It is obvious that the ages of the participants in this particular study fell perfectly within the best child-bearing period.

Table 4.1.1 Age Distribution of the Participants

| Age | Number of Participants |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 26 | 1 |
| 27 | 4 |
| 28 | 8 |
| 29 | 11 |
| 30 | 4 |
| 31 | 1 |
| 32 | 1 |
| 33 | 1 |
| Average Age | 28.9 |

4.1.2 Education Level

The results showed that all participants had received some form of higher education, and they all hold degrees and/or diplomas from higher education institutes. Most of them hold a bachelor's or master's degree, and some have received their master's degrees from universities overseas. Among the 31 participants, 14 participants hold a bachelor's degree, 15 hold a master's degree (three from universities overseas), one has a doctor's degree, and one received a diploma from a junior college.

Table 4.1.2 The Education Level of the Participants

| Education Level | Number of Participants |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Doctor | 1 |
| Master | 15 |
| Bachelor | 14 |
| Junior College | 1 |

4.1.3 Annual Household Income

Data on the annual household income of the participants indicated that they all belonged to the high income group in China with an average annual household income of 278,030 Chinese yuan. According to the 2014 Research Report of China Household Finance Survey, the average annual household income of Chinese urban families was 70,876 Chinese yuan. Comparing the two numbers, it is clear that the participants had a much higher annual household income than most Chinese families. As shown in Figure 4.1.3, nine participants had an annual household income within 15-20W Chinese yuan (here “W” stands for “Wan” with 1w Chinese yuan amounting to 1,600 dollars), eight participants had an annual household income of 21-25W Chinese yuan, seven participants had an annual household income of 26-30W Chinese yuan, three participants had an annual household income of 31-35W Chinese yuan, three others fell in the 36-40W Chinese yuan range, and one participant had an annual household income of more than 40W Chinese yuan.

Table 4.1.3 Annual Household Income of the Participants

| Annual Household Income | Number of Participants |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 15-20 W | 9 |
| 21-25 W | 8 |
| 26-30 W | 7 |
| 31-35 W | 3 |
| 36-40 W | 3 |
| > 40 W | 1 |

4.1.4 Occupation

The data showed that the participants came from a variety of occupations including civil servant, bank employee (bank clerk, bank manager, and senior bank manager), private business owner, teacher and staff (elementary teacher, and university faculty and staff), and company employee.

Table 4.1.4 Occupations of the Participants

| Occupation | Number of Participants |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Civil Servant | 6 |
| Bank Employee | 7 |
| Private Business Owner | 3 |
| Company Employee | 10 |
| Teacher & Staff | 5 |
| Total | 31 |

4.1.5 Religious Belief

The results of the data analysis showed that most participants did not have any religious belief. Among all 31 participants, only three have religious beliefs--two are Buddhist and one is Christian.

Table 4.1.5 Religious Belief of the Participants

| Religious Belief | Number of Participants |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| No Religious Belief | 28 |
| Buddhist | 2 |
| Christian | 1 |

4.1.6 City of Residence

Participants in this study came from different cities in China: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Jinan, Qingdao, Zibo, Weifang, Hangzhou, Xian, Chengdu, Lanzhou, and Dalian.

Table 4.1.6 City of Residence of the Participants

| City of Residence | Number of Participants |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Beijing | 5 |
| Shanghai | 2 |
| Guangzhou | 4 |
| Shenzhen | 2 |
| Jinan | 3 |
| Qingdao | 8 |
| Zibo | 1 |
| Weifang | 1 |
| Xian | 1 |
| Chengdu | 1 |
| Lanzhou | 1 |
| Dalian | 1 |
| Hangzhou | 1 |
| Total | 31 |

4.1.7 Whether They and Their Spouses Are the Only Child in Their Families

In the interview, the participants were asked whether they and their spouses were the only child in their families. The results showed that among the 31 participants, 18

participants and their spouses are both the only child in their families; 12 participants mentioned either they or their spouses are the only child in their family; and only one participant said neither he nor his wife is the only child in the family. Thus, for all but one of the couples, at least one partner is an only child in his or her family.

Table 4.1.7 Whether the Participants and Their Spouses Are the Only Child in Their Families

| The Only Child or Not | Number of Participants |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Both Husband and Wife | 18 |
| Either Husband or Wife | 12 |
| Neither Husband nor Wife | 1 |

4.1.8 Child Planning to Conceive

The participants were also asked if they were preparing to conceive their first child. The data revealed that 27 of the 31 participants were preparing to conceive their first child, while the remaining four participants mentioned that they were planning to have their second child.

Table 4.1.8 Child Planning to Conceive

| Child Planning to Conceive | Number of Participants |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| The First Child | 27 |
| The Second Child | 4 |

4.1.9 Travel Interests and Experiences

As for travel experience, the data showed that 29 of the 31 participants were travel enthusiasts with rich travel experiences. One participant commented,

Well, for my husband and me, travel is our favorite hobby indeed. We really enjoy traveling to different places, seeing different kinds of scenery and

experiencing different cultures. It is also very interesting to meet and talk with different people during a trip... Actually, I think, it is already a routine for us to take one or two long trips each year. On the weekends with great weather, we often drive to the suburbs (Participant No.1, Female, 30, Master's, Civil Servant, Qingdao).

Another participant remarked,

I really love traveling, and my wife has the same hobby as I do. You know what, we are very proud of ourselves because we have already been to many different countries and regions in the world, but we still have many other dream destinations. I think we have already got a lot of travel experiences; for example, in the past year alone we've made four or five long distance trips, including trips to overseas. We went to Thailand and Turkey,... Not to mention the short trips during the weekends (Participant No.5, Male, 29, Master's, Civil Servant, Weifang).

4.1.10 Subjective Well-being

In the interviews, questions related to participants' subjective well-being were also asked such as "Are you happy? Why?" "How do you like your current life?" "Are you satisfied with your current life?" As Table 4.1.10 shows, for various reasons the majority of the participants did not evaluate their subjective well-being very positively. The reasons listed include workplace stress, fertility stress, lack of leisure time, fading passion in their marriage, and financial stress.

Table 4.1.10 Reasons for Negative Evaluation of SWB

| Reasons for Negative Evaluation of SWB | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| Workplace Stress | 29 | 93.5% |
| Fertility Stress | 22 | 71% |
| Lack of Leisure Time | 20 | 64.5% |
| Fading Passion in Marriage | 7 | 22.6% |
| Financial Stress | 6 | 19.4% |

4.1.10.1 Workplace Stress

Workplace stress was the most frequently mentioned factor that negatively influenced participants' evaluation of their subjective well-being. Long working hours, an intense working environment, and an overwhelming work load were the main reasons leading to serious workplace stress. For instance, when asked about the satisfaction with their current life, one participant said,

I think my life is OK, except for my stressful job. I really don't like my job because it is too stressful for me. We often work overtime, and sometimes it is difficult for me to even go back home and have supper with my family. Can you believe that I haven't got a chance to have supper with my husband for a week? I hate this kind of life, and I want to share more quality time with my beloved ones. Sometimes my job really makes me feel overwhelmed and frustrated (Participant No.7, Female, 31, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Dalian).

Other participants mentioned their pressure from the intense working environment and overwhelming work load,

I am a policeman, and I believe that everyone knows what the working environment is like for us. We need to be ready for dealing with emergencies at any time. Many of the emergencies are very dangerous but we still need to face them and try our best to protect the citizens. Even when we are at home, we need to keep our cellphones on 24 hours a day, because you never know what will happen in the next seconds. Thus, my job really makes me highly stressed (Participant No. 16, Male, 29, Bachelor's, Policeman, Qingdao).

Participant No. 24 was a senior bank manager whose major responsibility was to help VIP clients at their bank to manage their money.

I am in charge of a few VIP clients; it is my responsibility to help them manage their money. I feel this job is really stressful because I need try my best to satisfy my clients since their satisfaction will directly influence my performance and my income (Participant No. 24, Male, 32, Bachelor's, Senior Bank Manager, Beijing).

Some studies have already indicated that Chinese workers face serious workplace stress (Lu, Siu, & Cooper, 2005; Lambert, Lambert, Petrini, Li, & Zhang,

2007). Siu et al. (2006) offered a possible reason for Chinese workers' serious workplace stress. They pointed out that China's economic transition with a shift in focus from production to service and knowledge, coupled with globalization of the economy, has placed an increased demand on Chinese workers' competencies and capabilities of dealing with change, challenges, and conflicts.

4.1.10.2 Fertility Stress

The pressure of getting pregnant and having a baby is another main stressor for the participants. The majority of the participants mentioned that they received much pressure about getting pregnant from their parents and other relatives, especially for those who live with parents. This kind of pressure also led the participants to a lower rating evaluation of their subjective well-being, as reflected in the following comments:

My husband and I are living in the same city with our parents and we often go back to our parents' house to spend more time with them because we don't want them to feel lonely. Thus the frequency of meeting parents is relatively high for us. Both of our parents are eager to have a grandchild, and so every time we meet with them, they will nag us to get pregnant and have a baby. For example, if we happen to meet other people with kids, our parents will be very envious and won't hide their longing for a grandchild. I feel really fretful and also stressful about this...I mean I could really understand their expectation about becoming grandparents, but they don't know how much pressure they have brought to me and my husband. Sometimes, I even feel too scared to face them (Participant No. 4, Female, 27, Junior College, Elementary Teacher, Qingdao).

The pressure of conceiving a child coming from the participants' parents may be interpreted as coming from the traditional Chinese cultural emphasis on family-line continuity, cohesion, and harmony, for which children (especially sons) are very

important (Xie & Xia, 2011). In a culture deeply influenced by Confucianism, it is almost imperative that family line be continued through patrilineal descent. If a man has no son, he may have to adopt one of his brother's sons to continue the family line (Yang, 1945, as cited in Beardsley & Smith, 2013, p. 38).

4.1.10.3 Lack of Leisure Time

Results of the data analysis indicated that all the participants were truly eager for more leisure time because in their hectic lives, they did not have too much leisure

time. One participant noted,

I feel my life is too busy to have any relaxation. When I am at work, I have to focus on my job which makes me very tired; after I go back home, I need to do the housekeeping, laundry, and take care of my child. As I mentioned, my child is only 2 years old, and he really wants to stay with Mommy as long as he is awake. Thus, even in the weekends, I still need to deal with a lot of trivialities. I really want to have more leisure time for myself so that I could relax and refresh myself (Participant No. 8, Female, 29, Bachelor's, Civil Servant, Zibo).

Another participant complained,

You know what? Actually my company allows employees eight days of paid leave each year. I've been in this company for nearly five years but I have never fully enjoyed them. It's not because I don't want to, it's just that I really cannot do that since my work load is so heavy. I have to finish my work before I can consider taking a paid leave. I wish there were more long holidays for us (Participant No.15, Male, 30, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Beijing).

A previous survey conducted in August and September 2012 by Insight China, a state-run magazine that looks into Chinese people's welfare, also pointed to the problem of a lack of leisure time for Chinese people. The survey revealed that among the 1007 participants nationwide, 70% said they were unsatisfied with their amount of leisure time.

4.1.10.4 Fading Passion in the Marriage

Existing studies have investigated “passionate love” in a relationship, which was defined as “a state of intense longing for each other” (Hatfield & Walster, 1978, p.9). Tucker and Aron (1993) argued that passionate love would decline rapidly in a relationship or a marriage. Similarly, Sims and Meana (2010) suggested that many females were more likely to lose sexual desire in their marriage. In this particular study, participants also expressed concern about the fading passion in their marriage, which could have negatively affected participants’ subjective well-being. For example, one participant voiced her complaint about the unfavorable change in her relationship with her husband:

I don’t like my current life, especially my marriage. I am not happy at all. My husband doesn’t treat me the same as when we were not yet married. Before we got married, we often went shopping, enjoyed delicious food and watched interesting movies together; but after we got married, all these things were gone. He is now focusing only on his job, and we even don’t talk much with each other. How I wish we could find the romance and passion back! Also I hate that he rarely helps me do the housekeeping. I know his job makes him tired, but I am tired too (Participant No. 6, Female, 28, Bachelor’s, Private Business Owner, Qingdao).

4.1.10.5 Financial Pressure

The participants also mentioned other types of life pressure that had caused them stress and unhappiness. A few participants considered financial pressure as a main stressor for them. One participant explained the reasons for his financial pressure:

You think I’ve already got a high income? I really don’t think so. See, my wife and I are all from underdeveloped rural areas, and our parents are ordinary farmers. We’ve just bought our apartment, using our own funds and a loan from the bank. We are ordinary working-class members with a mediocre income. However, the price of the apartment is truly high for us.... We need to make

money to pay off our loan. Since we are planning to have a child, we'll need even more money to prepare everything for the child. That's why I think financial pressure is the most negative factor influencing the quality of my life (Participant No. 10, Male, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Lanzhou).

4.2 Travel Motivations of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

In the interviews, the 31 participants were all asked why they would like to travel during their preparation for pregnancy. Their responses were conceptually divided into two main categories, which could be regarded as push factors and pull factors respectively, based on the theories about push and pull factors (Cohen, 1972; Dann, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Gnoth, 1997). As Table 4.2.1 shows, the factors of escape, relaxation and disconnection, relationship enhancement, and benefits for fertility and wellness combined to push the young Chinese couples to participate in babymoon tourism activities; and enjoyment, freedom and excitement, and novelty constituted the pull factors for the participants in this study. These two types of factors and their effects on the participants will be discussed in the following subsections.

Table 4.2.1 Travel Motivations of the Participants

| Push Factors | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Escape | 30 | 96.8 % |
| Relaxation and Disconnection | 28 | 90.3 % |
| Relationship Enhancement | 24 | 77.1 % |
| Benefits for Fertility and Wellness | 22 | 71 % |
| Pull Factors | Number of Participants | Percentage |
| Enjoyment | 25 | 80.6 % |
| Freedom and Excitement | 23 | 74.2 % |
| Novelty | 17 | 54.8 % |

4.2.1 Push Factors

4.2.1.1 Escape

The notion “escape” was first proposed by Crompton (1979) as one of the main push motives. It was used to refer to the desire to leave the everyday environment behind oneself. According to Shi (2010), “the critical ingredient of escape from a perceived mundane environment was that ‘the pleasure vacation context should be physically and socially different from the environment in which one normally lives’” (Crompton, 1979, as cited in Shi, p. 22). Put differently, people use travel as a way to get away from the monotony and stress of their daily routine life. Responses from the participants indicated that they commonly believed taking a babymoon would help them escape from the monotonous and stressful life. For example, one participant said to the researcher:

I’m so tired of living each day of my life just doing the same old thing. Every day I get up early and then go to work; after work I need to go back home and cook for my husband. This kind of boring life is almost killing me. I always feel like there is so much more for me to do in life but I can’t seem to get to it. Taking a babymoon will be a great opportunity for my husband and me to get away from our current monotonous life, even it is just for a little while (Participant No. 11, Female, 27, Bachelor’s, Company Employee, Xi’an).

Other participants expressed similar opinions. For instance, Participant No. 24, a senior bank manager helping VIP clients to manage their money, stated: “My life is so stressful because of my job that I really want to escape from it.” Another participant mentioned,

It is hard for me to feel happy now. My life is boring and sadly stressful. I work for a public relations company, and our customer is our king. I always need to take care of my customers, which makes me feel really tired. I think I really need

a get-away from all the work and pressure (Participant No.14, Female, 27, Master's, Company Employee, Guangzhou).

4.2.1.2 Relaxation and Disconnection

Relaxation is also a push factor proposed by Crompton (1979), referring to “a mental state rather than a physical relaxation” (p.471). It is recognized by most people as a positive outcome of travel. The participants' responses revealed their belief that taking a babymoon will help them disconnect from their daily routine life and get some relaxation. For instance, one participant commented:

I feel that taking a vacation during our preparation for pregnancy could help my husband and me ease the tension of our life. We will go to a place far away from our city that has beautiful scenery and good climate. Just imagine that you do not need to worry about your work, and you do not need to stay with your nagging parents. The only thing you do is to lie on the beach and enjoy the great landscape and nature. How amazing it will be (Participant No.18, Female, 28, Master's, Civil Servant, Beijing).

Another participant also said that he and his wife would like to take a babymoon in order to relax and refresh themselves.

We are living in Jinan where the air pollution is very serious, especially in the winter. Sometimes I even feel I cannot breathe. In addition, my wife and I are working really hard to make more money for our family since we need to support our parents, pay back the loan, and also save money for our future baby. Thus our life is full of pressure. If we take a babymoon, I believe it will help us to relax, both physically and mentally (Participant No. 26, Male, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Jinan).

4.2.1.3 Relationship Enhancement

Crompton (1979) referred to enhancing kinship as a crucial travel motivation.

According to Crompton, leisure travel was not only an opportunity to visit family and friends but also “a medium through which family relationships could be enhanced or

enriched” (p.417). In the current study, some participants explicitly complained about the fading passion in their relationships with their spouse, as shown in the comments quoted above. Therefore, it was not surprising that a few participants considered relationship enhancement as an important reason (viewed as a push factor in the study) for taking a babymoon. For example, Participant No.6 who complained about her husband a lot said:

I think going for a babymoon will be a very good opportunity for us to spend some wonderful time together; we could enjoy the beautiful scenery, taste great local food, and find our romance back. I believe this will greatly enhance our relationship and help us to be back in love (Participant No.6, Female, 28, Bachelor’s, Private Business Owner, Qingdao).

Other participants also confirmed the value of taking a babymoon to enhance their relationship.

For me and my wife, we will really like the idea of taking a babymoon because it will provide us a romantic and more importantly private chance to stay with each other. We live with my parents in our routine life; although my parents can take care of us, there are also various inconveniences. We need to follow my parents’ rules, for example, going to bed early and not making noises. Sometimes we feel really constrained and stressful, which I believe will negatively influence our relationship. But if we go out for a travel, there would be only my wife and me; we can do whatever we would like to do (Participant No. 29, Male, 33, Bachelor’s, Company Employee, Shenzhen).

4.2.1.4 Benefits for Fertility and Wellness

According to Chen and Petrick (2013), “our society has assumed that ‘tourism is a mentally and physically healthy pursuit to follow in our leisure time’” (Hobson & Dietrich, 1995, as cited in Chen & Petrick, p. 711). Many studies with a variety of tourist destinations and participants such as seniors, company employees, university faculty and staff, the disabled, and patients and care-givers have shown the benefits of

travel on individuals' health and wellness. In this dissertation, many participants would seek wellness improvement through travel experiences, which may also provide a better basis for conception. In their opinions, taking a babymoon would greatly increase the possibility of getting pregnant by improving their health and reducing their various pressure. For instance, a participant said to the researcher:

My husband and I are living a very stressful life actually. We are really tired of our busy and monotonous routine life. To be honest, sometimes I feel I lost my desire for the sexual life because I am too tired. We have been trying to get pregnant for a while before but we failed. One of my friends who is a doctor once told me that it would be much easier for a couple to get pregnant when they are in a relaxed and happy state, kicking off all pressure. That's why we feel that it is a good idea for us to have a vacation as part of the preparation for getting pregnant (Participant No. 25, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Clerk, Guangzhou).

Other participants focused on the potential benefits brought by the babymoon to the growth of the baby if they could successfully get pregnant. They believed that a babymoon would greatly improve their own wellness, which could in turn provide a good basis for conception and the growth of baby. For example, one participant remarked:

Yeah, we do want to get pregnant, but we also would like to have a healthy and strong baby. I believe a babymoon will help my husband and me relax and improve our wellness, both physically and mentally. I think if both father and mother are in a healthy and happy condition, it would be very beneficial for our baby's growth if we could successfully conceive. On the contrary, when we are living with much pressure and negative mood, it will not be good for the baby (Participant No. 28, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Manager, Beijing).

4.2.2 Pull Factors

Besides the factors pushing the young Chinese couples to have a babymoon, several factors were also identified in the data which pulled them to it. These pull

factors were summarized as the following: enjoyment, freedom and excitement, and novelty.

4.2.2.1 Enjoyment

Enjoyment is a factor mentioned by a few participants in the interviews. The participants considered travel as a good way for them to get great enjoyment and have fun. A participant reported:

I feel bored in my daily life, however, if my husband and I take a vacation when we are preparing to have a baby, it's going to be interesting for sure. We can do a lot of fun things together in the destination. For example, we can go to an interesting theme park and experience those nice entertainment programs. Or we can just go to a river and together fishing together. Anyway, I'm sure we will have fun (Participant No. 19, Female, 28, Master's, Bank Clerk, Hangzhou).

Some other participants also expressed very similar ideas and the desire to have some fun and make their lives more colorful through the babymoon.

4.2.2.2 Freedom and Excitement

“Krippendorff (1987) suggests that travel offers the individual a sense of freedom and self-determination not available in everyday life” (Hyde, 2008, p. 70).

Krippendorff's idea is confirmed by the findings in the present study that showed that participants believed they could obtain freedom and excitement through a babymoon.

This could be seen as a natural consequence of escaping the monotonous and stressful daily life the participants lived. In fact, it was clear in some participants' responses that when they were away from their routine life, it was much easier for them to feel free and excited:

For me, the most attractive part in taking such a vacation (i.e., one taken in the preparations for getting pregnant) is that I can totally get away from my daily life and enjoy the precious freedom. I will even turn off my cellphone and put my laptop aside, and just enjoy the good time with my husband. For us, we don't travel just for sight-seeing; we also travel for the experience and memories it gives us. I really feel that I cannot wait to have this exciting vacation (Participant No. 27, Female, 30, Bachelor's, Bank Manager, Qingdao).

Her opinion was echoed in another participant's response:

Imagine that in the beautiful destination for a vacation like this (i.e., a vacation taken as part of the preparations for getting pregnant), nobody knows who you are and nobody cares about what you are doing. You can forget about your work, your pressure, just be yourself and enjoy. How exciting it will be (Participant No. 30, Male, 28, Master's, University Faculty, Guangzhou).

4.2.2.3 Novelty

In existing studies, the term novelty referred to “a desire to seek out new and different experiences through pleasure travel as motivated by a need to experience thrill, adventure and surprise, and alleviate boredom” (Crompton & McKay, 1997, p. 430). It is a crucial factor that motivates people to participate in general tourism activities. The findings showed that in this study, the participants also considered novelty as an important reason for taking a babymoon. For example, a participant commented:

For me and my wife, travelling is an opportunity to learn about the world by experiencing it firsthand. We always love to meet new things, no matter the new scenery, new culture or meet new people. Thus we plan to select a place where we have not been to before as our destination if we do take a vacation during our preparations for having a child so that we could have new experiences (Participant No. 17, Male, 30, Ph.D., University Faculty, Qingdao).

4.2.3 Travel Constraints of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

In light of the intertwined relationship between travel motivations and constraints, a detailed review of constraints is essential to understanding the travel motivations of Chinese babymooners. The participation of people in leisure activities might be determined by the strength of their motivations relative to their perceptions of constraints (Jackson, 1993). Generally, strength of motivation appears negatively related to perception of constraints (Alexandris & Carroll, 1997). In this particular study, results showed that a lack of time, concern of travel safety, and travel cost were the possible constraints for the babymoon tourists. A lack of time for taking a vacation as described by the researcher was mentioned by 27 of the 31 participants. For instance, one participant offered the following explanation:

We really would like to have a vacation during our preparations for having a child, but the practical problem for us is the difficulty in finding a good time which could work for both my husband and me. We are both busy. Although both of us have paid holidays, it is still hard for us to coordinate our time. When I am free, he is busy. When he is available, I have work to do. That really bothers us (Participant No.1, Female, 30, Master's, Civil Servant, Qingdao).

Participants also took the travel cost into consideration. Twenty participants mentioned if the cost was too high for them, they were very likely to give up the travel plan.

We will consider the travel cost. Although our income is not low compared with other people, we still need to save money for our future baby, and pay off the housing loan. Therefore, if the travel cost was too high, we won't go (Participant No. 11, Female, 27, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Xi'an).

Travel safety was another factor (mentioned by 13 participants) that was taken into account when the participants planned a trip. The participants' responses indicated that in light of the increasing frequency of occurrences of various travel

accidents, they were paying more attention to travel safety. The following remarks were made by one participant about her feelings with respect to travel safety:

I feel scared about the high frequency of occurrences of accidents, especially the airline disasters. We will put the travel safety before other considerations. If we feel something in our travel plan is not safe, we will cancel the whole plan (Participant No. 27, Female, 30, Bachelor's, Bank Manager, Qingdao).

4.3 Travel Behaviors of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

4.3.1 Babymoon Information Sources

According to Fodness and Murray (1997), "Travelers try to reduce uncertainty of travel and improve the quality of trips through information searches before leaving home" (Kah, Vogt, & MacKay, 2006, p. 104). In reality, travel information plays a key role in influencing tourists' travel planning. Tourists seek information in order to satisfy certain needs that define or refine their travel motives (Wilson, 2014). Thus, knowing where the tourists get the necessary information pertaining to their babymoon is valuable for both tourism researchers and tourism industry managers. According to some existing literature, the information sources could be generally classified into marketer-dominated and non-marketer-dominated. The results in this study could be more specifically grouped under the umbrella of that classification. Results of the interview data analysis are summarized in Table 4.3.1, which shows that the young Chinese couples mainly depended on three types of information for planning a babymoon, namely, recommendations from family, friends and acquaintances, online travel information, and information from travel agents.

Table 4.3.1 Babymoon Information Sources

| Babymoon Information Sources | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Family, Friends and Acquaintances | 29 | 93.5% |
| Online Travel Information | 26 | 83.9% |
| Travel Agents | 16 | 51.6% |

4.3.1.1 Recommendations from Family, Friends, and Acquaintances

When asked about their babymoon information sources, 29 participants first mentioned recommendations from their family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors. They considered this kind of recommendation more trustworthy, partly because this source is non-marketer-dominated. One participant offered the following reason:

Before my husband and I take a vacation during our preparations for having a child, we'll definitely need more travel information to help us plan our trip. I would ask our friends and families first to see whether they have some valuable information for us, especially those who have had this kind of travel experiences already, because I trust them, and I think they will provide use with the most trustworthy information. I don't want to just turn to some advertisements from travel companies, because I know their ultimate purpose is to make money, and they don't necessary care about us and our interest (Participant No.7, Female, 31, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Dalian).

This finding conformed to those made in the existing studies. Engel (1973) observed that "hundreds of studies have found that consumers obtain information about products and services from other people, particularly family members, friends and neighbors, and other acquaintances" (p. 93). In a study by Gitelson and Crompton (1983), 72% of the participants indicated that they had received travel information from their families, friends, and acquaintances.

4.3.1.2 Online Travel Information

In the era of information technology, online information searching and sharing have been made simple and easy for tourists. Through the Internet, individuals can search for information best suited to their travel needs. Indeed, an increasing number of tourists use the Internet in their decision making process. A study by the Travel Association of America (TIA, 2005) reported that in 2005, 37% of American adults (79 million) used the Internet for travel planning, and 30% of American adults (64.8 million) purchased travel products through the Internet. In this study, 26 participants considered that online travel information had played an important role in their babymoon information searching. The participants obtained babymoon information mainly from online travel forums (17 participants), social networks (22 participants), and tourism blogs (12 participants). Although marketers can also use online sources to advertise their travel products, in the current study, the online sources preferred by the participants are mainly non-marketer-dominated. One participant responded:

I am a registered member of a large Chinese travel forum. Every day there are a lot of people sharing their travel experiences and information, which I think is very valuable for me since I can make my travel plans on the basis of such information. Thus I visit that forum very often to check whether there is any useful information that I can use in my plan for such a vacation (i.e., babymoon). (Participant No.5, Male, 29, Master's, Civil Servant, Weifang).

Another participant considered social networking websites as one of her favorite information sources. She mentioned:

I'm a heavy user of the website named Renren, which is the Chinese version of Facebook. I have hundreds of friends on that website. Through that website, I could learn about where my friends have gone for a vacation because many of my friends are used to posting pictures and comments about their life, including their travels and vacations. I think what they post on Renren website is real and

trustworthy (Participant No.13, Female, 26, Master's, Company Employee, Guangzhou).

Travel blogs are also good sources from which the participants could obtain the information they need. A few participants mentioned that they subscribed to some famous travel blogs to get the useful information.

4.3.1.3 Information from Travel Agencies

Apart from recommendations from family, friends and acquaintances, and online travel information, it was also very common for the babymooners to go to travel agencies for information. This information source is marketer-dominated. In this study, 16 participants mentioned they would ask travel agencies for information and suggestions. For example, one participant answered the question about getting travel information like this:

I think I will go to some large travel agencies for information. They have far more experience in travel than me, and maybe they will give me good suggestions if I plan to take a vacation during my preparations for getting pregnant (Participant No.12, Female, 32, Master's, University Faculty, Jinan).

Some other participants said they would probe the travel brochures printed by travel agencies in which they might find some valuable information.

4.3.2 The Preferred Babymoon Destinations

With diverse attractions and many tourism destinations to choose from, the potential tourist is likely faced with the difficult task of selecting a destination. To understand the phenomenon of the Chinese babymoon, it is inevitable for the researcher to investigate the kinds of destinations Chinese babymoon tourists will

select. The findings will also be of great value for practitioners in the tourism industry because the choices of a tourism destination serve as one of the fundamental elements that help to understand babymoon tourists. In the interviews, the 31 participants were all asked to describe to the researcher their preferred destinations for a babymoon. The analysis found many similarities in their answers. The preferred babymoon destinations described by the participants could be grouped into two categories: nature-based babymoon destinations and culture-based babymoon destinations. Within the two main categories, some sub categories of the preferred destinations were discovered and are summarized in Table 4.3.2. The details will be explicated in the following paragraphs.

Table 4.3.2 The Preferred Babymoon Destinations

| Nature-Based Destinations | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Water-based Attractions | 26 | 83.9 % |
| Mountains and Forests | 21 | 67.7 % |
| Places with Good Climate | 19 | 61.2 % |
| Culture-Based Destinations | Number of Participants | Percentage |
| Historical Cities and Places | 17 | 54.8 % |
| Buildings and Structures | 13 | 41.9 % |
| Museums and Temples | 9 | 29 % |

4.3.2.1 Nature-Based Babymoon Destinations

According to Chiesura (2004), “increasing empirical evidence indicates that the presence of natural assets (e.g., mountains and forests, green belts) and components (e.g., trees, water) contributes to the quality of life for human beings in many ways” (pp. 129-30). This could be explained using attention restoration theory, which has

already been discussed in Chapter 2 and will be further discussed in section 5.1.3.

According to this theory, staying in an environment where one is not waited on hand and foot allows the mentally fatigued person to rest those faculties that must be used when direct attention is being given. To put it simply, a natural environment has a restorative effect on human wellness. Ulrich (1984) confirmed the restorative function of natural environments. He found “that hospital patients who could look out on trees and nature from their windows recovered more quickly than those whose views were [sic] restricted to buildings” (Chiesura, 2004, p. 130). It was then not surprising to find in the interviews conducted for the current study that many participants expressed a yearning for nature.

The responses from these participants also indicated that they would select some nature-based destinations for their babymoon. Among the 31 participants, 26 people talked about their preference for water-based attractions, including lake shore, beach, coastal places, and islands. They maintained that being closer to water could make them feel relaxed and relieved. One participant expressed the following opinion:

My wife and I are planning to take a vacation as part of our preparations for having a child in a water-based tourism destination because we believe that it will help us relax ourselves. We like going to the beach or the lake shore. Feeling the breeze and the sun, seeing the peaceful environment and hearing water flow will release my thoughts from the stress and monotony in my routine life. Therefore, going to a beautiful island with great weather seems a good choice for us (Participant No. 26, Male, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Jinan).

Other participants emphasized the feelings of romance brought by getting close to the sea.

I believe that the beautiful natural sceneries will bring our love and romance back to us. For example, we may go to the beach and wait for the sunset to enjoy the

beauty of the nature. I remember in many films, the love stories between the leading actor and actress will happen in a beautiful nature-filled setting. We really would like to experience those romantic feelings, although we are not the actor and actress in a film (Participant No. 19, Female, 28, Master's, Bank Clerk, Hangzhou).

Also, there were 21 participants who mentioned they would like to stay in places with mountains and forests. For example, one participant who was suffering from serious insomnia made the following remarks:

I would like to select a resort that is close to nature, for example, a resort built in the mountains or forests. My husband and I really enjoy being in a natural environment. Just imagine how wonderful it will be when you are taking a walk with your beloved one in the green forest full of fresh air and the smell of plants, listening to the beautiful singing of the birds! In an environment like that, I feel that there are only my husband and me in the world. That would be really peaceful and relaxing. And there are even more benefits for me since I normally couldn't sleep well during the night, and I could have a very good sleep in this kind of environment. This is what I found out from my prior experiences (Participant No. 22, Female, 29, Bachelor's, Bank Clerk, Shenzhen).

Good climate is also an important factor that could influence the participants' decision making for their babymoon destination. Results showed that 19 people wanted to choose places with a good climate as their babymoon destination. Examples of their comments were, "We feel a good climate is very necessary for a comfortable and satisfying babymoon. We don't like to have our babymoon in a place which is too hot or too cold."

4.3.2.2 Culture-Based Babymoon Destinations

In addition to the aforementioned nature-based babymoon destinations, a few participants suggested that destinations with unique cultures or very long histories were also particularly attractive to them when they were planning for their babymoon.

As we know, culture is pretty much localized. According to Falahah and Rijayana (2011), “The term local culture is commonly used to characterize the experience of everyday life in specific, identifiable localities. It reflects ordinary people’s feelings of appropriateness, comfort, and correctness—attributes that define personal preferences and changing tastes” (p. 54). Put in a different way, every individual can be seen as one of the creators contributing to the culture they belong to and the history that they live in. It is, hence, not surprising that people will feel interested in culture and history, both their own and in others’. The findings of this study showed that many participants would like to select culture-based locations as their babymoon destinations. The culture-based locations discussed by the participants included famous historical cities and places (17 participants), buildings and structures (13 participants), and museums and temples (nine participants). For instance, a participant responded:

My husband and I are both big fans of unique cultures and histories. We feel really interested to visit those famous cities or towns with a very long history and experience their unique and old culture. It is even very interesting to talk with the local people and listen to the old stories passed down through generations. I feel this would really help us forget about our own stressful and monotonous routine life (Participant No.1, Female, 30, Master’s, Civil Servant, Qingdao).

Some other participants listed their dream babymoon destinations including historic European cities, such as Rome, London, and Paris and some Korean and Japanese cities, such as Seoul, Kyoto, and Osaka. There were also participants who mentioned some old Chinese towns, including Fenghuang, Dali, Lijiang, and Wuzhen. They would like to visit the ancient buildings and structures there; for example, one participant said,

I've heard a lot about the beauty of Chinese famous old town—Fenghuang. I want to see its old stilted building of Tujia nationality (Participant No.25, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Clerk, Guangzhou).

No matter where those cities are located, they have something in common:

They all have a distinctive culture and a long history. To better understand the local history and culture, visiting the local museums and the old temples may work as a very good starting point. Nine participants expressed their interest in the museums and temples. One participant who listed Rome and Paris as his dream babymoon destination pointed out:

Going to those ancient cities or towns, you can see completely different cultures that you've never seen before. I think visiting the local museums and old temples will be helpful to understand the local culture and history. It will also be fun for a couple to discover and experience exotic things together. And I always feel the exotic things are very romantic, which is why I would like to take my wife to Rome and Paris if we take a vacation in our preparations for having a child. And we will definitely visit the local museums and old temples. She also considers this as a good idea (Participant No.5, Male, 29, Master's, Civil Servant, Weifang).

4.3.3 The Preferred Babymoon Activities

The babymoon activities in this study refer to those activities in which the babymoon tourists would like to participate during their babymoon. Based on the existing studies, the leisure activities are classified into productive versus consumptive types based on the criteria of sociability. Productive activities are characterized by an active dedication of the participant and working towards a certain goal; consumptive activities are a passive form of spending time, characterized by the 'utilization' of certain goods and also of experiences (Ingen & Eijck, 2009). Because the classification of productive and consumptive activities is too general to explain the

preferred activities of babymoon tourists, more specific groups of activities needed to be investigated through the interviews. An open question was utilized in the interview to help the researcher investigate the kinds of activities in which the babymoon tourists would like to participate. The findings suggested that the babymoon tourists really disliked activities that required much brain activity and/or energy. They argued that such activities would put even more pressure on them instead of helping them relax. There was a pretty typical response illustrating the dislike for this kind of activity:

If my wife and I take a vacation as part of our preparations for having a child, we want one that can help us relax, not one that would make us even more tired and exhausted. We won't participate in any activities which will cause us more fatigue or pressure which will make the whole vacation meaningless (Participant No. 10, Male, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Lanzhou).

A summary of the responses to the question about babymoon activities shows that there were four major types of activities favored by the participants: recreation-oriented activities, romance-oriented activities, wellness-oriented activities and food-oriented activities. These four categories of babymoon activities will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

4.3.3.1 Recreation-Oriented Activities

As discussed in the previous sections, the participants of this study were living very stressful lives. They were using the babymoon as a way to help them escape from serious pressure in their life and to get some relaxation and refresh. Naturally, they would prefer recreation-oriented activities instead of intense or adventurous

activities when planning their babymoon. As the table shows, the participants had various choices for recreation-oriented activities in a babymoon vacation:

Table 4.3.3.1 Recreation-Oriented Activities

| Recreation -Oriented Activities | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| Natural Recreational Activities (e.g., fishing, sunbathing, promenade) | 26 | 83.9 % |
| Shopping Related Activities | 22 | 71 % |
| Interactive Activities (e.g., talk with local people, participate in local activities) | 15 | 48.3 % |

Among these choices for recreation-oriented activities, the natural recreational activities and shopping related activities are more consumptive, and the interactive activities are more productive. Many participants (26) said they would like to get close to nature and do some recreational activities, such as enjoying the scenery, fishing, sunbathing, taking a slow walk, and having a picnic in a natural setting.

Among these activities, enjoying the beautiful scenery had much popularity and was mentioned by many participants, as in the following quote:

To enjoy the gorgeous scenery is always one of the main purposes for traveling me and my husband. Beauty can always bring hope and happiness to our lives. If we take a babymoon, we will find a place with great views and enjoy a good time. Even if we don't participate in other activities, it will be fine as long as we have great scenery to enjoy (Participant No. 9, Female, 28, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Qingdao).

Another participant said to the researcher:

If my wife and I take such a vacation (i.e., babymoon), the goal is to relax. Thus we will only choose some mild activities. I think we will definitely go fishing because we both love fishing, and it is very interesting. Don't assume that fishing is very easy. It is not. It's not just sitting there and waiting for the fish to come to you. People who don't love fishing can never experience the kind of happiness and excitement we get when we catch a big fish (Participant No. 15, Male, 30, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Beijing).

Another participant stated that she really enjoyed taking a walk in the beautiful forest with her beloved husband. She considered it very romantic and relaxing (Participant No. 22, Female, 29, Bachelor's, Bank Clerk, Shenzhen). There were also participants who noted that they would like to lie down on the beach and enjoy a sunbath (Participant No.11, Female, 27, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Xi'an).

Besides the nature-related recreational activities, a few participants (15) suggested that they were also interested in interacting with local people and participating in local activities (i.e., local festival celebrations) to experience the real local life. Some unique local cultures and activities seemed very appealing to the participants who were modern city residents. They expressed a desire to learn about the local cultures and local people of different places. The prior section on culture-based babymoon destination mentioned that many participants would like to explore the local cultures of their destinations. In that section, Participant No.1 and Participant No. 5 are two examples who made it clear in their responses that they would like to talk with the local people, hear about the old stories, visit the ancient ruins and museums, and buy some local souvenirs.

In response to the question about tourism activities, there were also quite a few participants (22) who said they would do some shopping, especially if they would go abroad for a babymoon. These participants were especially interested in three kinds of merchandise: luxuries, baby products, and local souvenirs.

If we travel abroad, we may do some shopping, especially in stores that sell luxury goods because they are much cheaper abroad than at home. We will also buy some foreign baby products because they are safe. I really don't trust the

quality of baby products in China (Participant No.18, Female, 28, Master's, Civil Servant, Beijing).

Participant No. 19, stated, "Before we finish this vacation and go home, we will buy some unique local souvenirs as gifts for our families and friends" (Female, 28, Master's, Bank Clerk, Hangzhou).

4.3.3.2 Romance-Oriented Activities

As mentioned earlier, the young Chinese couples use babymoos as a way to rekindle passion in their marriage that has been lost or faded due to the stress and monotony of their routine lives. For this reason, quite a few participants (21) expressed a preference for some type of romantic activity that would help them get back their love and passion. Traveling together was always a good opportunity for creating some sweet and unforgettable memories for a couple. One participant commented:

In our routine life, we seldom have opportunities to spend some romantic time together because we are already so tired after work. Also in the crowded and noisy cities, it is really hard to create a romantic atmosphere; but if we are out for a vacation, things are completely different. I can easily take my wife to many very fancy and romantic events. For example, we can watch a love movie together in a fancy private cinema where she and I are the only audience; or I will arrange a romantic candlelight dinner for ourselves with flowers and great music. I'm sure my wife will love my ideas (Participant No. 17, Male, 30, Ph.D., University Faculty, Qingdao).

Some other participants talked about lying on the grass and watching stars which they could hardly see because of the air pollution in the cities: "I will ask my husband to watch stars with me. I often see people do this in the film and I would like to try it.

It must be very romantic” (Participant No. 20, Female, 27, Master’s, Company Employee, Shanghai).

They also talked about visiting some places which have special meaning for people in love:

I really want to go to that love lock bridge in Paris. It is so romantic that I think no girls will dislike it. Imagine that you and your beloved partner put a lock on the bridge, which means your love is also locked to each other. How romantic it is! I want to do that with my husband (Participant No. 21, Female, 29, Master’s, Company Employee, Chengdu).

4.3.3.3 Wellness-Oriented Activities

As mentioned before in the motivation section, young Chinese couples are also likely to take a babymoon for wellness improvement, which may also positively influence the possibility of getting pregnant. It is commonly believed that good health, both mental and physical, is a necessary condition for conceiving a child. According to a news report (Zhang, 2011) from CCTV (China National Television), “sub-health has now become a major problem among city dwellers, especially white-collar workers and those with [a] high education level” (para. 1). Participants in this study also reported suffering from some type of sub-health problems. They complained about having insomnia, a poor appetite, dizziness, depression, and general body weakness, which are all symptoms of sub-health. It followed naturally that many participants showed preference for some kinds of wellness-oriented activities that could help improve their wellness. As Table 4.3.3.3 shows, the activities listed by the participants included having a relaxing time at some natural hot springs or spa club,

getting a good massage, trying some herbal treatments, and having some special diet plan.

Table 4.3.3.3 Wellness-Oriented Activities

| Wellness-Oriented Activities | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Spa and Hot Springs | 21 | 67.7 % |
| Special Diet Plan | 16 | 51.6 % |
| Massage and Physical Therapy | 13 | 41.9 % |
| Herbal Treatment | 8 | 25.8% |

For example, one participant stated:

I would like to spend some time at natural hot springs, because I know it will be very helpful for our health. And also hot springs or a spa will make us feel relaxed and refreshed. For women, it will also help to maintain youth and beauty. I believe that getting a good massage after bathing in the hot springs will also benefit our health. I really enjoy bathing in hot springs and having a massage, and so does my husband (Participant No. 23, Female, 28, Master's, Civil Servant, Shanghai).

Some participants mentioned they might get some physical therapy to improve their sub-health problems. Other participants also showed an interest in special

health-oriented diet plans. For example, a participant explained:

I feel my body now is full of toxins due to the pressure and the environment pollution. In my routine life, I don't even have time to detox. Maybe this kind of vacation (i.e., babymoon) will be a good chance for me and my husband to take care of our own bodies. We plan to follow some healthy diet which could help us get rid of the toxins in our bodies so that we could have a healthy baby after pregnancy (Participant No.25, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Clerk, Guangzhou).

4.3.3.4 Food-Oriented Activities

In China, there is an old saying, "food is the paramount necessity for people," showing the importance of food in Chinese people's life. This is echoed in a participant's response in the interview: "Everyone loves delicious food, and I don't

believe there exists an individual who does not like nice food. I have a dream that one day I will eat and play all over the world” (Participant No. 3, Male, 29, Master’s, Private Business Owner, Beijing). The results, not surprisingly, showed that many participants (18) had a strong desire for trying different kinds of cuisine, especially unique local cuisine in travel destinations. For example, one participant described food as an important part of a trip by saying: “I will definitely go and find the most famous local food with my husband every time I go to a new place... Yes, I love delicious food, and so does my husband. We are both big fans of delicious food” (Participant No. 4, Female, 27, Junior College, Elementary Teacher, Qingdao).

Another participant suggested,

See, the world is so large with so many countries, and every country or even a small town has some unique local food. How I wish I could taste all those great food around the world! That’s going to be amazing, especially when you are with your beloved ones! I think love will make the food even more delicious
(Participant No. 14, Female, 27, Master’s, Company Employee, Guangzhou).

It is clear that most participants considered tasting delicious local food a necessary part of their babymoon. They would love to spend time searching for food as long as it was indeed delicious.

4.3.4 The Preferred Babymoon Travel Mode

In the interviews, the participants were asked about the travel modes for their babymoon. Almost all participants (29) said they preferred to travel by themselves, instead of choosing a package tour arranged by travel companies or travel agencies. There were various reasons why they would like to travel on their own, which are listed as follows: 1) No mature babymoon travel packages were available that could

satisfy their needs; as one participant commented, “We did some research about the current travel products or packages. Unfortunately, we haven’t found any well-designed and mature babymoon products for us” (Participant No. 25, Female, 29, Master’s, Bank Clerk, Guangzhou). 2) The participants would like to design their own travel plans rather than to follow the fixed routes arranged by the travel companies; for example, a participant stated,

My wife and I would like to design our own plans if we were to take a vacation during our preparations for having a child, because we don’t think travel agencies know our needs better than we ourselves do. Only we know where we would like to visit, what kinds of foods we like. Therefore, we don’t want to choose to join a tour group for this purpose (Participant No. 15, Male, 30, Bachelor’s, Company Employee, Beijing).

3) They would like to have more privacy for themselves as couples trying to bring back the romance and passion in their marriage. They felt that a package tour offered little personal space and virtually no privacy. One participant said,

Every time I think of a package tour, I think of noises and crowds. I don’t like that; it will be very difficult for us to enjoy the travel. My husband and I really want a more private travel so that we can feel relaxed. And it will also be hard to create a romantic atmosphere (Participant No. 19, Female, 28, Master’s, Bank Clerk, Hangzhou).

It is also worth noting that a few participants expressed some interest in traveling on cruise ships.

I’ve never had a cruise vacation. I always feel traveling on cruise ships is so romantic that a couple should do it at least once in their lifetime. A cruise vacation is also very comfortable, because it almost covers everything and once we go on a cruise, we don’t need to make any additional arrangements during our trip. You just get on the cruise and have fun (Participant No. 2, Male, 29, Bachelor’s, Bank Clerk, Qingdao).

In summary, the travel packages available on the market could not satisfy the participants who wanted to take a babymoon. This dissatisfaction pushed them to

design their own travel plans and to travel on their own. The data also indicated that if there were good babymoon travel packages on the market that could satisfy the participants' needs, they would be very willing to pay for them.

4.3.5 Features of the Desired Babymoon Travel Packages

An open question was adopted in the interviews that asked the participants to describe their desired babymoon travel packages. The participants were encouraged by the researcher to describe all the details of their dream babymoon travel packages. Some basic features were identified that seemed necessary for a satisfactory babymoon travel package as perceived by the participants. As Table 4.3.5 shows, these features include “customized and all-inclusive,” “high quality accommodations,” “fertility and wellness beneficial programs,” “romantic arrangements,” “customer-oriented services,” and “delicious and healthy foods.”

Table 4.3.5 Features of the Desired Babymoon Travel Packages

| Features of the Desired Babymoon Travel Packages | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|--|------------------------|------------|
| High Quality Accommodations | 27 | 87.1 % |
| Customized & All-inclusive | 23 | 74.2 % |
| Fertility & Wellness Beneficial Programs | 22 | 71 % |
| Romantic Arrangements | 21 | 67.7 % |
| Customer-oriented Services | 16 | 51.2 % |
| Delicious and Healthy Foods | 16 | 51.2 % |

4.3.5.1 High Quality Accommodation

Accommodation was found to be an important element of the desired babymoon travel package. Most of the participants (27) mentioned they attached great

significance to the quality of the accommodation. For these participants, accommodation would play a key role in the quality of their sleep and sexual life during the trip, which would in turn affect their chance of getting pregnant. Therefore, it was understandable that they would want high quality accommodation for their babymoon. These participants put an emphasis on several aspects of accommodation including comfort, cleanliness, safety, and privacy. For example, a participant explained his understanding of the comfort of accommodations.

In my opinion, whether a resort or a hotel is comfortable actually depends on multiple factors. For me, the first thing I require of my room is to be very quiet because noise will disturb my wife and me, making a negative effect on our sleep and moods; I also want the room to be equipped with nice furniture, great bedding, and good bathroom facilities, and preferably a very large and comfortable double bathtub (Participant No. 26, Male, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Jinan).

Another participant said: "We would like the room to be decorated in a very fancy and cozy style" (Participant No. 20, Female, 27, Master's, Company Employee, Shanghai).

Besides the comfort of the accommodation, participants also emphasized the cleanliness of the environment. "I think for us, cleanness is the most important element in our evaluation of the accommodation. How can we stay in a dirty and disgusting environment? That's totally unacceptable" (Participant No. 30, Male, 28, Master's, University Faculty, Guangzhou). Safety also figured as a significant element in the accommodation requirement. The participants mentioned they cared about their safety during their trip.

We considered safety as a very important and part of the accommodation. We hope the hotels could protect our personal safety as well as our property safety. We once had a very bad experience in a hotel: our laptop was stolen, which

ruined the whole trip. We would never go to that hotel again (Participant No. 19, Female, 28, Master's, Bank Clerk, Hangzhou).

The last element of accommodation given much emphasis was privacy, which was also mentioned by many participants.

I would like to have some private time and space with my wife, especially when we are on a vacation during our preparations for having a baby. We would like to use it as a way to help us prepare for pregnancy. Thus we don't want anyone to disturb us. I hope the hotel could take some measure to ensure our privacy when we want to be alone (Participant No. 31, Female, 28, Bachelor's, Private Business Owner, Guangzhou).

4.3.5.2 Customized & All-Inclusive

The participants' responses also suggested that they preferred a babymoon package that was customized and all-inclusive. That means, once they have paid for this kind of travel package, they do not have to pay for virtually anything else and the package should cover almost everything in their vacation including transportation, accommodations, hotel taxes, meals, beverages, activities, and entertainment.

Sometimes, additional services and amenities (in this study, fertility and wellness-beneficial programs and romantic arrangements) may be included according to the needs of the tourists. In addition, the travel package should be designed especially for each couple to meet their unique needs and desires. For a customized all-inclusive babymoon package, a couple only needs to pay one price for the entire package, and then they could enjoy their unique travel experience without any worries.

As one participant indicated,

We take this vacation (i.e., babymoon) to relax ourselves, not to exhaust ourselves. Therefore, we really hope that the travel package will include all the necessary services and amenities based on our needs, so that we don't need to worry about making travel plans. We pay once, and then we can just enjoy ourselves! Planning

a trip is really annoying, especially when we are already so tired and stressed (Participant No. 24, Male, 32, Bachelor's, Senior Bank Manager, Beijing).

Many other participants expressed similar opinions. They all emphasized two features, which were all-inclusiveness and customization.

We hope the package could be designed according to our requirement so that it will satisfy our needs. We don't want to purchase those packages in which there might be something we don't like or need. Why should we spend money on something we just don't like or even don't need (Participant No. 20, Female, 27, Master's, Company Employee, Shanghai).

The customization service could assure that the tourists would have a package specially designed for them according to their own needs instead of joining a large tour group with fixed travel routes; and the all-inclusiveness feature would save them the trouble of making additional plans or arrangements.

4.3.5.3 Fertility & Wellness Beneficial Programs

When interviewed by the researcher, the participants implied that they would like to utilize the vacation to benefit their wellness, improve their chance of getting pregnant, and also to improve the health of their future babies. In other words, for these participants, a babymoon is a travel experience closely related to wellness and fertility. The findings also showed that participants were very interested in taking part in activities that would benefit them in terms of wellness and fertility, including fertility related lectures, workshops, herbal treatments, spas, specially designed diets, and massage.

If the resort could provide us with some special programs which are beneficial for our health and fertility, we will definitely try. For example, I've heard about some specially designed diet or herbal treatment that may induce ovulation for women, I really would like to try them (Participant No. 28, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Manager, Beijing).

Another participant indicated,

We are trying to get pregnant, but actually neither my husband nor I have much knowledge about fertility or pregnancy. I hope that the travel package for this type of vacation (i.e., babymoon) could include some workshops or lectures to help us learn more about pregnancy, for example, workshops on what we should do to improve the chance of getting pregnant, or on what we should do after becoming pregnant. The speaker must be very professional and also easy to communicate with. That would be really helpful for us (Participant No. 25, Female, 29, Master's, Bank Clerk, Guangzhou).

A few other participants expressed their interests in spa and massage, which they felt would be very helpful for them to relax and also improve their wellness.

4.3.5.4 Romantic Arrangements

The findings that the participants wanted the travel package to include romantic arrangements echo what has already been mentioned in the section on preferred activities in which participants noted they would love to participate in romance-oriented activities. The participants told the researcher that they hoped the package suppliers would design some very romantic events for them. The participants mentioned:

I like watching fireworks by the seaside, especially with my husband. I really love fireworks; they are gorgeous! If my husband can take me to the seaside to watch fireworks which are especially for me, I will be very, very excited and happy for sure (Participant No. 27, Female, 30, Bachelor's, Bank Manager, Qingdao).

I've always been longing for a special wedding; although we have already had a wedding but it was not anything close to what I had dreamed about. So I'm wondering whether my husband and I could have another wedding ceremony which follows the local customs of a travel destination, small but very sweet and memorable (Participant No.9, Female, 28, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Qingdao).

Some participants would like to take some very romantic photos of themselves and their spouses. Therefore, they suggested that the package should include a

professional photo shoot for couples (Participant No.14, Female, 27, Master's, Company Employee, Guangzhou).

Other romantic events mentioned by the participants included having a candlelight dinner with flowers and music at a fancy restaurant (Participant No. 17, Male, 30, Ph.D., University Faculty, Qingdao), watching stars with the beloved one (Participant No.20, Female, 27, Master's, Company Employee, Shanghai), visiting places with special meaning for people in love (Participant No. 21, Female, 29, Master's, Company Employee, Chengdu), and watching a good movie in a private cinema (Participant No.17, Male, 30, Ph.D., University Faculty, Qingdao). One participant said that she and her husband would like the bed decorated with rose petals arranged in a heart-shape or other romantic artifacts as this would remind them of the good memories of their honeymoon (Participant No.7, Female, 31, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Dalian).

4.3.5.5 Customer-Oriented Services

Good service is key to customer satisfaction in all service industries. The tourism industry is no exception. The findings in this study showed that participants greatly craved customer-oriented services, meaning that the service staff would provide warm, genuine care for customers and make much effort to resolve disputes, offer quality service, offer satisfactory answers to customers' questions, and ensure customer satisfaction. The participants explained their desired customer-oriented service to the researcher, which will be examined in the following paragraphs.

In my opinion, the first thing required of customer-oriented workers is to be helpful and professional. They should be willing to help the customers to solve any problems and make them feel relaxed and happy. The professional training they've received will make sure that they can better help their customers (Participant No. 17, Male, 30, Ph.D., University Faculty, Qingdao).

We love good service, and it is a necessary part of a great product for this kind of vacation. I think the customer-oriented workers should be very considerate and patient. For example, my wife and I will definitely appreciate good manners-- opening doors, maintaining eye contact throughout the conversation, beginning conversations with a pleasant greeting and avoiding interrupting when customers speak (Participant No. 29, Male, 33, Bachelor's, Company Employee, Shenzhen).

Several participants suggested that they would like to have a butler for their entire vacation.

We would like to have a butler or personal assistant who takes care of only us during such a vacation so that no matter what we need or what problems we've got, we can contact him or her for help or service. I think it would be much more convenient and easier for us that way because we wouldn't have to remember who to contact for what during our stay. Isn't it a good idea (Participant No. 13, Female, 26, Bachelor's, University Staff, Jinan).

4.3.5.6 Delicious and Healthy Food

The findings also showed that the participants wanted the babymoon travel package to include delicious and healthy food. Many participants complained that they were worried about the safety of the food in their routine life due to the serious environment pollution and the problems in food manufacturing and processing.

Therefore, they wished that in their babymoon, they would be able to enjoy delicious and fresh organic foods, to benefit their wellness and fertility. One participant said

In the cities, we are concerned about food safety. You never know whether the food you are eating every day is safe or not. Food with safety problems will cause many health problems, including infertility or fertility difficulty. That is horrible! I hope when my husband and I are having such a vacation (i.e., babymoon), the package could provide us with organic and very fresh food which both safe and delicious (Participant No.18, Female, 28, Master's, Civil Servant, Beijing).

Another participant also stated,

My husband and I are both big fans of delicious food. They will make the travel package much more attractive to us. There is also another important thing the food we care about: the food safety. We need to eat healthy food because we want to have a healthy baby. Therefore, we hope the travel package could prepare safe and healthy food for us. Of course, the food should also be delicious. Also the diet we are provided with in this type of vacation should be specially designed to contain all the necessary nutrition for pregnancy (Participant No.12, Female, 32, Master's, University Faculty, Jinan).

4.3.6 Travel Duration and Budget of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists

The last question the participants were asked in the interviews was about how long they would like to stay and how much they would like to spend for their babymoon. Most participants (25) said they would like to spend about five to ten days on this kind of vacation. "I plan to stay for about seven to ten days because if such a vacation is shorter than one week, it will not be enough for us to relax and enjoy" (Participant No. 2, Male, 29, Bachelor's, Bank Clerk, Qingdao). "We may stay for five to seven days, but I don't think our job would allow us to stay for longer than seven days" (Participant No.3, Male, 29, Master's, Private Business Owner, Beijing).

As for travel budget, the participants' answers varied. The participants who would like to travel abroad generally planned to spend 10,000 to 20,000 Chinese yuan per person; while the participants who selected a domestic destination had a budget of less than 10,000 Chinese yuan per person.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Analytical Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study has been to investigate and understand babymoon tourism, a phenomenon which has started gaining popularity in China but that has not received adequate attention in academic research and the tourism industry in China. In Chapter 2, within the conceptual framework, three main propositions with several sub-propositions were proposed that aimed to identify the backgrounds of young Chinese couples participating in babymoon tourism activities, investigate the factors motivating them to engage in the activities, and examine their travel behavior when engaged in a babymoon. Due to the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, a qualitative approach has been considered more appropriate compared to a quantitative method.

In this study, in-depth interviews with both demographic and open-ended questions were conducted in China with 31 qualifying participants (who were preparing for pregnancy and also had travel plans during the preparation). The data was then collected and analyzed using classic grounded theory (Glaser & Holton, 2004; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The results were presented holistically instead of individually so that all potential patterns would emerge. Furthermore, it was crucial to protect the

participants' identities. The findings in the results were used as the basis upon which the final conceptual model was developed in this study.

The following sections discuss the previously proposed propositions: The findings improved the prior propositions with more detailed information, and new propositions were added, as well, based on the data analysis. These propositions helped to improve the framework proposed and finally construct a more comprehensive conceptual model.

5.1.1 Propositions of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists' Backgrounds

1). Chinese babymoon tourists are well-educated and rich urban elites in the post-1980s generation.

Based on the demographic information collected from the participants, it could be suggested that these babymooners are young and successful urban couples. They are young, well-educated, and employed in high social status positions (e.g., college faculty and staff, public servant, enterprise senior manager) with a high income. They ranged in ages from 26- 33-years-old with an average age of 28.9, meaning that the babymooners were at the child-bearing period. They were all the post-1980s generation in China. It could be argued that every generation is special, but this group, born between 1980 and 1989, is particularly unique. According to Sabet (2011), “[They] have witnessed China’s gradual opening up and rapid economic growth. [Furthermore], they are a large population, roughly 300 million, the majority of whom are the only child in their own family due to the one-child policy established in 1979”

(p. 4). Chinese society has paid much attention to this group because the lives they choose to lead will impact the future of their country and the world (Sabet, 2011).

One of the Chinese babymoon tourists' most significant characteristics was their education level in that the majority of the participants hold at least a bachelor's degree (only one participant held a degree lower than that), and many of them have graduate level degrees--some have studied abroad. This finding echoes what Lubbe (2003) asserted in his study about the relationship between education level and travel--the more educated and cultivated tourists are, the wider their interests and knowledge will tend to be, and in turn they will be more likely to travel. Another significant group characteristic identified in the study was their high income. The participants averaged an annual household income of 278,030 Chinese yuan, far more than that of Chinese urban families, which is 70,876 Chinese yuan. The high income has provided them with more possibilities to travel; just as a New Zealand Travel Survey Report (1999) showed, people with high incomes spend more time travelling and travel farther than those with low incomes.

2). Chinese babymoon tourists are experienced travel enthusiasts who hold a negative evaluation of their subjective well-being.

The findings supported the original proposition that the babymooners are experienced travel enthusiasts. In the interviews, the participants invariably expressed their strong interests in travel and considered travel necessary. They all had some travel experience, and some even had experience of travelling abroad.

Also, findings showed that the participants mostly evaluated their subjective well-being negatively because of workplace stress, fertility stress, a lack of leisure time, fading passion in marriage, and financial pressure. This may help to understand why they are so interested in travel and tourism activities that could help them to get relaxed. As mentioned before, these participants were all from the post-1980s generation, which is also the first only-child generation in China. Being the only child in their family brought much more pressure to the participants; they were over-focused on by parents and grandparents and were more likely to feel lonely when growing up. Additionally, as adults, they will continue to have more pressure in regard to their fertility and their responsibility for taking care of their aged parents and grandparents. As literate and rich elites, they tend to have higher expectations for their life. However, in reality, they need to work hard and take on more family responsibilities, which has made them feel stressed and unsatisfied with their lives. Hence, they are more likely to travel more often in order to release their stress. In effect, as many studies have found, travel and vacations have positive effects on an individual's subjective well-being. Rubenstein (1980) showed that holidays could be a source of happiness and relaxation to alleviate headaches and fatigue of tourists; a qualitative study done by Hunter-Jones (2003) showed that among a group of cancer patients, holiday-taking had positive effects on personal health, social effectiveness, personal identity, and regaining independence. Other studies have suggested that because leisure travelers can choose their destinations, vacations contribute not only to their comprehensive life satisfaction (Nawijn & Peeters, 2010) but also to

satisfaction with a number of facets of their vacations (Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Saayman, & Nienaber, 2004). This helps explain why in this study the participants who had to fight various kinds of stress on a daily basis were all experienced travel enthusiasts.

5.1.2 Propositions of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists' Travel Motivations

Based on the data analysis, the prior propositions of Chinese babymoon tourists' travel motivations were greatly improved with more detailed information:

1). Chinese babymoon tourists travel to escape from daily routines and to relax and disconnect.

As argued in previous research, escaping is the “the desire to leave the everyday environment behind oneself” (Iso-Ahola, 1987, p. 261). Furthermore, according to Witt and Wright (1992), “People are motivated to seek leisure activities in order to leave behind personal and interpersonal problems of everyday life and obtain personal and interpersonal rewards from participation in these leisure activities” (p. 39). In the interviews, most of the participants expressed a desire to escape from their stressful and monotonous routine life and enrich their life through a leisurely babymoon. They hoped to disconnect with their normal life and put all the stressors behind to relax and rest because they were all quite stressed and tired already in their daily life. According to Crompton (1979), rest and relaxation refer to the desire to refresh oneself mentally and physically from normal day-to-day stresses and are both key elements in the seven socio-psychological or push motives framework (Crompton, 1979). In fact,

many participants in this study were found to share the belief that a babymoon would provide them with a great opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of travel and refresh or recover from fatigue and stress.

2). Chinese babymoon tourists travel to improve the relationship with their spouse and to seek wellness and fertility benefits.

Many participants described their relationship with their spouse as passionless. They mentioned that they missed those days when they were still very much in love and their relationship was characterized by passion and romance. However, passion and romance faded away and were replaced by the stress and monotony of routine life. The participants desired to improve their relationship and bring back the romance and love. According to a U.S. Travel survey conducted by Edge Research in 2012, couples who travel together have healthier, happier relationships compared to those who do not travel together. The survey also revealed that “traveling together makes [couples] significantly more likely to be satisfied in their relationships, communicate well with their partners, enjoy more romance, have a better sex life, spend quality time together and share common goals and desires” (Rubin, 2013, section 6).

The participants also believed taking a babymoon would be quite beneficial for their wellness as well as for fertility. The benefits of travel on the wellness of different groups of individuals have been confirmed in various studies (Milman 1998; Tarumi, Hagihara, & Morimoto, 1998). The participants were generally aware of and complained about the sub-health problems they had and expressed their desire to improve their wellness. They also expected the babymoon to bring fertility benefits,

i.e., increasing their chance of getting pregnant and helping them to conceive a healthy baby (if they could conceive successfully) because the babymoon would help them get rid of the stress of their daily life and provide them with a more relaxing and romantic environment in which they could focus on themselves. According to some research, chronic or severe stress jeopardizes human fertility because it leads to anovulation and amenorrhea in women (Barnea & Tal, 1991) and also leads to a decrease in sperm count, motility, and morphology (McGrady, 1984) in men. Taking a babymoon would greatly improve the physical and mental wellness of the tourists and would help them to relieve stress, which in turn might bring great benefits for fertility.

3). Chinese babymoon tourists travel for enjoyment, freedom, excitement, and to learn and discover new things.

Many participants suggested that they felt travel was fun, so they would like to seek enjoyment through a babymoon. In their description, when traveling, there would be more opportunities for them to engage in recreational and entertaining activities and to experience something interesting. Explained by Crompton (1997), this was the “desire to obtain psychological rewards through travel in a contrasting environment” (p. 261). Travel could also provide individuals with a sense of freedom and self-determination not available in everyday life (Krippendorf, 1987). As the participants claimed, they felt real and true when traveling because no one knew who they were and where they came from, and their only focus was to enjoy themselves. Participants in this study also mentioned they would like to see and learn new things and add to their knowledge in their babymoon vacation. In fact, learning and

discovery is not unique to Chinese babymooners. Individuals want to discover more about themselves and about the world at large; travel offers a means by which tourists can learn more about both. Sellick (2004) identified excitement as an integral component of learning, which was found to be an important factor of motivation for senior Australian tourists.

4). Chinese babymoon tourists' motivations for taking a babymoon are subject to constraints of time, travel cost, and travel safety.

It is argued that strength of motivation appears negatively related to perception of constraints (Alexandris & Carroll, 1997). Jackson(1993) also suggested people's participation in leisure activities might be determined by the strength of their motivations relative to their perceptions of constraints. In this particular study, results showed the major constraints for the babymooners are time, travel cost, and travel safety. The findings suggested that these constraints may prevent the participants from taking a babymoon although they really desired one. Almost all participants said they did not have much leisure time and this might prevent them from traveling, conforming to the findings in various other studies: For instance, Kay and Jackson (1991) reported that 36% of their respondents said lack of time constrained leisure activities. Shaw et al. (1991) also reported that 56% of their sample listed lack of time as an explanation for not traveling. Travel cost was also listed by the participants as a possible constraint. They would make a rough estimate of how much their babymoon would cost to see if they could afford it. If the costs were too high, they might not go for the babymoon. Similar results were found in Kay and Jackson's (1991) study in

which 53% of the participants considered a financial constraint to be the most important factor in constraining their leisure participation.

In addition to a lack of time and concern for travel cost, perceptions of travel safety and risk were another constraint discovered in this study. Participants were concerned about their safety and possible travel risks when they were making a travel plan. The role of perceived travel safety and risk in negatively influencing people's travel desire has been examined in multiple tourism studies (Cook & McCleary, 1983; Cossens & Gin, 1994; Mansfeld, 1992; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992; Um & Crompton, 1990).

5.1.3 Propositions of the Chinese Babymoon Tourists' Travel Behaviors

1). Family, friends and acquaintances, online travel sources, and travel agencies are the major sources of information for the Chinese babymoon tourists.

The travel information search played a key role in influencing tourists' decision making. According to Maser and Weiermair (1998), in tourism, "information can be treated as one of the most or even the most important factor influencing and determining consumer behavior" (p. 107). In the interviews, the participants were asked to describe the sources they used in their search for babymoon travel information. The findings suggested that they mainly obtained travel information from family, friends and acquaintances, online travel sources, and travel agencies. Conforming to the original proposition, most participants emphasized their trust toward the information they got from their families, relatives, and friends. As

Snepenger (1993) pointed out, tourists acquired travel information through non-marketer dominated information sources, such as personal experience, family, and friends. According to Gretzel and Yoo (2008), this kind of information source could also be considered as “word-of-mouth (WOM) communication, [which] refers to interpersonal communication among consumers concerning their personal experiences with a firm or a product. . . . WOM has long been recognized as one of the important external information sources for travel planning” (p. 36). It has been argued that because of the intangibility of travel products and difficulty in describing them, tourists tend to rely on word of mouth from an experienced and trustworthy source to lower perceived risk and uncertainty. This was confirmed in the participants’ responses in this study.

Besides family, friends and acquaintances, online travel websites and blogs and forums also served as a crucial information source for the young couples who were planning for their babymoon. The development of information technology has changed the business world and our everyday lives (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). In tourism, more and more tourism enterprises and organizations are adopting information technology to communicate with their customers through various channels. According to Pan and Turner (2010), “the development of information technology has changed the business world and our everyday lives. . . . In tourism, more and more tourism enterprises and organizations are adopting information technology to communicate with their customers through various channels” (p. 2). Searching for travel-related information is one of the most popular online activities

(Boase, 2006), and as more content becomes available, it is projected that travelers will search this content even more. Travel-related studies, such as Bonn, Furr, and Susskind, (1999), have reported the increase in online travel referrals directed toward arranging travel. In this study, the participants also reported that they liked to search for travel information online to plan their babymoon because of the convenience and vast coverage of online information. They obtained travel information mainly from some online travel forums, social networks, and tourism blogs.

In addition to the two information sources mentioned above, some of the participants also mentioned they would go to travel agencies or companies for information because they considered the latter more professional and experienced in providing travel information. This kind of travel information source was also recognized as one of the important marketer-dominated sources in Crotts (2000). He argued that the information tourists got from either brochures, advertisements, or information in other forms through tourism companies was dominated by marketers.

2). Chinese babymoon tourists mainly prefer nature-based and culture-based destinations.

Regarding their preferred babymoon destinations, the participants' responses could be grouped into two main categories, namely, nature-based destinations and culture-based destinations. The nature-based destinations mentioned by the participants include water-based attractions, resorts in the mountains or forests (for example, the Maldives and Tahiti), and places with a good climate. The participants' preference for nature-based destinations could possibly be explained by the believed

restorative effects of nature. The large amount of information about the restorative effects these participants had received from books, journals, TV programs, and websites made them believe that getting close to nature and uniting with nature would greatly improve their physical and mental well-being. From an academic perspective, according to attention restoration theory (ART; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995) and Ulrich's psycho-evolutionary stress reduction theory (1979, 1983, 1991), nature has restorative effects on individuals and helps people to recover from stress and fatigue (Ryan et al., 2010). ART uses the notion of directed attention to explain why nature has restorative effects. According to Van den Berg, Hartig, and Staats, (2007), this theory claims that extended or concentrated directed attention increases an individual's level of distraction. Increased distraction leads to directed attention fatigue, which is characterized by inability to focus, less tolerance, and more errors on tasks that need focused attention. Kaplan (1995) argued that directed attention fatigue may cause stress for people because they have fewer cognitive resources needed to manage everyday demands. An individual suffering from directed attention fatigue can take a break from the tasks contributing to the condition in a setting that does not cause this type of fatigue. The break can help the individual to regain the ability to direct attention. According to Newton (2007),

Ulrich (1983) argues that contact with or simply looking at natural spaces triggers physiological and psychological responses underpinning recovery from stress (e.g., reduced blood pressure, muscle tension, and pulse rate). He related this to our evolutionary relationship with nature which stimulates an

early-warning function located in the limbic system of the brain to interpret scenes of nature as places of safety and survival resulting in positive emotional reactions. (pp. 24-25)

Many scholars interested in the restorative effects of nature on human beings have investigated its effects. For example, a study carried out in the Netherlands (de Vries et al., 2003) revealed a link between the natural environment and people's physical wellness. The study found that, overall, people living in areas with more green space had better general health. Another Japanese longitudinal study (Takano et al., 2002) also confirmed a positive relationship between access to green spaces and health. Nature also helps people to improve their mental well-being. "Burns (2006) [proposed] that natural environments operate as a reciprocal inhibitor of depression. . . . [because] nature provides [people with] multiple stimuli that result in pleasurable input" Newton, 2007, p. 24). The natural areas are actively pursued by people to restore themselves from stresses of everyday life. Mace et al. (1999) summarized over 100 studies to argue that "natural environments play [an] important role in facilitating recovery from stress and that stress reduction consistently emerges as the key perceived benefits [sic] of a wilderness experience" (Newton, 2007, p. 24).

Culture-based destinations, including some famous historical cities and places with very unique and interesting cultures (e.g., some ancient European cities or old towns in China), buildings, structures, museums, and temples, were also found to be appealing to the babymooners. Many of the participants commented that they liked places with a long history and unique local culture so much that they really would like

to spend their babymoon in such places. Research has shown that rather than a typical beach-resort vacation, many tourists prefer cultural experiences. For example, they would like to visit cultural sites and take part in various cultural events. According to Kulkarni and Bhopatkar (2013),

The World Tourism Organization [reported] that more than 40% of all international tourists are interested in cultural destinations. . . . [Furthermore], the Travel Industry Association of America has estimated that two-thirds of U.S. adults visit a cultural or heritage site or attraction when they travel. (p. 1)

Additionally, Hennessey, Yun, & MacDonald (2014) stated that “the cultural elements in the context of tourism destinations may include entertainment, food, drink, hospitality, architecture, manufactured and hand-crafted products of a destination, and all other characteristics of a destination’s way of life” (p. 1). In this study, the participants mentioned they would like to visit museums, temples, some famous buildings, and architecture (e.g., a bridge), try some unique local food, interact with local people, and buy hand-crafted souvenirs in some ancient city or town. They considered visiting culture-based destinations as not only interesting but also helpful in that they could leave behind their stressful and boring routine life when traveling in such places.

3). Chinese babymoon tourists prefer to participate in recreation-oriented, romance-oriented, wellness-oriented, and food-oriented activities in the babymoon, and their choices are correlated with their travel motivations.

The original propositions that the babymooners may prefer to participate in recreational activities, romantic activities, and activities beneficial for wellness were supported by the findings of the study. Adding to that, the findings also showed that they also feel interested in food-oriented activities that could provide them with opportunities to taste delicious local food. In fact, their preference was closely correlated with their travel motivations. With a strong desire to escape from boring and stressful routine lives and relax, these tourists naturally preferred recreation-oriented activities, which could help them forget about all the trouble and stress in life. The second type of preferred activities, i.e., romance-oriented activities, could satisfy babymooners' need to enhance their relationship with their spouse by providing them with opportunities to spend quality time with the latter. The participants' eagerness to improve their wellness and increase the possibility of successful pregnancy would draw them to wellness-oriented activities. According to Myers, Sweeney, and Witmer, (2000), "wellness is a way of life oriented towards optimal health and well-being in which the body, mind, and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community" (p. 252). Travel was considered to be a good way to improve their wellness (Ryan, 1997). Hence, the increasing concern about wellness would motivate people to engage in various wellness-oriented activities when they were traveling. The desire for wellness-oriented activities in a babymoon suggested by participants in this study include spa or hot springs baths, massage, herbal treatment, and healthy diets. Many participants also mentioned they were very interested in activities that allowed them

to taste the local food in a travel destination. Shenoy (2005) commented that “food is a significant means to penetrate into another culture as ‘...it allows an individual to experience the ‘Other’ on a sensory level, and not just an intellectual one” (Long, 1998, as cited in Shenoy, p. 1). A component of the variety of tourist experiences, local food is an essential part of the characteristics of a destination. Additionally, “dining out [in a fancy restaurant] is a growing form of leisure where meals are consumed not out of necessity but for pleasure, and the atmosphere and occasion are part of the leisure experience as much as the food itself” (Shenoy, 2005, p. 1). For the babymooners, dining at a local restaurant in a travel destination to experience the local food and cuisine is an important part of their travel itinerary.

4). Chinese babymoon tourists prefer customized all-inclusive travel packages with high quality accommodation, beneficial programs for wellness and fertility, romantic arrangements, customer-oriented service, and healthy and delicious food.

When asked about their travel mode for their babymoon, the participants responded that they would like to travel on their own instead of buying existing travel packages because they were not satisfied with the products available in the market. A travel package usually refers to “the comprehensive service provided by a travel company for the tourists based on one or several themes (or topics)” (Liu et al., 2011, p. 408). Here, the theme would be babymoon. Based on the participants’ description about their desired babymoon travel package, several key features about the desired package were identified: Most participants were very much in favor of a customized all-inclusive travel package, one that is designed according to their own needs and

covers all necessary service, such as transportation, accommodation, hotel taxes, meals, beverages, activities and entertainment, and sometimes additional services and amenities (e.g., fertility and wellness-beneficial programs and romantic arrangements). This echoes the claim made in Jin, He, & Song (2011) that “service customization is becoming an increasingly popular method of catering to the heterogeneous needs of consumers” (p.1). It “allows consumers to specify the product or service characteristics that they desire,” which could increase the perception of value and consumer satisfaction (Dellaert & Stremersch, 2004, as cited in Jin, He, & Song, 2011, p. 1). Bloch (1996) also argued that customers tended to choose customized travel packages within a tourism context.

Within an all-inclusive travel package, the participants attached much importance to the quality of accommodation. Accommodation is a very important part of the tourism infrastructure. It creates a home away from their real home for the tourist (Tsyganok, 2013). The participants desired high quality accommodations that are comfortable, clean, safe, and private. Many participants also mentioned fertility and wellness beneficial programs and romantic arrangements for an all-inclusive package. These programs (e.g., spa, massage, and herbal treatment) could satisfy their needs to improve their wellness and positively influence their fertility; and the romantic arrangements would help the participants better enjoy their time with spouse and rekindle romance and passion in their marriage.

Customer-oriented service in an all-inclusive babymoon package was another aspect given much emphasis by the participants. It refers to helpful, professional,

considerate, and patient service in the babymoon. Some of the participants proposed the idea of having a butler or personal assistant--someone responsible just for them during the babymoon, someone to whom the couple could turn whenever they needed service or encountered problems. Last, the participants expressed their desire for healthy and delicious food in the babymoon travel packages. The desire could be explained by the prevalence of food safety problems in China. According to a news report, “food safety has always been an issue [in China] due to a lack of knowledge about contamination and hygiene standards...The problem is, buying anything here that is processed becomes a roll of the dice” (Huehnergath, 2014). The food safety problems may be caused by the following factors: Chinese food processing plants are staffed by workers with little education and limited knowledge of hygiene and sanitation; and China is still lacking an effective food safety supervision system (Huehnergath, 2014). Many participants expressed concern about food safety problems that they have to face every day in the cities, and they demanded organic, fresh and safe food which was healthy and delicious for the babymoon package.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions of the Study

5.2.1 An Empirical Behavioral Model of the Chinese Babymoon Tourism

The present study investigated an emerging phenomenon that has not been discussed or examined in previous research: young Chinese couples taking part in tourism activities during their preparation for having a baby. This kind of tourism has

started gaining popularity among young Chinese couples but has not received adequate attention in academic research or in the tourism industry. This study has aimed to fill in the gap in the tourism literature by looking into the backgrounds of this particular tourist segment and their decision-making process for a babymoon, including their travel motivation and travel behavior.

The data collected from the in-depth interviews was carefully analyzed, and based on the data analysis, the propositions proposed before data collection were improved, and several new propositions were also added. Then an empirical model was built on the basis of these propositions. The model aims to visualize the findings about this particular group of tourists (i.e., Chinese babymoon tourists) in terms of their backgrounds, their motivations for taking a babymoon, and their behaviors in the babymoon. Compared with the conceptual model proposed in Chapter 2, which only provided some basic simple constructs, the final model offers a more refined account of the babymooners, elaborating on the three key constructs (tourist backgrounds, tourist motivations, and tourist behaviors) and the interplay among them.

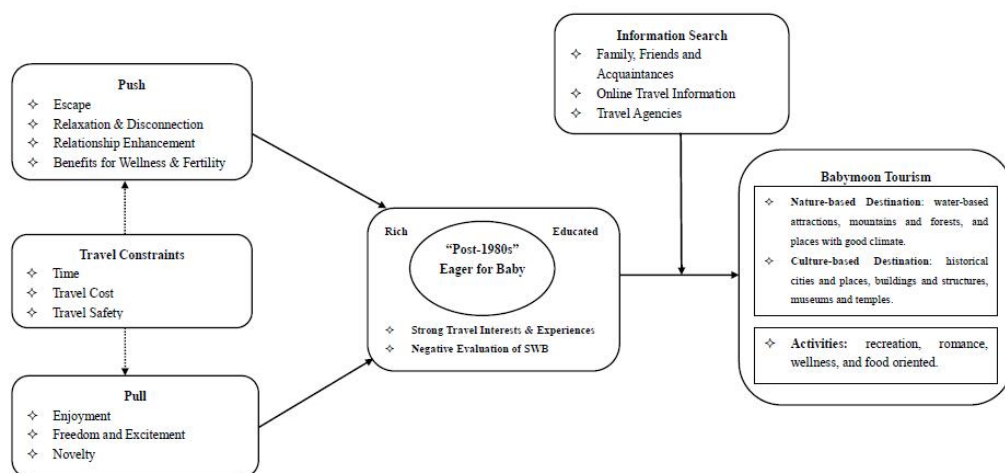


Figure 5.2.1 An Empirical Behavioral Model of the Chinese Babymoon Tourism

The market of Chinese babymoon tourism has great potential but has not received enough attention; thus, this dissertation would be of great importance to help understand this phenomenon and the particular group. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this dissertation incorporates perspectives from various fields of study such as social psychology, consumer behavior, and motivation to provide a framework that offers a deeper understanding. Using this model, the dissertation has contributed to the tourism literature by focusing on Chinese babymooners and systematically investigating their backgrounds, travel motivations, and travel behaviors for the first time in the field of tourism research.

This empirical behavioral model of the Chinese babymoon tourism is unique among existing models in relevant areas such as tourist motivation and tourist behavior in several respects. First, it was built as a systematic model to describe and understand the tourist group in the particular phenomenon of Chinese babymoon tourism, rather than just focusing on some fragmented aspects. For example, the model in this dissertation adds the component of babymooners backgrounds (including their personal background, travel experiences, and their subjective well-being) into the tourist decision-making process. Thus, this model is built to fit the particular tourist group in the phenomenon of Chinese babymoon tourism. In contrast, most existing models in tourist behavior studies describe the tourist decision-making process as a series of three to five interconnected steps evaluating different aspects of decision making and their interrelationships from pre-purchase to post-purchase (Correia & Pimpao, 2008; Crompton, 1979; Nicolau & Ma, 2005;

Woodside & King, 2001), but they all fail to take into consideration the tourist backgrounds in their analysis of the decision- making process. For instance, in a study conducted by Correia and Pimpao (2008) that focused on the decision-making processes of Portuguese tourists traveling to South American and African destinations, the scholars developed a conceptual framework that was composed of components of information sources, motivations, perceptions, satisfactions, and behavioral intentions. The results of their study showed how behavioral intentions preceded emotional and cognitive satisfaction, which in turn were explained through perceptions and motivations. Without taking the tourist backgrounds into consideration, this framework may lack validity in explaining some phenomena; for example, why tourists use particular information sources may relate to their backgrounds.

Furthermore, this model is built on a contextualized analysis of push and pull factors that incorporates the specific Chinese context from four different perspectives (i.e., cultural, economic, social, and emotional) and tourist backgrounds in the inquiry. The goal was to obtain a more accurate picture of the push and pull factors that underlie the phenomenon under investigation, i.e., babymoon tourism. By comparison, many existing studies on tourist motivations that also utilized the concept of push and pull factors in order to build tourist motivation models have been conducted from a general perspective. Although some studies have also focused on the travel motivations of a particular population, the influences of backgrounds on travel motivations were neglected in these studies. For example, Yoon and Uysal's (2005) study proposed a framework based on the concept of push and pull factors to examine

the structural, causal relationships among tourist motivations, satisfaction, and destination loyalty. However, their framework simply fitted their analysis into the concept of push and pull factors, building a bipartite model consisting of push and pull motivations. To be more specific, in the self-administered questionnaire used to collect data in their study, items related to push and pull travel motivations were all developed on the basis of a review of the related literature, and there was no effort made to develop other items to account for influential contextual factors. In contrast, the current study takes into account the special Chinese context (including the cultural, social, economic, and emotional factors that underlie this context) and tourists' backgrounds to better explain the push and pull motivation for the Chinese who engage in babymoos.

To summarize, this model has been developed to investigate and explain the particular phenomenon of Chinese babymoon tourism: thus, great fits were shown between the model and the phenomenon: the specific desire to pursue benefits for fertility, the incorporated tourist background, and the preferences for wellness oriented activities. However, in addition to those fits for the babymoon tourism phenomenon, this model may also help scholars make sense of the broad-based literature and to identify future research avenues in this area. It is intended to be adaptable to help a wide variety of individuals in diverse settings, for example, tourism managers who need help with real-world situations or researchers, novice or experienced, investigating the literature. It may even provide valuable references in developing a systematic framework for future research on other tourism phenomena.

5.2.2 Contribution to the Tourist Typologies

In addition to building the model, this dissertation has also made a contribution to the literature of tourist typologies by introducing and classifying a new tourist typology that has not received enough attention: the Chinese babymoon tourist. Defining tourist typologies is of great importance to discover and understand distinct tourist groups--for the planning, management, and marketing of tourism especially in special interest tourism, e.g., sports tourism and dark tourism (Smith & Smale, 1980; Taylor, 1986). According to Hvenegaard (2002), classifying different tourist typologies enables managers to understand the varying motivations, experiences, and effects of tourists and to recognize the type of tourist expected at differing steps in the development of tourism areas.

Hvenegaard (2002) reported that Murphy (1985) identified two broad categories of tourist typologies, interactional and cognitive-normative. Furthermore, Lowyck et al. (1992) similarly distinguished between tourist typologies and typologies of tourists' lifestyles (cited in Hvenegaard, 2002). Generally speaking, interactional tourist typologies center on tourists and destination area interactions. Healy (1992), however, proposed a typology based exclusively on tourist destinations (cited in Hvenegaard, 2002). Cohen (1972) posited a four-part interactional tourist typology centered on the degree to which tourists want a familiar and institutionalized environment. Other interactional tourist typologies have examined travel activities, concerns, and attitudes (Perreault et al., 1977) and focused on regions (Ditton et al., 1975) or specific

locations (Collins & Hodge, 1984, cited in Hvenegaard, 2002). Finally, ecotourism uses interactional tourist typologies to identify eco-tourists.

Hvenegaard (2002) further explained that cognitive-normative tourist typologies look at tourists' motivations, including those motivated to travel alone and seek adventure, those also traveling alone to destinations that cater to them, and those who want to travel with a group to a trendy destination. Tourists' motivations are also typed as existential, experimental, experiential, diversionary, or recreational.

In this dissertation, to define the typology of Chinese babymoon tourist, the study first redefined the term babymoon and proposed the concept of babymoon tourism within the Chinese context to refer to the phenomenon. In Western contexts, babymoon is defined as a vacation a Western couple takes subsequent to conception but prior to the birth of their baby. In contrast, in the current study, babymoon is defined as "a vacation taken by young Chinese couples who are eager for babies but having difficulty in conception due to various stresses, with the aim of increasing the possibility and quality of conception by reducing the stress and rekindling the romance with their partner."

The current study classified and defined the Chinese babymoon tourist by comparing babymoon tourism in this study with several other types of tourism (fertility tourism, reproductive tourism, medical tourism, and honeymoon tourism) studied in previous research that bear surface similarities to the phenomenon under investigation in terms of the tourist groups and the activities in which the tourists participate during their trips. The present study focused on the tourist group with the

following features: 1) they have been married for a while, 2) they have fertility difficulties due to various stresses but are not physically infertile, 3) they are preparing to have a child, and 4) they have a great desire for leisurely tourism activities in their preparation for pregnancy. Put in a different way, the typology of the Chinese babymoon tourist has unique characteristics and is worth our attention.

5.3 Practical Contributions of the Study

In addition to the above mentioned theoretical contributions, the findings of the study offer important insights of much value to the practice: First, the study helps draw attention to the great demand for babymoon tourism in China, which is a neglected, large market with much potential. Especially with China's new family planning policy established in October 2015 that all Chinese couples will soon be allowed to have two children, the demand for babymoons and relevant travel products could possibly be even higher. The findings of this study showed that no satisfactory travel products and packages were available in the market that could meet the needs of the babymooners.

In the current Chinese tourism market, although some kinds of products exist to serve the particular group of babymooners, these products are actually just fragmented pieces rather than a systematic babymoon package desired by the tourists. For example, in Beijing, some travel agencies now provide service for those young couples who would like to have a vacation during their preparation for pregnancy in the U.S. By phone, a manager introduced the relevant services and his customers to

the writer of this dissertation. His company had received a request for special arrangements from some young couples. Compared with other run-of-the-mill customers who just visit the U.S. in a package tour, these young couples desire a more private and flexible schedule. Additionally, they do not want to stay in the usual type of hotel but prefer to stay in an apartment or house in the local community. The length of their stay is usually longer than the normal package tour--from 12 days to a month, or even several months. These couples would like to spend a very relaxing and private time just for the two of them to help themselves get pregnant. Most of the customers are familiar with neither the foreign language nor the local environment; consequently, they turn to the travel agencies for help and convenience. To satisfy the needs of these customers, the travel agencies will provide services to help them, including getting their visas, booking air tickets, and arranging for local house and car rental. However, their services are only limited to these basic aspects without any other products or services relating to fertility and are also very fragmented.

Another example of the products in the current market that may be seen as a possible babymoon product is the fertility helping center. For instance, on the Beidaihe River, a famous tourism destination city for its beautiful scenery and good living conditions, there exist some fertility helping centers. The couples with fertility difficulties or sub-health problems could receive relevant treatment to help them resolve their problems and increase the possibility of pregnancy. However, these centers' services are also limited, focusing only on wellness and fertility related services and treatments, including herbal treatment, spa, massage, and also some

special diet plan. To sum up, the current Chinese tourism market lacks a well-designed babymoon product and cannot satisfy the demands of this particular tourist group.

In addition, the present study provides useful information about Chinese babymoon tourists for the industry, including their backgrounds, travel motivations, and travel behaviors. It has also made valuable suggestions regarding the design of the babymoon travel package proposed on the basis of the needs and requirements of the babymooners (see Figure 5.3). The practitioners could use the findings and proposals made in this study in their design of babymoon travel packages that could appeal to this potential market. To be specific, the following suggestions may be beneficial for the industry to design satisfactory babymoon products for the customers:

From the perspective of hotel and resort design:

When selecting the locations for future hotels and resorts, access to nature should be carefully considered because of the restorative effects of nature on human wellness. A hotel built close to nature would be very convenient for the customers to interact with the natural environment. If it is not realistic for the hotel to be built in a good location near to nature, decorations with natural elements, such as natural images and vignettes could still be used to create a relaxing and comfortable setting for the customers.

In hotel rooms, the windows should also be well designed in order to create a good view of the natural scenery. Furthermore, many participants demand a high quality accommodation for their babymoon; consequently, the rooms should be

equipped with comfortable furniture and good bedding to provide a fantastic environment for the couples. When designing and building the hotel, good sound proofing should also be considered.

From the perspective of the babymoon package design:

A well designed babymoon package should start from understanding the different needs of each couple. Participants in this study mentioned that they would like to design their own babymoon according to their particular needs. Thus, an ideal approach for the tourism company is to talk with the couple first and then design a customized package based on their needs. After listening to the needs of a couple who desire a babymoon, the tourism company would know what kind of services should be included in the package. Also, the package should be an all-inclusive one, which means the customers pay once and then the package will include everything they need for the babymoon (e.g., transportation, accommodation, romantic arrangements, fertility and wellness-beneficial programs, special diet plan, and delicious food).

To satisfy this particular group of tourists, the industry also has to provide customer-oriented and high standard service. Based on the findings of the current study, when designing a babymoon package, the provider may consider a butler service for each couple. That is to say, a couple would be assigned a private butler to assist and serve them. No matter what kind of problems they might encounter or what kind of request they might entertain, the couple could turn to their butler for help to arrange any kind of services for them, such as a special diet plan, a tour to nearby places, or a romantic arrangement.

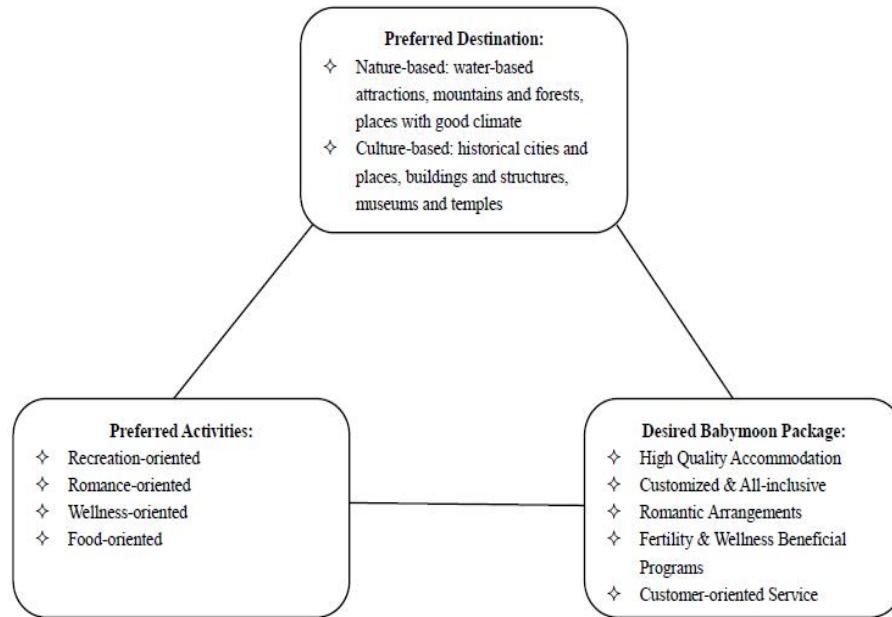


Figure 5.3 Chinese Tourists' Preferences for an Ideal Babymoon

Another practical contribution of this dissertation is that it possibly can help couples who are struggling in their stressful lives to get pregnant realize the importance of dealing with stress and improving their quality of life, which will in turn positively influence their fertility. If couples' birth-giving problem could be solved, it would also help to maintain the stability of the society. As previously mentioned, Chinese culture has greatly emphasized the value of children so that children play a key role in the Chinese family and society. As a result, for those couples who are unable to have children or those with fertility difficulties, they might consider adopting a child to satisfy their desire for children. This demand for child adoption has boosted the market of illegal adoption because adoption by illegal means is much easier than adoption through the legal system. In recent years there has been a high rate of criminal cases related to children-trafficking in China. A large number of families and parents are suffering from the pain of losing their children. According to

a report, the children who have been stolen and sold in China for illegal adoption number at least 70,000 (McDonald, 2008). These crimes have severely disturbed the social stability of the country. Therefore, by providing those Chinese couples facing fertility difficulties with valuable information to solve their birth-giving problem, this study could possibly help to maintain the stability of the Chinese society.

Last, the findings of this study may help the government recognize the significance of this type of tourism and the importance of facilitating its development. First, the development of this type of tourism might possibly help to decrease the rate of criminal cases related to children-trafficking in China; second, it might help increase the state tax revenue and job opportunities and ease the employment tension in China. The government could do much to help tourism enterprises to develop the babymoon tourism market. For instance, the government should remove barriers for tourism companies by reducing license fees, commercial requirements, and paperwork. In addition, the government might also provide financial support, training, and marketing intelligence for tourism enterprises.

5.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study offers insights into Chinese babymoon tourists' backgrounds, travel motivations, and travel behaviors that can be useful for tourism practitioners, the government, couples who are suffering fertility difficulties, and other possible stakeholders. However, this study serves only as a starting point for researching the

emerging phenomenon of babymooners. The participants were interviewed before they actually took the babymoon, meaning that the findings based on such interviews have presented only part of the picture. For future research, longitudinal studies can be conducted to investigate the actual effects of a babymoon on these Chinese tourists or to investigate where the tourists go and the specific types of activities in which they participate. In addition, this study adopted a qualitative approach, using data collected from interviews with 31 participants to explore the phenomenon of babymoon and to understand the babymooners. The findings provide only a partial understanding of the phenomenon and of the group; further exploratory studies involving more participants are still needed to investigate more about this tourist group and the phenomenon. An instrumental survey can be designed based on the theoretical framework proposed in this study in order to further explore and test the factors identified: For example, a more detailed investigation of the motivational factors that were found to play a role in the participants' decision-making process can be carried out by quantitative methods.

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