An Investigation into Sustainable Strategies of New Zealand and Chinese Tourism Businesses

By Xingzhen Su

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Abstract

This study focuses on the sustainable strategies and practices of six selected tourism business case studies. With the rapid development of the global tourism industry, its negative impacts on tourist destinations have emerged globally. Therefore, the concept of sustainable tourism has received more and more attention. Chinese tourism businesses have different understandings and practices of sustainable tourism compared with New Zealand tourism businesses. Thus, this study analyses the performance of sustainable strategies and practices of New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses. The research data was collected from the official websites and corporate social responsibility reports of six tourism businesses of New Zealand and China. The first key finding is that New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses differ in their focuses and understandings of sustainable tourism. Another main finding is that both New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses are concerned about the socio-cultural aspect of sustainable tourism, but in terms of the environmental aspect, the Chinese tourism businesses that were studied focus only on energy and resources, especially scarce energy and resources, rather than the ecosystem. Future research could consider the economic aspect of sustainable tourism more into the scope of research to explore the economic, socio-cultural and environmental performance and impacts of tourism businesses' sustainable strategies and practices.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed: _____   Date: 29th November 2018

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The researcher is an international student from China, who has traveled with his parents throughout China since he was a child. He has visited many places of interest in China, including cultural and natural scenery. After that, he realised that tasting local cuisine and understanding local customs could increase his knowledge and broaden his horizon. The fast development of Chinese tourism and the improvement of Chinese living standards have resulted in Chinese people to travel more during their holidays.

What impressed the researcher most is that recently the tourist experience has been getting worse. No matter which tourist attractions, most are now full of tourists and overcrowded and tourists must stand in long queues for dining or parking. The environment of tourist destinations in China has been damaged and polluted by countless tourists, such as the litter thrown away by tourists everywhere.

Later, when the researcher traveled to many countries where tourism industries are more developed, such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand, he found a different situation in those countries from China. Initial investigation of tourists and staff of tourism businesses in New Zealand showed that the concept of sustainable tourism and the strategy of environmental protection was more of a focus. The researcher with this study aims to explore the causes of the differences between China and New Zealand by comparing the understandings of sustainability of two countries' tourism businesses.

1.2 Background

Tourism can promote economic development faster than other industries, attract financial capital, raise awareness of tourism development, improve infrastructure, and create new jobs (Swanson & Edgell, 2013). At the same time, with the fast development of Chinese tourism industry, an increasing number of people are capable to travel at home and abroad. According to the EU SME Centre (2015), there were 26005 Chinese travel agencies in

China serving 131.2 million domestic and 144.6 million international tourists in 2014.

The high-speed development of Chinese tourism has stimulated the prosperity of Chinese tourism businesses in recent years, and new tourism businesses are emerging in large numbers during this period. Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017) state that tourism businesses, including travel agencies and tour operators, are playing an increasingly crucial part in tourism, and relying on that, tourism businesses can become vital participants in the promotion and implementation of sustainable strategies

The marketisation of China's tourism businesses began in the late 1970s when New Zealand's tourism businesses had been growing for more than a century. New Zealand tourism businesses have many successful experiences in sustainable strategy and corporate social responsibility, which are worth learning form by the Chinese tourism businesses. Those successful experience can aid Chinese tourism businesses to resolve some problems they face because of the increasing number of travelers.

According to Wijk and Persoon, (2006), more and more research is concerned with the sustainable development of tourism, especially its influences on the environment and socio-culture. In response to tourists' demand, the corporate social responsibility of tourism businesses includes sustainable strategies as well as social responsibility for finance, environment and society

This dissertation intends to compare the sustainable strategies of the selected New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses through analysing their official websites and corporate social responsibility reports, in order to assist Chinese tourism businesses to formulate necessary sustainable strategies and promote the development of sustainable tourism by using the experience of New Zealand tourism businesses for reference.

China is rich in cultural and natural resources and has enormous potential to develop sustainable tourism. The analysis of the sustainable strategies of New Zealand tourism

businesses can benefit the sustainable development of Chinese tourism. To achieve the aim of this dissertation, the following questions will be analysed and answered.

1. How much attention do Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses place on sustainable practices?

2. What specific factors of sustainable tourism are presented by Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses and the differences between them?

1.3 Research Methods

The study considers global sustainable tourism development, national and local sustainable strategies of the two countries as well as their socio-cultural and environmental influences. The main research method used in this dissertation is a web-based analysis method relying on tourism businesses' official websites and relevant reports, such as corporate social responsibility reports. Robson (2002) stated that content analysis procedure includes four steps:

- Electing the proper documents of study objects
- Creating codes, including words, phrases and sentences
- Counting the frequency of codes
- Grouping all connected codes as the analysis object for discussion

To effectively investigate the sustainable strategies of tourism businesses and analyse the similarities and differences between them, it is vital to select tourism business which can provide sufficient reliability of data. The researcher will scan global and the national sustainable tourism policies of two countries as well as review literature and select six local tourism businesses. The selection criteria focus on the tourism businesses who have won or been nominated for relevant international or national awards, which are more representative of each country's tourism industry.

1.4 Outline of the Study

This research consists of six chapters. The second chapter reviews the literature about the tourism industry's importance and impacts, the development process of the concept of

sustainable tourism, and corporate social responsibility of tourism businesses. Chapter 3 concentrates on the research methodology adopted to respond to the research question, including the research strategy, the research design, the data collection and limitations. Chapters 4 presents the findings of the web-based content analysis of the six cases as related to their sustainable tourism strategies, and chapter 5 discusses the research results from chapter four with the aim of responding to two research questions. Finally, Chapter 6 draws a conclusion of the study and makes some suggestions for future study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The chapter involves five sections on sustainable tourism development, its definitions and linked concepts. Part one presents theoretical concepts and the association between diverse levels of tourism from global, national, regional to the local level, including the theoretical concept of the global-local nexus framework of Alger (2014) adopted in this study. Part two shows the influences of tourism, for example, tourism's beneficial and damaging impacts on national economic, socio-cultural and environmental contexts. Part three demonstrates the past definitions of sustainable tourism and its development process. Part four reveals the diverse definitions of tourism businesses between the two countries, such as the tour operators, travel agencies, as well as the differences between them. This part also presents some guidance on sustainable tourism development by several global, national and local tourism organisations. Part five shows the definitions of corporate social responsibility and the association between corporate social responsibility and sustainable strategies of tourism businesses.

2.1 Global-Local Nexus Framework

According to Alger (2014), tourism is expanding globally, but it is also developing unevenly and regressively in some areas. For example, urban and rural areas are affected differently by the development of tourism. Gursoy, Uysal, Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci & Baloglu (2014) stated that in the context of rapid global development of the tourism industry, the local social and economic development level of destinations influences the local tourism industry progress. To better understand the connection between diverse levels from global, national, regional to the local level, the dissertation applies the theoretical concepts of the global-local nexus framework (Alger, 2014).

From a global perspective, according to Thomas Cook Group of Companies (2014), the first leisure tourism business opened by Thomas Cook in Loughborough in June 1841. In 1845, he operated his first commercial tour group. According to Gyr (2010), the emergence and popularity of trains and cars also promoted the development of the tourism

industry. In 1952, the emergence of commercial air flights and the jet aircraft marked the opening of the modern tourism industry. The following decade was considered a vital period for the development of tourism, as more and more tourism businesses emerged and competition for tourists became increasingly intense. tourists moved to mass tourism, introducing new travel destinations and styles of holidaying.

As cited by Gyr (2010), the global tourism industry is vulnerable to international events. At the beginning of the 21st century, international events brought the global tourism industry into recession, such as the September 11 attacks and the United States subprime mortgage crisis. Meanwhile, the widespread use of the Internet has brought an unprecedented technological change in the tourism industry. During the first decade of this century, travel online bookings raised exponentially.

In the mid-19th century, the boom of ocean-going lines spurred the early development of New Zealand tourism (Margaret McClure, 2010). The first tourists were rich tourists from Britain and America. The industry continued to grow very slowly until it ushered in the rapid development of the 1960s. According to Margaret McClure (2010), at the end of the last century and the commencement of this century, New Zealand's tourism industry became more prosperous and intricate, offering tourism products related to culture, adventure and nature. The backpacker hotels, souvenir shops, restaurants, hotel chains and cruises serve various visitors, from independent travelers to guided tour groups.

According to TravelChinaGuide (2018), until 1978, with the implementation of the Reform and Opening-Up Policy, Chinese tourism began to develop independently. At that time, Chinese people traveled abroad mostly to visit relatives. In order to cope with the expansion of market demand, there was an increasing number of tourism businesses. As stated by TravelChinaGuide (2018), in 1997 the rapid development of the Internet promoted the emergence of online travel services in China. Several leading Chinese tourism businesses have set up their own websites, facilitating foreigners to travel to China. At the same time, outbound travels also flourished, with China becoming Asia's

largest tourist source country. Tourism had gradually become an indispensable industry of the Chinese economy. Online travel services experienced fast development in the first decade of this century. At the same time, China has grown into the largest domestic and outbound tourism market in the world, while inbound tourism is also growing steadily.

2.2 Tourism's Influences on the Economy, Socio-Culture and Environment

According to Heitmann and Robinson (2016), tourism is one of the world's most rapidly developing industries and has different types of impacts on tourist destinations, including environmental, social and economic influences. However, Boksberger and Laesser (2007) pointed out there is a status quo that the tourism' influences are mainly focused on its environmental and ecological impacts because of the promotion of ecologists. Heitmann and Robinson (2016) also stated that in general, tourism benefits local economic and social development, and raises local visibility and provides more financial support for local authorities to protect the local environment.

Heitmann and Robinson (2016) point out several benefits of the tourism industry, including creating more job opportunities, increasing the income level of local people, and providing financial support for local authorities in education and medical care. In contrast, as cited by Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017), the traditions and customs of tourist destinations and the daily lives of the local population can be undermined and threatened by tourism, and the tourism industry also can overdevelop tourist destinations' natural and social resources. Timms and Conway (2012) added some other adverse impacts of the fast expansion of tourism, such as socio-cultural and environmental degradation and expanding inequality of wealth amongst local residents

2.2.1 Socio-cultural Impacts

Among researchers from sociology and anthropology, in particular, tourism has often been seen as a major negative influence on the culture, traditional lifestyles of tourist destinations' residents (Slocum & Kline, 2017). Hashimoto (2014) states that the development of tourism has been considered as an effective way to promote economic

development, rather than sociocultural development. Sociocultural development emphasises the improvement of various indicators, including those relating to living conditions, living quality, people's well-being, reduced mortality rates, increased literacy rates and access to good health and education services. Hashimoto (2014) concluded that in general, it seems that there is little connection between the development of tourism and the improvement of those indicators.

Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017) argue that tourism is able to contribute to local socio-cultural identity and social harmony. It not only promotes the improvement of local public infrastructure, but also the protection of local traditional socio-cultural resources. For instance, the authority of tourist destinations invests in the reconstruction of local historical and cultural buildings for the development of the tourism industry.

Heitmann and Robinson (2016) note that although the development of tourism can bring more employment opportunities and accelerate capital flow to tourist destinations, and even revitalise local traditional crafts, it often pays no attention to the demands and rights of local people. In the past, the traditional rituals held each year were cultural and religious, but if they are shown to tourists every day, the cultural and religious significance of these traditional rituals to local residents will gradually diminish, and local residents' cultural identity will also weaken. According to Tibet Watch (2014), for example, the mystery of Tibet has always attracted visitors from all over the world. But now the mystery of Tibet is commercially packaged by local travel developers. The development of tourism in Tibet has negatively influenced local socio-culture, environment and religion. Developers have improved supporting facilities to enhance the tourism experience, some facilities actually hinder traditional pilgrimages, and the ads spurred more visitors, but the true pilgrims have to worship in a limited space and even are kept out of pilgrimage sites (Tibet Watch, 2014).

Beeton (2006) pointed out that living in a tourist destination, the pride and identity of residents to local can be increased by tourism, and tourism also can provide opportunities

to put tourist-generated funds into community projects such as perfecting infrastructure and tourist supporting facilities at tourist destinations to increase the reasons for residents to welcome tourists. At the same time, the sound infrastructure and tourist supporting facilities and the attitude of local communities towards tourists also can react to local tourism. For example, if visitors feel that they are not welcomed by local residents, they may leave early and will never revisit.

Also, Meyer (2010) noted that philanthropic donations often appear in the tourism businesses' corporate social responsibility, including contributions to orphanages and schools, financial aid of students, donations to environmental foundations and non-profit organisations. Besides for fulfiling corporate social responsibility, Macharia, Thenya and Ndiritu (2010), added that those foundations and organisations will spend money on the promotion and education of the conservation concept, which can raise public awareness, empower communities to recognise the necessity of protecting ecosystems and the environment and inspire them to actively protect tourism resources, such as natural, historical and cultural resources. According to Fernandes, Coelho and Brázio (2015), historical and cultural resources are important tourism resources. For example, the earliest known travelogue indicates that people traveled historical and cultural sites in ancient times, and now travelers can visit historical and cultural sites to understand and experience the culture, folklore, customs, natural and historical landscapes, so it is indispensable to conserve historical and cultural resources, for example, Maori culture and heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

2.2.2 Economic Impacts

Weisbrod and Simmonds (2011) define the economic impact of tourism is determined by the changes that capital flows bring to the local economy, including manufacture and communities. According to Schubert, Brida, and Risso (2011), the increasing arrival of tourists has improved the current economic and financial situation of many countries, particularly small countries such as New Zealand, which are increasingly affected by their tourist arrivals. Since small countries are constrained by their limited natural and socio-

cultural resources, reliance on tourism rather than other kinds of industries is a viable option for them to promote their economies. However, sometimes the contribution of tourism to local development is minimal. Heitmann and Robinson (2016) gave an example to further interpret this when tourists visit tourist destinations, a large part of tourism consumption is related to transportation and accommodation, and the profits are made by hotel chains and airlines. Local governments and residents of tourist destinations make limited profits from tourism's prosperity.

2.2.3 Environmental Impacts

Nakagami, Nwe, Prideaux and Cooper (2009) noted that the most frequently cited impacts of tourism are those on the environment. Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017) list some advantageous examples of tourism, such as protection, renovation and reconstruction of historic buildings, maintenance of national parks and reserves, protection of coral reefs and coastal ecosystems, and conservation of forest resources.

In contrast, tourism also has a lot of destructive effects on the environment, some of them are becoming more and more serious (Dolnicar, Crouch, & Long, 2008). Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017), Heitmann and Robinson (2016), and Desai and Potter (2013) add that tourism can have a direct environmental influence on air and water quality and noise levels. The discharge of sewage into the water and the use of motorboats in rivers and protected waters can cause water pollution. Increased use of gasoline and diesel fuel for tourism transport and hotel air conditioners have contributed to air pollution. Nightclubs and other forms of entertainment, as well as heavy traffic, can dramatically increase noise levels in urban areas. As for plastic waste, Heitmann and Robinson (2016) and Jafari (2002) noted that uncontrolled solid waste generated by tourists and their activities in some popular resort destinations also threaten the local ecosystem and environment.

In terms of influences on ecosystems, Benckendorff, Sheldon, and Fesenmaier (2014), and Mason (2015) noted that native flora and fauna are more vulnerable to threats and

disturbances from invasive alien species. Severe damage to plant and animal species can occur if tourism is not managed adequately and tourists do not behave appropriately. However, Mak (2004) argued that tourism has beneficial impacts on the environment by contributing to the conservation of the environment and wildlife as well as the maintenance of parks and reserves.

Holden (2017), Schrijver and Schrijver (2015), Turan and Karakoc (2010) and Scott et al., (2008) added that in addition to air pollution, the increased application of fossil fuels in vehicles, cruises and planes also causes the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere to gradually increase, resulting in the greenhouse effect, global warming and climate change which pose threats to the sustainability of tourism throughout the world, especially in some Pacific island countries. Idowu et al., (2015) and Marr (2012) pointed out in order to measure of the amount of greenhouse gases, the term 'carbon footprint' was issued, which means the amount of carbon emissions released into the atmosphere each year as a result of human activities

According to Zhao and Li (2018), with the aim of promoting the development of tourism and appeal to more tourists, some cities in China have sacrificed the ecological environment. However, environmental issues for example water pollution and haze have led to a decline of inbound tourist arrivals in China. Currently, the Chinese government has promised to gradually lower carbon dioxide emissions. Obviously, Wu and Shi (2011) concluded that China has many environmental problems to be resolved and needs to diminish the negative influences of tourism on the environment and develop natural resources sustainably. Energy conservation and emission reduction are indispensable to the Chinese tourism industry.

Mason (2015) points out that the pure natural environment of New Zealand is an important reason why it can attract tourists from all over the world. This feature is used to promote New Zealand's tourism to international tourists. However, the New Zealand government is concerned about the damaging influences of tourism on the environment,

as in ensuring quality tourist experience requires its clean and green image. Another reason is coastal areas and offshore islands, lakes and rivers, as well as mountainous areas, have been recognised as the areas with the most vulnerable natural environment in New Zealand (New Zealand Tourism Board, 2007).

2.3 Sustainable Tourism Definitions

The Brundtland Report, also known as 'Our Common Future', published by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987, puts forward the significance of sustainable development and environmental protection (Fletcher et al., 2017). In the Brundtland Report, sustainable development defined by WCED (1987) is the development which satisfies the demands of contemporaries without endangering the demands of posterity.

Managi (2007) stated that after sustainable development's definition was proposed, an increasing number of people understood sustainable tourism development. In 1992, Agenda 21 was issued on the Rio Earth Summit which is considered to mark the beginning of the formulation and implementation of sustainable development policies. Øian et al. (2018) state that as people now pay more attention to the influence of tourism development, the concept of sustainable tourism can be a viable strategy for tourism participants to handle the environmental, socio-cultural and economic issues generated by tourism.

The most widely accepted definition of sustainable tourism was put forward by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in 1999. This definition is similar to the Bruntland Report's definition. Sustainable tourism was defined as the tourism which focuses on the current and future influences of tourism on the economy, socio-culture and natural environment, as well as meeting the demands of tourists, local inhabitants, governments, tourism businesses and destination managers.

According to Johnston and Tyrrell (2008), sustainable tourism has been widely accepted

in tourism, but the exact definition of sustainable tourism is controversial in theory. Sustainable tourism has many definitions, probably because of its complexity. For example, Honey (2008) defined sustainable tourism as one that benefits all tourism participants, such as ensuring a safe working condition as well as respecting and protecting the local environmental and socio-cultural traditions. Timms and Conway (2012) gave a definition of sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism is tourism that can promote the development of local economy without threatening the local environment on which it depends. Besides, Heitmann and Robinson (2016) define sustainable tourism as tourism that can assure local ecological and natural resources are regenerative now and tomorrow, esteem local inhabitants, socio-culture and lifestyles, and guarantee local tourism participants can gain from it.

In addition, Heitmann and Robinson (2016) propose ten details of sustainable tourism, for instance the sustainable application of tourism resources, the reduction of overconsumption and resource waste, the maintenance of socio-culture and the natural environment's diversity, integrating tourism into planning, the promotion to local economic growth, the consideration of local residents' interests, the discussion with all tourism participants, employee training, truthful tourism promotion and related research conduct. Despite many concepts of sustainable tourism, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017) conclude that sustainable tourism needs to benefit the local economy, the natural environment, socio-cultural and tourism participants.

Sofield (2003) emphasised that different countries have a different understanding of sustainable tourism. For example, Sofield and Li (2011) pointed out that there was no accurate term for 'ecologically sustainable development' in Chinese, but the term 'sustainable tourism development' was created by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and generalised nationwide. The CNTA stipulated that all tourism policies and plans use 'sustainable tourism development' that was beginning to be widely adopted. Another example given by Connell, Page, and Bentley (2009) is the New Zealand Ministry of Tourism's understanding of sustainable tourism, which is

considered to be an effective way to protect nature and tourism resources and to ensure that tourism participants, such as tourists, local governments and inhabitants, can gain from tourism development now and tomorrow.

2.3.1 Related Concepts of Sustainable Tourism

Legrand, Chen and Sloan (2013) point out that while 'sustainable' and 'responsible' have diverse meanings, now they have been mixed to convey the same meaning over time. Responsible tourism defined by Legrand, Chen and Sloan (2013) is tourism that can achieve sustainable development through boosting tourism. They particularly emphasised that responsible tourism is focused on promoting tourism development instead of tourism itself.

Sharpley (2014) explains the distinction between sustainable tourism and tourism sustainable development. Tourism sustainable development refers to the long-term development in a limited scale region without destroying the social and natural environment, while allowing other activities to participate, but sustainable tourism is tourism that can be maintained for a long time.

Leung, Marion, & Farrell (2008) pointed out that sustainable tourism is easy to confuse with ecotourism, a form of recreation that relies on the natural environment. Ecotourism can threaten different types of ecosystems such as rainforests, grasslands and coral reefs. Ecotourism can cause vegetation degradation because of an extensive number of tourists. However, Tussyadiah and Inversini (2015) state that sustainable tourism takes into account the interests of local people. Through developing sustainable tourism, they can benefit from the growth of local tourism and the protection of local tourism resources such as local natural and cultural resources which can attract numerous tourists and bring considerable benefits.

2.4 Tourism Businesses

Fyall and Garrod (2005) pointed out that tourism businesses contain several types, the

most general types are the tour operator and travel agency. According to Evans (2015), a tour operator is an individual or company who purchases multiple tourism items, packages them into tourism products, and sells them to different target markets, such as tourists or travel agencies. Papatheodorou (2016) defines tour operator as a person or corporation who buys various components of a holiday package, consolidates them, and sells them to individual travelers and travel agencies, which is a significant part of the tourism supply chain.

As stated by Tepelus (2005), tour operators and travel agents are different. Travel agencies sell retail airline tickets and holiday packages planned by tour operators for travelers. Tour operators, on the other hand, wholesale holiday packages and sell them to travel agencies and tourists. Therefore, the tour operator acts as the wholesaler and the travel agency acts as the retailer in the supply chain. Papatheodorou (2016) concludes that the gap between the company's size and financial resources gives tour operators the capability to affect the growth of travel agencies to some extent and to have a greater influence on tourism than travel agencies.

Tepelus (2005) noted that tour operators generally lower the prices of the products offered by tourism services providers in order to gain a price advantage, and they can add or subtract items in the holiday package to meet the needs of different tourists. Tepelus (2005) emphasised that tour operators are key to the tourism industry's supply chain and can influence different travel suppliers, such as hotels and airline companies, because travelers can buy packaged tourism products or separate items from tour operators, such as accommodation, transport and sightseeing. Tour operators through flexible prices and powerful marketing networks enable tourism products to be more competitive. Smith (2015) concludes that the tour operator is a substantial part of the exploitation of tourism products and tourism market expansion.

In term of China, Chon, Guangrui, Lew, Ap and Yu (2013) state that other than western countries, who divide tourism businesses into tour operators, travel agencies and others,

Chinese tourism businesses are divided into the international tourism business and the domestic tourism business. The business scope of the international tourism business contains inbound tourism, outbound tourism and domestic tourism, but the business scope of the domestic tourism business only includes domestic tourism, and both of them engage in commercial activities, such as tourism products design, promotion and sale, within their business scope.

2.4.1 Sustainable Tourism Standards

According to Budeanu (2007), besides new equipment and technologies, numerous strategies and policies of sustainable tourism have been designed by various tourism organisations in order to reduce harmful impacts of tourism and make tourism more sustainable,

The sustainability standard put forward by UNWTO (2005) is the tourism development standard that concerns environmental, economic, and socio-cultural factors and intends to maintain the balance among them. White and Marsh (2006) pointed out that a number of international organisations, such as GSTC (Global Council for Sustainable Tourism) and UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), issued sustainable tourism standards. In addition, numerous countries and organisations, including New Zealand and the European Union, made sustainable tourism principles for their tourism industries. GSTC (2013) states that publishing those standards aims to resolve the increasingly severe issues caused by tourism, to preserve environmental sustainability on a global scale and to provide effective guidance to tourism participants.

Gouveia (2012) points out that there is still no consensus on what resources need to be sustained and what indicators are suitable for measuring and monitoring sustainability levels. Standards of GSTC and UNEP have high reliability and are the most widely accepted and referenced in the world. They include a range of indicators, such as average spending of tourists and average daily arrivals (Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill, 2017). The GSTC's standards cover four themes: effective sustainability planning, maximising

the socioeconomic benefits of local inhabitants, conserving natural, historical and cultural resources, and minimising damages to the local environment and ecosystems (GSTC, 2013). Besides, UNEP's standards focus on issues in the tourism market and services, such as inner management, product improvement and tourist relation management, and collaboration with tourist sites (UNEP, 2005).

However, standards of GSTC and UNEP are general standards for making tourism participants more aware of sustainable tourism and put it into practice. Budeanu (2005) noted that tourism businesses can influence travelers' comprehension of sustainable tourism, and tourists' acceptance of sustainable tourism can diminish the adverse influences of tourist activities on the environment and communities of tourist destinations. GSTC (2013) also notes that those standards can also help tourists judge whether their chosen tourism business is sustainable and eco-friendly. Therefore, it is necessary for governments at all levels and tourism businesses to make more detailed and specific strategies to raise the level of sustainable tourism.

In terms of New Zealand, according to Page (2009), one of the most significant features of New Zealand tourism is that its tourism products particularly depend on natural environments, while commercial promotion focuses also on 'clean and green' image. With the increase in demand for tourism market and more tourists from home and abroad, environmental protection has become a high-profile issue. Owing to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), in New Zealand, consideration of environmental impacts of tourism activities is necessary for tourism planning. RMA was originally intended to promote sustainable management rather than sustainable development, so setting other standards was suggested (Connell, Page & Bentley, 2009).

In terms of tourism, Lee McGlone and Wright (2005) indicated that national strategies require to be published to attain sustainable tourism objectives. In New Zealand, a series of national strategies, emphasising sustainability and covering environmental, economic and socio-cultural cultures, have been put forward successively. For example, according

to the New Zealand Tourism Guide (2018), the Government of New Zealand launched the Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Project, which aims to build six regional charters dedicated to sustainable tourism practices, and participants ensure tourism can continuously benefit the promotion to the 'clean and green' image of New Zealand. And according to the Tourism Industry Aotearoa (2017), New Zealand tourism businesses have achieved some progressive achievements in sustainable practices.

As for China, as stated by the UNWTO (2013), 'The Outline for National Tourism and Leisure (2013-2020)', the latest outline of Chinese tourism development, published by China State Council, proposes a plan about building a sound management system and a healthy environment for Chinese tourism sustainable development. However, most details of the plan are aimed at improving tourism participants' services and monitoring systems without covering the natural environment and ecosystem protection. Meanwhile, Ding and Packer (2008) pointed out that in China, tourism researcher and tourism participants are often criticised for too little attention to environmental sustainability, so the Chinese tourism participants still requires to learn advanced ideas of the countries with developed tourism from market promotion, operation philosophy to administration mechanism (Zhang, 2011).

2.5 Corporate Social Responsibility

Wijk and Persoon (2006) noted that with the enhancement of tourism sustainable development awareness, more and more tourism businesses begin to pay attention to corporate social responsibility, because it refers to corporate responsibility for economy, socio-culture and environment which is similar to sustainable development's meaning, and both emphasise influences on those three factors.

Budeanu (2007) pointed out that tourists are increasingly aware that tourism can lead to environmental and social problems in tourist destinations, and they can assist local governments and communities to preserve local social and natural environments. Forsyth (1997), Kamanga and Bello (2018) asserted that because tourism businesses usually do

not communicate directly with tourists, displaying their corporate values in corporate social responsibility reports can improve their corporate image and appeal to more tourists. Due to when tourists decide which tourism business to choose, they are more likely to focus on the performance of tourism businesses, especially the performance on sustainable issues (Tepelus, 2005), so issuing corporate social responsibility reports is an effective way to bridge the distance between tourism business and tourists, and enables tourists to understand tourism business more.

Benckendorff, Sheldon, and Fesenmaier (2014) further explained that tourists are becoming more aware of sustainable tourism, and they believe that sustainable tourism is one of the important considerations for choosing destinations and travel businesses. When tourists browse tourism businesses' corporate social responsibility reports with their sustainable strategies, they can realise those strategies and make better choices. However, all tourism businesses do not actively fulfil their corporate social responsibilities. Schwartz, Tapper, and Font (2008) noted that some tourism businesses shift their corporate social responsibility onto local governments and administrations of tourist destinations, and according to Wijk and Persoon (2006), some tourism businesses complain that fierce competition among tourism businesses is their obstacle to corporate social responsibility fulfilment and sustainable tourism promotion, because of their limited resources, market expansion of companies should be prioritised.

Prebensen, Chen and Uysal (2014) particularly stressed that the influence of the larger tourism businesses on tourist destinations is greater than the smaller tourism businesses. Wijk and Peron (2006) further explained that bigger tourism businesses can rely on their strong market influence and penetration to hold the key to the development of sustainable tourism in tourist destinations. Budeanu (2005), Rahman and Widyasari (2008) agreed with Wijk and Peron and added that greater tourism businesses that can maintain a high market share and hold significant social resources can serve an essential role in facilitating sustainable tourism and influencing tourists' attitudes towards sustainable tourism. Furthermore, Wijk and Persoon (2006) also point out that larger tourism businesses are

more active to demonstrate their strategies and achievements of sustainable tourism on their corporate social responsibility reports and official websites than smaller ones, assisting tourists to raise the awareness of sustainable tourism and then diminish their harmful influences on tourist destinations' environment and socio-culture (Budeanu 2005). Meanwhile, according to Visser (2010), corporate history includes not only past performance and corporate culture, but also external impacts on society, economy, and environment, which is a substantial aspect to understand the development of corporations. The past failures and successes can guide their current strategies and practices, which also apply to long-established tourism businesses. They can use their rich tourism management experience accumulated over the years to guide their current formulation and practice of sustainable strategies.

2.6 Summary

In summary, this chapter mainly reviewed the influences of tourism on the economy, socio-culture and environment, the development of sustainable tourism concepts, tourism businesses and the concept of corporate social responsibility. As noted above, most of the literature on sustainable tourism focuses on the concept of sustainable tourism and its impact on the natural and social environment. Also, most studies on sustainable tourism strategies of tourism businesses emphasise their influence on the natural environment and society of tourist destinations. This shows that sustainable tourism is inextricably associated with the economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects of tourist destinations, which serve a vital guiding role in the next step of this study. Moreover, sustainable tourism is a strand that presents in global to local economic, cultural and environmental development, and as such influences all levels of strategy and policy development (Alger, 2014)

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter aims to explain the research strategies adopted to solve the research questions proposed in the first chapter. This chapter commences with the research methods, and then introduces the research design, followed by the research method which is divided into two steps: research cases selection and data collection. The last section presents the study limitations.

3.1 Research Methods

Two major research methods are widely utilised in academic research, qualitative and quantitative methods, for data collection and data analysis. The main quantitative method's data is the number, and the main qualitative method's data is the word. Veal (2017) notes that quantitative methods typically include methods which can generate and analyse numeric data, such as questionnaires and statistics. Quantitative methods are usually explicit and methodical. On the other hand, Bogdan and Taylor (1990) indicated that qualitative methods focus not on location, time and people, but on reason and meaning. Veal (2017) points out that qualitative methods generally contain methods used to collect and analyse non-numeric data, such as interviews and categorical data. Available data for qualitative methods include text, and a variety of other data, such as pictures, audio, and video.

In this study, content analysis is used to analyse data. Silverman (2015) points out that content analysis is a commonly used text analysis method. Henderson (1991) added that content analysis allows investigators to systematically analyse text data from different perspectives. Marshall and Rossman (2014) agreed that content analysis is a method of generating countable results and quantitative descriptions by setting up fixed questions.

Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2014) point out that content analysis can be adopted to a variety of social science research, such as communication. The popularity of the Internet and mobile networks has led researchers to use content analytics more frequently, and it

is widely used in new media research, such as online media. For instance, Jose and Lee (2006) researched multinational corporate sustainable strategies online, mainly on their official websites. Besides, content analysis is also appropriate for business and marketing research.

However, Singh (2015) points out content analysis is a simple method that is not suitable for complex numeric data analysis. In addition, Morgan (1993) added that some researchers claim that content analysis cannot meet the need for qualitative research. This phenomenon makes the attribute of content analysis controversial. For example, Tesch (2013) argued that content analysis is closer to quantitative methods because content analysis requires coding and calculating the frequency of occurrence, which is more in line with the characteristics of quantitative methods.

Cavanagh (1997) argues that it is not easy to reach a consensus on the attributes of content analysis because researchers in different research fields have different perspectives and research methods. Krippendorff (2004) points out that this debate has been going on interminably, particularly in the media sector, since content analysis was initially used to study newspapers and count the frequency of words and phrases. Cavanagh (1997) added that content analysis often involves numbers, and text analysis involves the participation of computers, which is the cause of this controversy. In addition, Yin (2017) divides content analysis into quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Quantitative content analysis can answer some numeric and simple questions, such as the frequency of events. However, qualitative content analysis can answer some complex descriptive questions, such as the cause and process of events. White and Marsh (2006) concluded that content analysis is a mixed-method which contains qualitative and quantitative methods, and it has been broadly used in social science research because it can meet the demands of various disciplines' research.

Because this research explores sustainable tourism strategies of tourism businesses, the author chose qualitative content analysis as the main research method in this dissertation

to analyse differences and similarities between New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses' sustainable tourism strategies. Besides, qualitative content analysis can help researchers see the depth rather than surface appearance. Moreover, some researchers have used qualitative content analysis to research the topics of enterprises' environmental strategies. Therefore, the qualitative content analysis is suitable for this study.

3.2 Research Design

Bryman (2016) refers to research design as a research structure for collecting and analysing data. Sarantakos (2012) adds that the research design can help researchers answer research questions that are consistent with the logic of the research strategy, because reasonable research design benefits researchers to use research resources, such as research data, reasonably and orderly, in order to ensure that all research steps are in line with the research direction without digressing, so as to obtain the desired research results.

Overall, the author chose to study official websites and reports of business cases and compare them systematically to find out similarities and differences between New Zealand and China tourism businesses sustainable tourism strategies. In order to respond to the two proposed research questions, firstly, the research focuses on the strategies and activities related to sustainable tourism of each tourism business, including strategy's objectives and specific initiatives, which are key points of their strategies. Then, the author compared data from different sources to study tourism businesses' understanding of sustainable tourism. The next section discusses the data collection of the study.

3.3 Data Collection

According to Robson (2002), there are five steps of content analysis: designing research questions according to research purpose, selecting research data collection sources, making codes such as words, phrases and sentences, and qualitative content analysis. Before analysing data, codes also need to be grouped. The data collection of research consists mainly of two steps: selecting six New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses

and collecting and calculating data obtained from their official websites and corporate social responsibility reports.

3.3.1 Step 1: Selecting Six New Zealand and Chinese Tourism Businesses

Three selected New Zealand tourism businesses were winners or nominees of the Environmental Tourism Award of the New Zealand Tourism Awards whose criteria focus on leadership, implementation and achievements of the environmental tourism programme of each participant. All of them have won awards and been nominated in national sustainability-related tourism awards.

On the other hand, three selected Chinese tourism businesses were the winners or nominees for the winner of China's Leading Travel Agency at the World Travel Awards. The criteria of that award focus on market share, financial performance, contribution to communities and the tourism industry. There are no national sustainability-related tourism awards in China, so select those Chinese tourism businesses to demonstrate the focus of Chinese tourism businesses on sustainable tourism to some extent.

There are some differences between NZ and Chinese selected tourism businesses in size and classification. However, this dissertation focuses on sustainable strategies rather than financial performance and market share. All six cases have the content related to sustainability on their corporate social responsibility reports and official websites, which can conform to the requirement of data collection. They are China International Travel Service, HNA Caissa Travel, Jin Jiang Travel, Rotorua Canopy Tours, Waitomo Glowworm Caves and Real Journeys. A brief introduction to each case is given below.

Table 1. Six Tourism Businesses and The Awards They Won

Chinese tourism businesses	Awards	New Zealand tourism businesses	Awards
China International Travel Service	The winner of China's Leading Travel Agency 2015 of the World Travel Awards	Rotorua Canopy Tours	The winner of Environmental Tourism Award 2016 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards
HNA Caissa Travel	The winner of China's Leading Travel Management Company 2017	Waitomo Glowworm Caves	The finalist of Environmental Tourism Award 2016 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards
Jin Jiang Travel	The Nominees of China's Leading Travel Agency 2017 of the World Travel Awards	Real Journeys	The finalist of Department of Conservation Environmental Tourism Award 2017 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards

China International Travel Service (CITS), founded in 1954 and headquartered in Beijing, became the wholly-owned subsidiary of China Travel Service (CTS) in 2016, which has become one of the largest and most powerful tourism businesses in China known at home and abroad (CITS, 2017). CITS adheres to the sustainable development strategy, prioritises the development of social welfare and environmental protection, such as education, antipoverty, low carbon emissions and the application of advanced eco-friendly technologies (CTS, 2017). It was the winner of China's Leading Travel Agency 2015 of the World Travel Awards (World Travel Awards, 2015)

HNA Caissa Travel, a Chinese tourism business, founded in 1993 and headquartered in Beijing, is the subsidiary of HNA Group. It principally provides the wholesaling and retailing of outbound tourism products and destination services to government, enterprise customers and personal customers (HNA Group, 2014). HNA Caissa Travel maintains close communication with stakeholders such as governments, tourists, employees, communities and environmental regulators, listen to their recommendations to further enhance its performance of corporate social responsibility, and actively implements its social responsibility in the economy, society and environment (HNA Caissa Travel, 2018). It was the winner of China's Leading Travel Management Company 2017 (World Travel

Awards, 2015),

Jin Jiang Travel, the third largest tourism business in China, headquartered in Shanghai, is the subsidiary of Jinjiang International. Jin Jiang Travel is providing travel services, planning and consulting for individual tourists and MICE clients (Jin Jiang International, n.d.). Jin Jiang Travel always actively assumes its social responsibility in terms of resource conservation, environmental protection and public welfare (Jin Jiang International, 2017). It was nominated in China's Leading Travel Agency 2017 of the World Travel Awards (World Travel Awards, 2017)

Rotorua Canopy Tours, a thriving tourism business in Rotorua, built in 2012, who insists on combining tourists, local culture, and the natural environment and provide them with a unique tourist experience. The number of visitors has been increasing promptly in recent years, and outstanding environmental outcomes have been achieved due to the passion, innovation, and perseverance of Rotorua Canopy Tours team (Tourism Industry Aotearoa, 2018). Rotorua Canopy Tours endeavours to be the leader in eco-tourism and conversation of Rotorua (Rotorua Canopy Tours. 2018). It was the winner of the Environmental Tourism Award 2016 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards (Tourism Industry Aotearoa, 2018)

Waitomo Glowworm Caves is world-famous and attracts local and overseas visitors because of its unique historical and geological significance (Waitomo.com, 2018). It was owned and managed by Tourism Holdings Limited from 1996 (Cleaver, 2011). The commercial operator of Waitomo Glowworm Caves is based on a comprehensive sustainability strategy, such as waste disposal and biodiversity maintenance (Waitomo.com, 2018). It was the finalist of the Department of Conservation Environmental Tourism Award 2017 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards (Tourism Industry Aotearoa, 2018).

Real Journeys, built in 1954, operating world-renowned cruises in Milford and Doubtful

Sounds, is a major South Island and New Zealand award-winning tourism business (Real Journeys, 2018), such as the finalist of Department of Conservation Environmental Tourism Award 2017 of the New Zealand Tourism Awards (Tourism Industry Aotearoa, 2018). Real Journeys always regards environmental protection as an important part of its corporate values and believes it has a responsibility to carefully protect natural heritage and the environment (Real Journeys, 2018).

3.3.2 Step 2: Data Collection from the Official Websites and Corporate Social Responsibility Reports of Cases

Lohmann and Netto (2016) point out that tourism websites serve a vital role in moulding the image of tourism destinations and tourism businesses, complementing traditional channels such as friends and relatives, tourism businesses, advertisements, and mass media. Benckendorff, Sheldon, and Fesenmaier (2014) and Trevino and Nelson (2016) point out that in addition to describing corporate products and services, a company's website is a significant display platform for corporate introduction, values and strategies. For example, six cases not only show their tourism products, but also their corporate history, corporate values, corporate strategies and corporate social responsibility on their official websites. Some of their present corporate social responsibility related content is in the form of reports. The web-based analysis of the cases' sustainable tourism strategies and practices was adopted to demonstrate the tendency of sustainable tourism in the two countries' tourism industry.

The first step of the analysis was making sustainability-related codes from socio-cultural and environmental perspectives and grouping them together. The next step was scanning the official websites and corporate social responsibility reports of the six research cases, followed by qualitative content analysis. In the statistical process, an expression with the similar meaning to the created code is counted into the frequency of that code.

3.4 Limitations

As mentioned above, the classification of tourism businesses in China differs from that

in Western countries for a variety of reasons, for example, differences in national systems and the late development of Chinese tourism. As such, there are differences in size and business scope between Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses. It is difficult to find Chinese tourism businesses as appropriate counterparts to New Zealand tourism businesses. However, the study concentrates on the sustainable strategies of the two countries' tourism businesses, and the researcher selected the most representative tourism businesses of the two countries in this respect as research cases. Due to national tourism industry differences, although sustainable tourism includes economic sustainability, this is outside of the scope of the study, and socio-cultural and environmental sustainability are the focuses.

Undoubtedly fruitful research relies on rich and reliable research data collected from various sources. This study uses official websites and corporate social responsibility reports of the tourism businesses. Firstly, data reliability is closely related to research validity. The reliability of data collected from the websites and reports of cases can be affected, if information on those sources lacks accuracy and timeliness. For example, some tourism businesses do not frequently update the information on their official website and issue corporate social responsibility reports.

Some tourism businesses actively demonstrate their sustainable tourism strategies and achievements on their official websites, but others do not realise the importance of doing so, especially some Chinese tourism businesses who prefer to display relevant content in their corporate social responsibility reports rather than on official websites. Therefore, it is insufficient to collect research data only from their official website.

In addition, research cases include Chinese tourism companies. Although there are some Chinese tourism businesses with official websites in English, they do not include their corporate strategies and corporate social responsibility. Thus, in the process of data collection, the researcher needed to translate the content presented on cases' official websites and corporate social responsibility reports. Because translation is to some extent

subjective, which can directly affect codes statistics and the results of data collection, the categorisation of words and phrases in the text of websites and corporate responsibility reports can also affect objectivity and reliability of research because the researcher needs to determine whether a word and phrase are synonymous with the code, which can also be subjective.

3.5 Summary

In sum, the chapter introduces the research strategies, research design and data collection, including the concept of content analysis and the reasons why it was chosen, the selection of study cases as well as the data collection method and steps. The limitations of data collection in case selection and code statistics are presented. This chapter lays the foundation for the progress of the following two chapters: research findings and discussion.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter shows the finding of the web-based content analysis of the six cases as related to their sustainable tourism strategies. The collected data indicates specific factors of sustainable tourism presented on the official websites and corporate social responsibility reports of the six cases.

4.1 Availability

Sustainability in tourism businesses is an abstract concept and therefore difficult to assess. The first step is looking at whether the content related to sustainability of six tourism businesses is available online. It then further explored the convenience of obtaining the content related to sustainability online, such as whether it can be obtained from their official websites.

Table 2. Availability of The Content Related to Sustainability on the Cases' Official Websites and Corporate Social Responsibility Reports

	New Zealand tourism businesses		
	Rotorua Canopy Tours	Waitomo Glowworm Caves	Real Journeys
Available online or not	Yes	Yes	Yes
Directly available on the official website	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 2 (a). availability of the content related to the sustainability of New Zealand tourism businesses

	Chinese tourism businesses		
	China International Travel Service	HNA Caissa Travel	Jin Jiang Travel
Available online or not	Yes	Yes	Yes
Directly available on the official website	Yes	No	No

Table 2 (b). Availability of the content related to sustainability of Chinese tourism businesses

Table 2 shows the results of the availability of the content related to sustainability presented on their official websites and corporate social responsibility reports. As table 2 (a) and Table 2 (b) indicate, all six tourism businesses are available online. Table 2 (a)

indicates that all three New Zealand tourism businesses include sustainability information directly related to their business practices. In particular, on the official website of Waitomo Glowworm Caves, sustainable strategies are presented both on web pages and a sustainability-related report. In terms of Chinese tourism businesses, as shown by Table 2 (b), only CITS provide a website link to its corporate social responsibility report. However, there is not any content directly related to sustainability on the other two Chinese tourism businesses' websites.

As for the content related to sustainability of the six cases the data is predominantly related to environmental activities.

On the Rotorua Canopy Tours's official website, content related to sustainability links to education and ecosystem conservation. For example, a pest trapping programme. In October 2016, after a few months of hard work in the Dansey Road Scenic Reserve, Rotorua Canopy Tours team carried out the third phase of that programme (Rotorua Canopy Tours, 2018).

On the official website and corporate social responsibility report of Waitomo Glowworm Caves, content related to sustainability again focusses on the environment although referring to how people can engage in the business's strategies. For instance, Waitomo Glowworm Caves has a comprehensive programme and multiple restoration projects (Discovery Waitomo, 2018).

Although Real Journeys does not provide a separate report about sustainability such as Waitomo Glowworm Caves, its website provides content about environmental conservation and ecosystem restoration. For example, the Walter Peak Land Restoration Project which focuses on ecosystem issues. In February 2015, Real Journeys implemented a massive restoration project at Walter Peak to assure that the local environment continues to maintain authentic New Zealand feel and fight against invasive species that are spreading throughout the region (Real Journeys, 2018).

Content related to sustainability on the CITS's corporate social responsibility report includes socio-cultural factors referring to the harmonious community and poverty alleviation, as well as environmental activities. For example, according to the corporate social responsibility report of China Travel Service (2017), it actively organises environmental-protecting activities, such as 'garbage collection, tickets (of tourist attractions) exchange', 'the desert tree of life', to raise the environmental protection awareness of its employees as well as to advocate environmental conservation and the low-carbon lifestyle.

On the corporate social responsibility report of HNA Caissa Travel, content related to sustainability covers socio-cultural factors such as being community-friendly and conscious of the ecosystem. For instance, HNA Caissa Travel (2018) states that it actively advocates the concept of green environmental protection, encourages tourists to protect the natural environment of each tourist destination in the tour and to respect local customs and habits, and brings high-quality tourists to tourist destinations.

The corporate social responsibility report of Jin Jiang Travel provides some introduction to sustainability, including the content of environmental and resources conservation, such as emission reduction and energy conservation as well as social and charitable causes. For example, it invested forty hybrid electric vehicles as tourist coaches, and continuously tried new technologies that help improve environmental quality, so as to further create a green environment (Jin Jiang International, 2017),

4.2 Sustainable Strategies' Categories

The classification of sustainable strategies from the six tourism businesses is aligned with the sustainable tourism definition of the UNWTO (1999), where sustainability is categorised by the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. As declared in the limitations, the economic factor falls outside of the scope of this study and instead the focus is on the socio-cultural and environmental factors which are analysed in more depth.

The environmental impacts are further broken down according to Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2017) categorisations of air, waste, energy and resources, as well as flora and fauna. Because there are various detailed factors in each category, data was organised by classification of words and phrases related to those five subcategories. The analysis resulted in twenty-four sustainability-related codes that are represented by code frequency. The statistical results are demonstrated in the tables and graphs below.

Table 3. Sustainable Strategies' Categories of the Six Cases

Tourism businesses	New Zealand tourism businesses			Percentage of yes
	Rotorua Canopy Tours	Waitomo Glowworm Caves	Real Journeys	
Socio-cultural category				
Socio-culture	Yes	Yes	Yes	100%
Environmental category				
Air	No	Yes	Yes	67%
Waste	No	Yes	Yes	67%
Energy & Resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	100%
Flora & fauna	Yes	Yes	Yes	100%

Table 3 (a). The sustainable strategies' categories of the New Zealand tourism businesses

Tourism businesses	Chinese tourism businesses			Percentage of yes
	China International Travel Service	HNA Caissa Travel	Jin Jiang Travel	
Socio-cultural category				
Socio-culture	Yes	Yes	Yes	100%
Environmental category				
Air	Yes	Yes	No	67%
Waste	Yes	No	Yes	67%
Energy & Resource	Yes	Yes	Yes	100%
Flora & fauna	No	Yes	Yes	67%

Table 3 (b). The sustainable strategies' categorisation of the Chinese tourism businesses

As demonstrated in Table 3 (a), two New Zealand tourism businesses, Waitomo Glowworm Caves and Real Journeys, cover all five subcategories.

All three New Zealand cases include the two categories related to environmental and

socio-cultural. Including in the socio-cultural category codes such as 'community', 'history', 'charity' and 'education'. Discovery Waitomo (2018) and Real Journeys (2018) present data from all the sub-categories. The four environmental subcategories include the codes: 'emission or waste reduction', 'plastic waste', 'recycling or reusing', 'energy or resources conservation', 'ecosystem', and 'biodiversity'. Rotorua Canopy Tours only includes two of the subcategories on their website: 'energy and resources' and 'flora and fauna'. The codes include: 'environmental conservation', 'forests or plants' and 'wildlife or animals' (Rotorua Canopy Tours, 2018).

On the other hand, as Table 3 (b) shows, all three Chinese tourism businesses include the 'socio-culture' category with codes such as: 'sustainability', 'community' and 'charity'. None of them cover all four environmental subcategories. The three environmental sub-categories referred to in the corporate social responsibility report of CITS are 'air', 'waste' and 'energy and resources', which mention codes such as 'low carbon', 'emission or waste reduction', 'green or eco-friendly', and 'energy or resources conservation'. The HNA Caissa Travel (2018) corporate social responsibility reports contain three environmental sub-categories, 'air', 'energy and resources' and 'flora and fauna', by referring to codes like 'low carbon', 'recycling or reusing', 'energy and resources conservation', and 'ecosystem'. In terms of Jin Jiang Travel (2017), its corporate social responsibility report shows three environmental sub-categories, 'waste', 'energy and resources' and 'flora and fauna', referring to codes such as 'emission or waste reduction', 'green or eco-friendly', 'water' and 'ecosystem'.

4.2.1 Socio-cultural categories

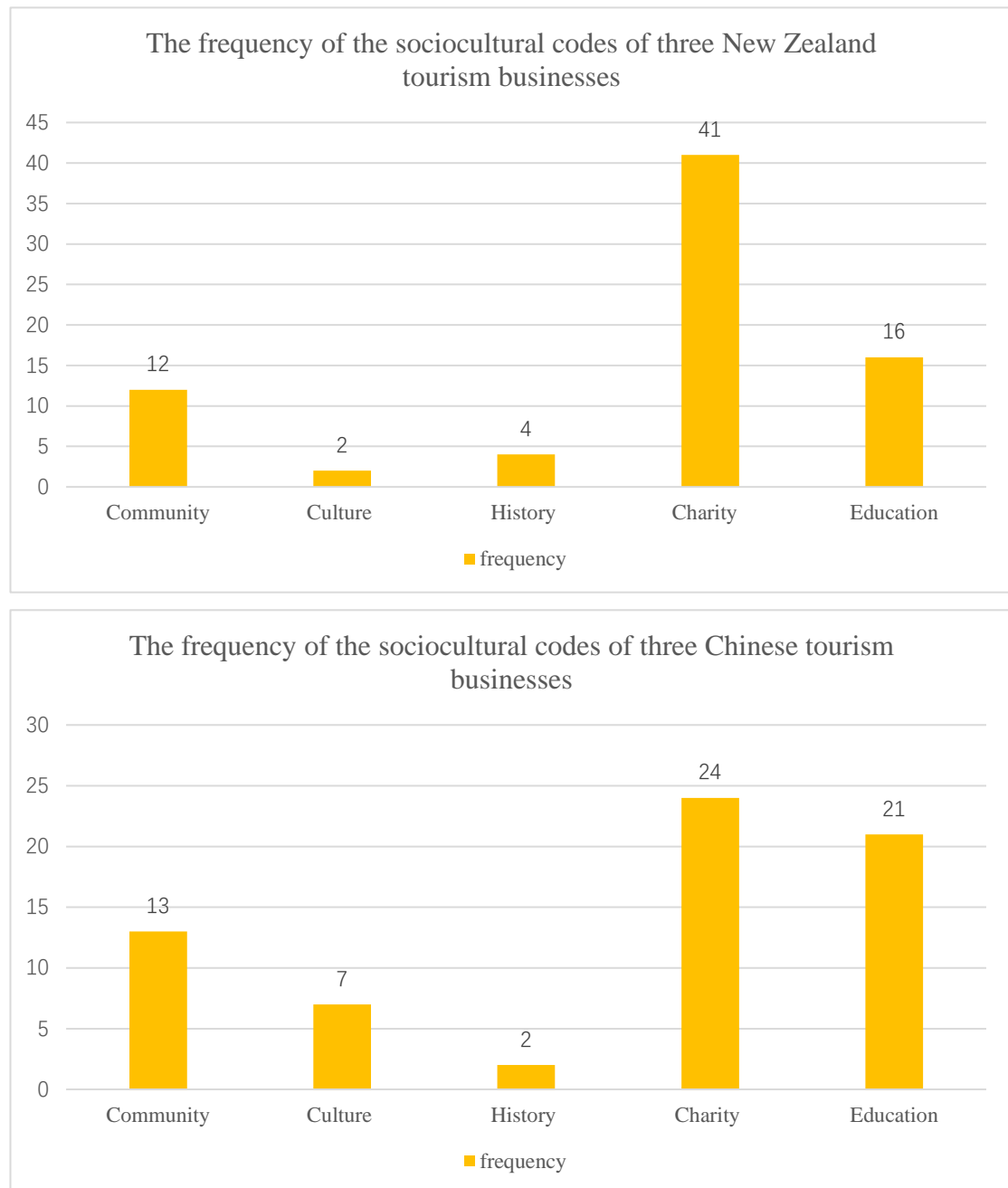### 4.2.1.1 Socio-culture

Figure 1. The Frequency of Socio-cultural Codes of Six Tourism Businesses

The first category 'socio-culture' contains five codes, including 'community', 'culture', 'history', 'charity' and 'education'. When the researcher counted the frequencies of them, related words were also included. For example, 'community' contains 'society' and

'residents', 'charity' contains 'donation', 'contribution' and 'fund', 'education' contains 'schools' and 'training', 'culture' contains 'Maori culture' and 'minority culture'.

In terms of 'community', 'charity' and 'education', for example, Real Journey has contributed over five hundred thousand dollars for some protective and communal initiatives in 2017 (Real Journeys, 2018), One communal initiative is the Stewart Island Rakiura Community Environment Trust, a non-profit organisation that propels projects that profit the Stewart Island and Rakiura community and its environment. As well as an Annual High School Dux Award, a prize supporting young people's academic studies in its community. Another example from the Chinese tourism businesses is Jin Jiang Travel sponsorship of tickets for a symphony concert RMB 44,000, was then donated to the China Charities Aid Foundation for Children to subsidise eleven kindergartens in poor areas in Yunnan province, China (Jin Jiang International,2017).

As for the 'history' and 'culture' codes, as an example, the Waitomo Glowworm Caves provides a programme of educational activities for children to learn all about nature, history and the culture of Waitomo. In terms of Chinese tourism businesses, for instance, CITS helps remote ethnic minority villages improve their living standards and develop sustainable tourism based on their rich tourism resources, such as the profound background of deep history and culture (China Travel Service, 2017)

4.2.2 Environmental Categories

4.2.2.1 Air
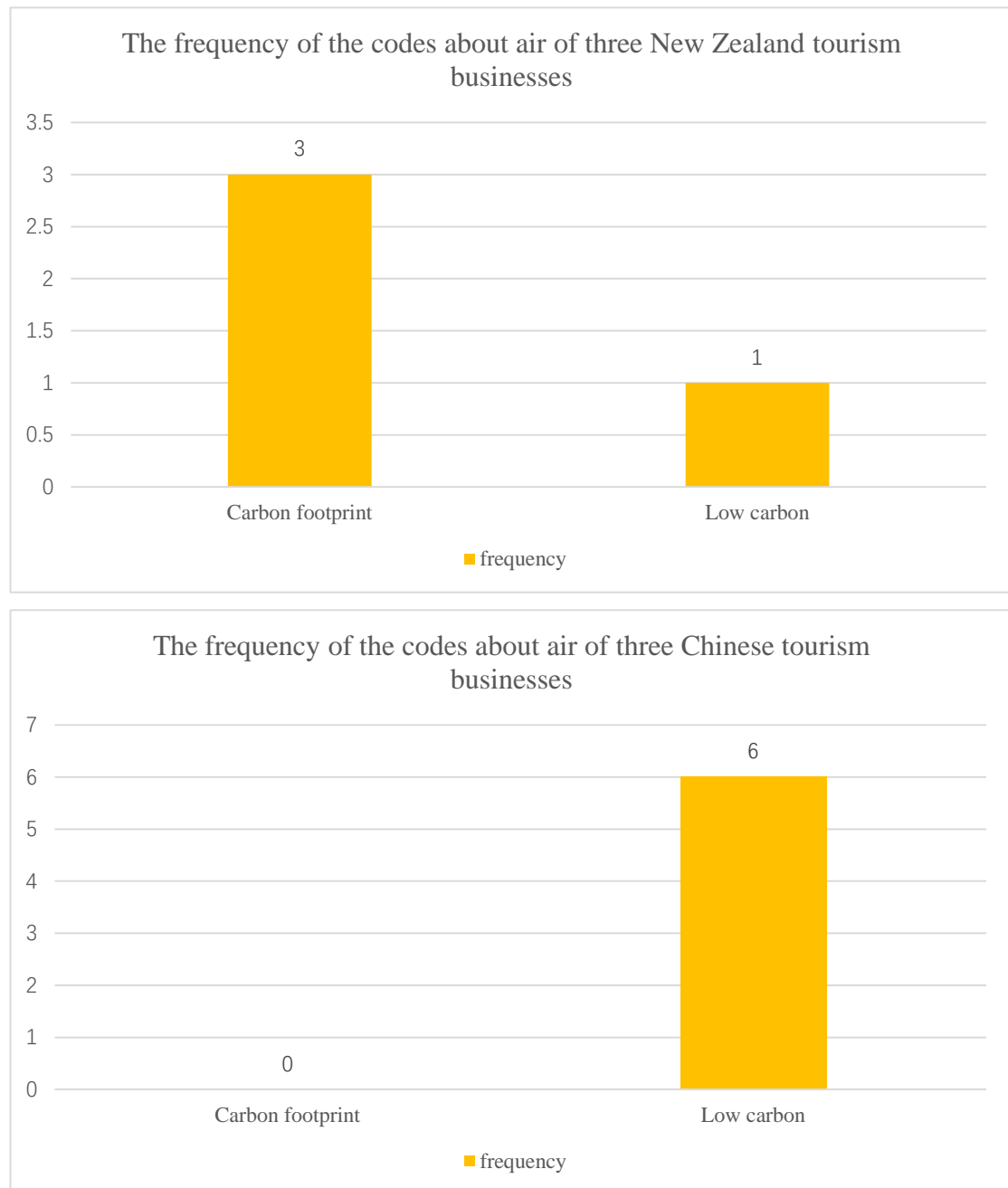
Figure 2. The Frequency of the Codes about Air of Six Tourism Businesses

In terms of the second category, 'air', included two related codes: 'carbon footprint' and 'low carbon'. The frequency of 'carbon footprint' included 'carbon consumption', and the frequency of 'low carbon' included 'reduce carbon emission'. For example, in Real

Journeys the words 'carbon emission reduction' in the sentence '…monitor carbon emission reduction from vessels, coaches and aircraft.' was included in the code 'low carbon' (Real Journeys, 2018).

In terms of 'carbon footprint' which refers to the amount of emissions released into the atmosphere. For example, Real Journey aims to use advanced technology to minimise its carbon footprint in its daily operation (Real Journeys, 2018). As for 'low carbon' which refers to the reduction of greenhouse gas emission. For example, CITS in March 2016 participated in the Earth Hour, which motivated its employees' enthusiasm for saving electricity and further strengthened their awareness of environmental conservation and low-carbon lifestyle (China Travel Service, 2017).

4.2.2.2 Waste
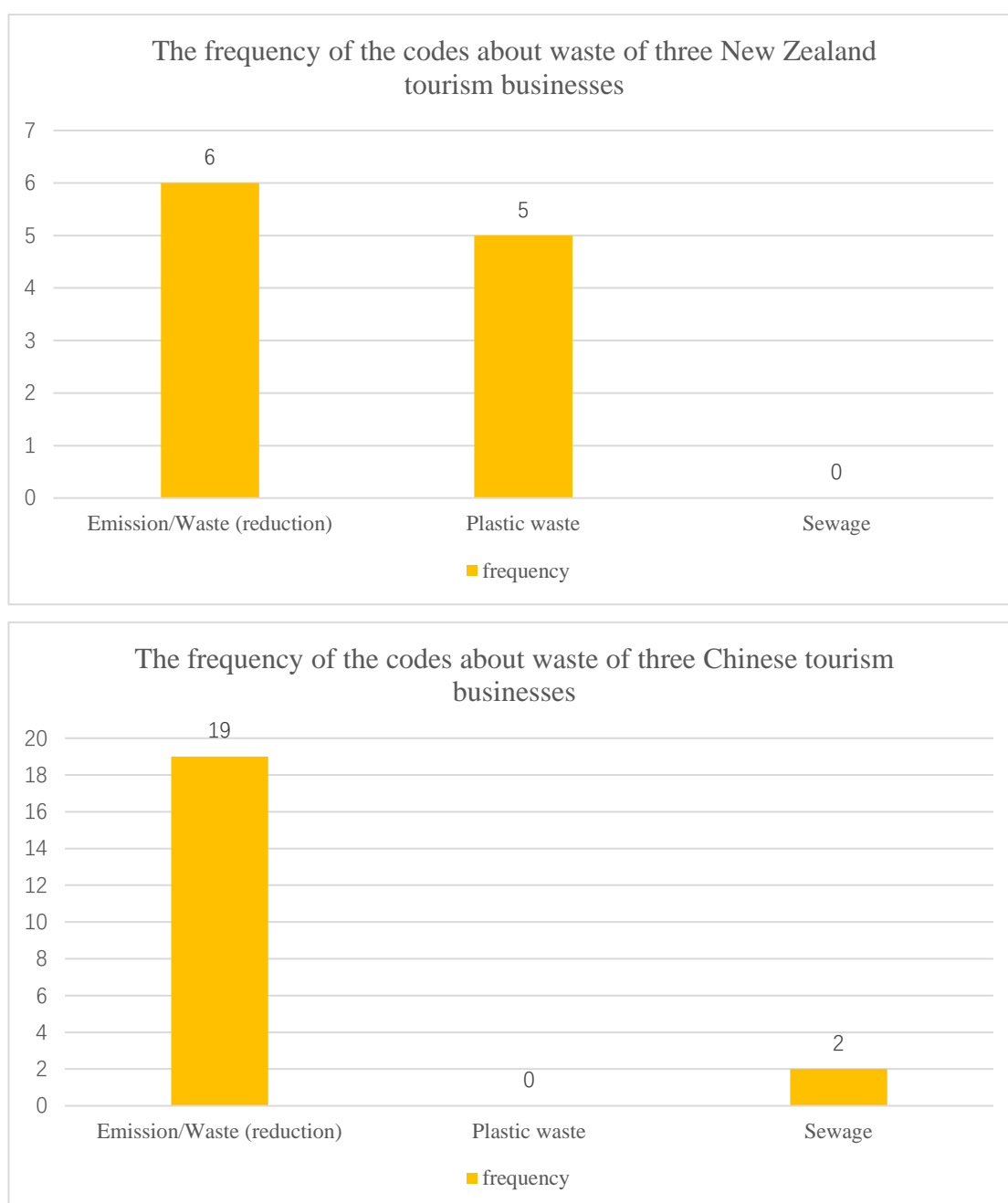
Figure 3. The Frequency of Codes of Waste of Six Tourism Businesses.

Category 'waste' contains three codes, a general phrase 'emission or waste (reduction)' and two related specifically to pollution, 'plastic waste' and 'sewage'. When the frequencies of 'plastic waste' and 'sewage' were counted, some relevant words or phrases were included, such as 'waste water'. For example, the word 'wastewater' in the sentence '…the discharge of wastewater decreased compared with the same period last year.'

(China Travel Service, 2017).

In terms of 'emission and waste reduction', for example, Real Journey purchased coaches particularly with Euro V emission standard designed for minimising effects on the company's carbon footprint (Real Journeys, 2018). On the other hand, as for Chinese tourism business, for instance, CITS set up a special group to formulate and improve the management system and standards for energy conservation and consumption reduction (China Travel Service, 2017). About 'plastic waste', for example, Real Journey has undertaken waste minimisation and reprocessing, such as biodegradable plastic picnic boxes, recyclable washable bento boxes and self-coloured reusable napkins (Real Journeys, 2018)

4.2.2.3 Energy and Resources

The frequency of the codes about energy and resources of three New Zealand tourism businesses

Category	Frequency
Green/eco-friendly	4
Electricity	0
Fuel	1
Water resources	1
Recycling/Reusing	9
Energy/resources (conservation)	5
Environmental conservation	56

The frequency of the codes about energy and resources of three Chinese tourism businesses

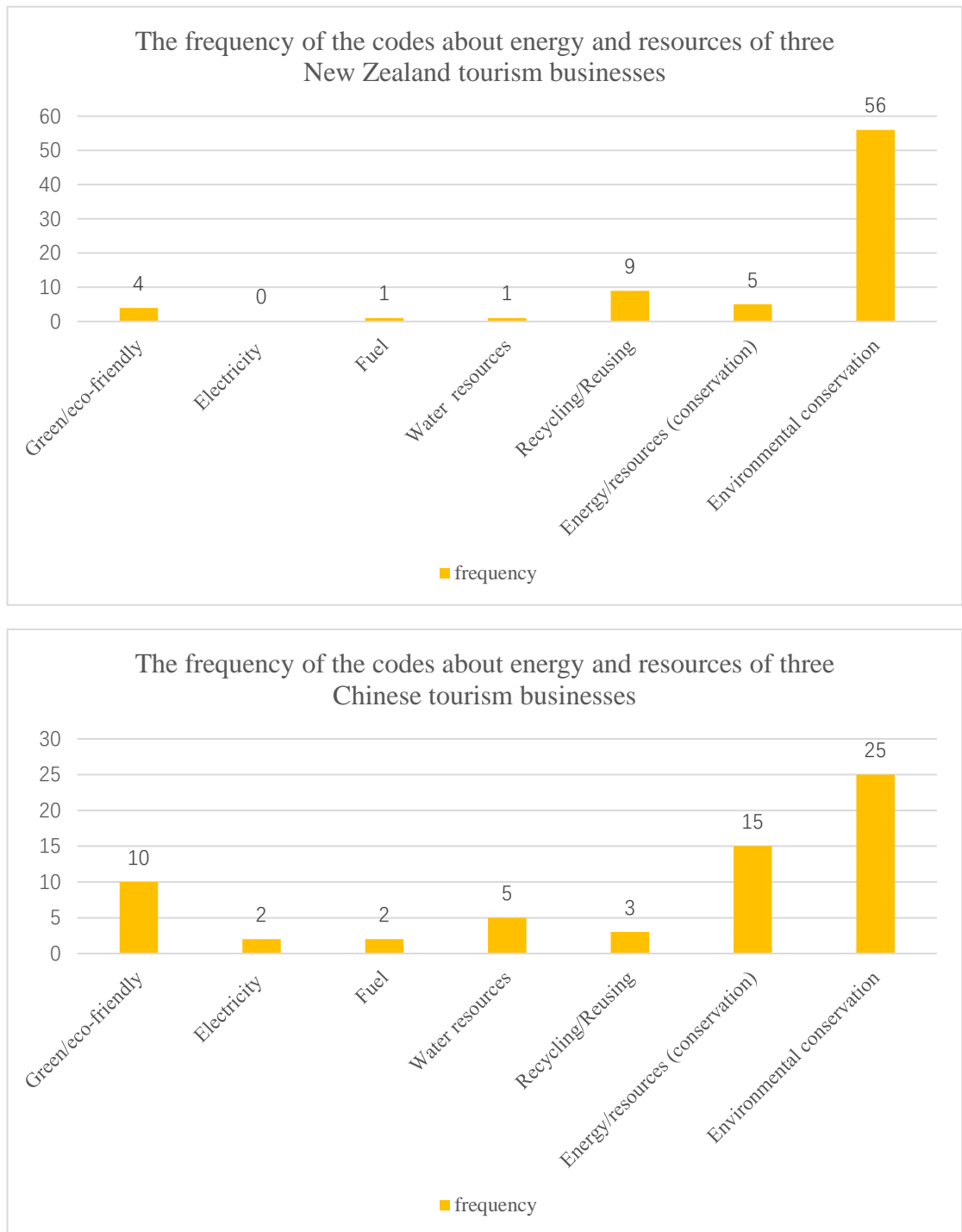| Category	Frequency
Green/eco-friendly	10
Electricity	2
Fuel	2
Water resources	5
Recycling/Reusing	3
Energy/resources (conservation)	15
Environmental conservation	25

Figure 4. The Frequency of the Codes about Energy and Resources of Six Tourism Businesses

This type of code includes some typical energy and resources such as 'fuel', 'electricity', and 'water', and codes used to describe environmental issues, such as 'green or eco-

friendly', 'energy or resources (protection)' and 'environmental protection'.

In terms of 'green and eco-friendly', for example, Real Journey adopts new eco-friendly electric trail bikes in a cycling travel product (Real Journeys, 2018). At the same time, as for Chinese tourism business, for instance, Jin Jiang Travel installed a reclaimed water system in its headquarters building (collecting rainwater through the circulation system and finally using it for flushing toilets and watering) (Jin Jiang International, 2017).

About 'recycling or reusing' and 'energy or resources conversation', for example, Waitomo Glowworm Caves has a complete procedure containing public multilingual recycling boxes, uncomplicated waste logistics and an appropriative collection and classification table (Discovery Waitomo, 2018). On the other hand, as a Chinese tourism business, HNA Caissa Travel encourages its employees to use double-sided printing and reuse printed waste paper (HNA Caissa Travel, 2018).
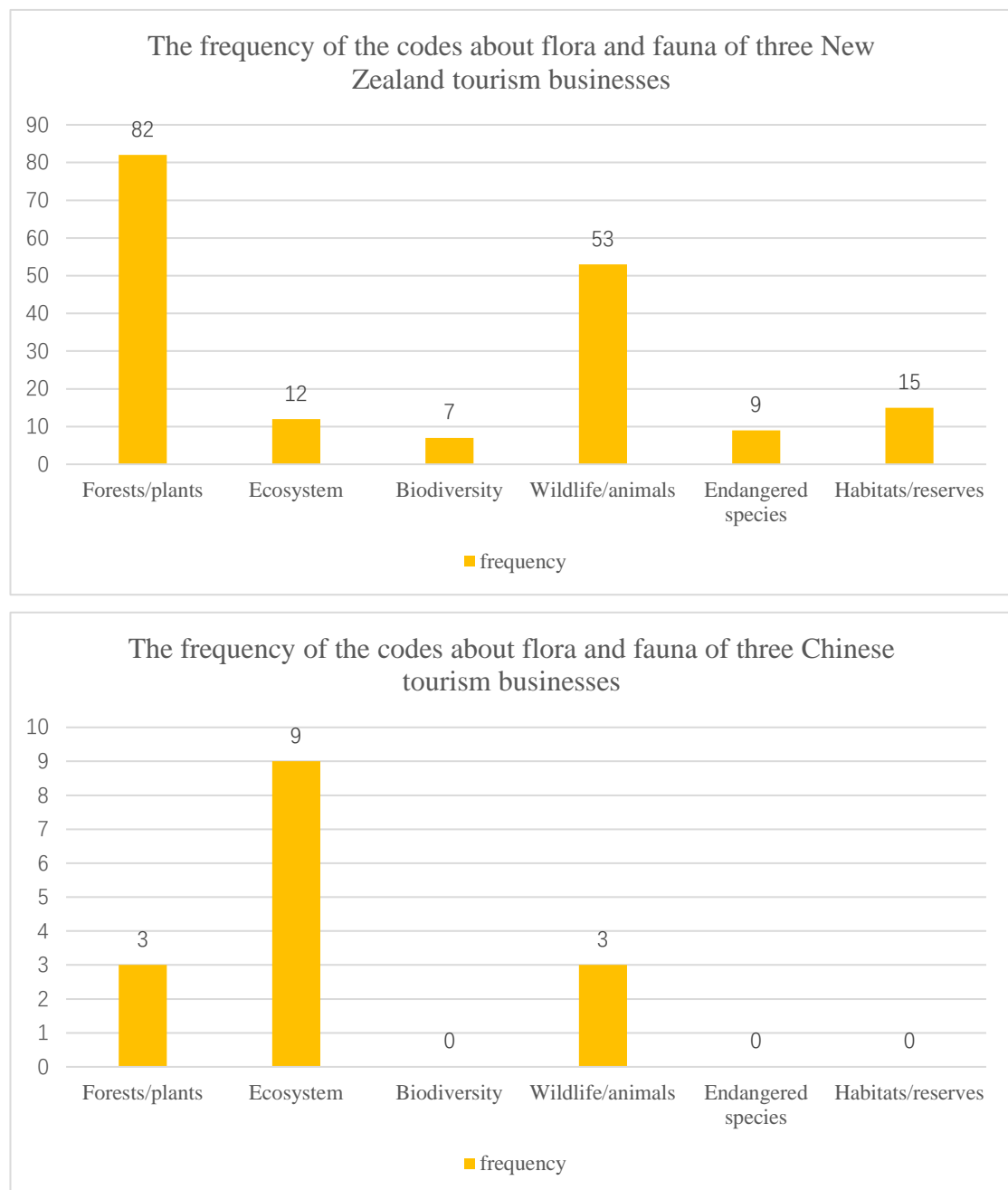
4.2.2.4 Flora and Fauna

Figure 5. The Frequency of the Codes about Flora and Fauna of Six Tourism Businesses

The last category is flora and fauna, which includes six codes related to animals and plants, such as 'forests or plants', 'ecosystem', 'biodiversity', 'wildlife or animals', 'endangered species' and 'habitats or reserves'.

In terms of 'forests or plants' 'ecosystem' and 'wildlife or animals', for example, Rotorua Canopy Tours organised a pest trapping program to fight against the invasion of alien species and restore the ecosystem and local flora and fauna (Rotorua Canopy Tours, 2018). As for Chinese tourism business, for instance, HNA Caissa Travel and the World Animal Protection Association signed an 'elephant-friendly tourism' commitment to stop selling and promoting elephant rides and performances in South Asian countries. At the same time, it launched a 'Polar Conservation' environmental action to protect the local flora and fauna, and maintain the sustainable development of the local natural ecosystem (HNA Caissa Travel, 2018). As for 'habitats or reserves', for example, Real Journey made Walter Peak Land Restoration Project to help restore the natural habits of native species destroyed by invasive species (Real Journeys, 2018).

4.3 Summary

The chapter shows the findings of content analysis based on the official websites and corporate social responsibility reports of six cases. The researcher made a series of attempts to survey the availability and specific factors of the content related to sustainability presented on those sources, for example categorising the content related to sustainability and grouping its specific factors, because the thorough discussion in the next chapter is grounded on the findings obtained in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The chapter demonstrates a discussion of the main research findings from chapter four with the aim of responding to the two research questions: the availability and specific factors of the sustainable strategies and practices of both countries' tourism businesses.

5.1 Research Question 1: How Much Attention do Chinese and New Zealand Tourism Businesses Place on Sustainable Practices?

As stated by Benckendorff, Sheldon, and Fesenmaier (2014), tourism websites are not only a marketing tool, but also provide support and services for tourists to enhance their experience. Most tourism businesses now provide online platforms, such as websites, for potential customers to browse their services and book online. On-line services aid those tourism businesses to promote their business to a larger audience, enhance their market competitiveness and provides tourists with more convenience in selecting travel products. Forsyth (1997) added that showing their sustainable strategies on corporate websites also can increase the value and attractiveness of their services and products and leaving tourists with a responsible corporate image. Tourists who pay attention to sustainability are then able to see those tourism businesses strategies online and determine those tourism businesses that best match their idea of sustainability (Kamanga & Bello, 2018). For example, all six case businesses utilize websites to promote and inform their customers on their services available, as well as utilize the websites to inform visitors about aspects of their environmental and socio-cultural business practices.

Therefore, to investigate the availability of the sustainable strategies of six cases online is one way to ascertain how much attention those tourism businesses give to sustainable strategies. Because of the limited space on a webpage, in order to market their products and services and provide relevant content, most tourism businesses are prone to present what they prioritise. As for sustainable strategies, tourists can obtain information of those sustainable strategies, which indicates that they gave priority to their sustainable strategies which can be their selling points in a competitive market.

Only studying the availability of sustainable strategies of those tourism businesses is inadequate to indicate how much attention tourism businesses pay to. Compared with corporate social responsibility reports, official websites are more convenient and direct to display sustainable strategies of tourism businesses for people. For example, some tourism businesses' official websites directly provide content of their sustainable strategies. And some do not do so but provide relevant links, such as the download link for corporate social responsibility reports which includes their sustainable strategies. such as CITS. However, there are also tourism businesses whose official websites are lacking both relevant content of their sustainable strategies and relevant links, and if tourists are eager to understand their sustainable strategies, they require to search and obtain relevant content from third-party websites through search engines.

As the finding of the availability of the content related to sustainability of six cases (shown in Table 2), all the six tourism businesses give sustainable strategies different levels of attention by presenting them on corporate official websites and corporate social responsibility reports. After the comparison, there is a certain gap between Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses in this regard. The content related to sustainability of two Chinese tourism businesses, HNA Caissa Travel and Jin Jiang Travel, were found with the assistance of the Google's search engine, their corporate social responsibility reports were downloaded from other third-party websites.

The result shows that New Zealand tourism businesses pay more attention than Chinese tourism businesses to sustainable strategies, reflecting that the New Zealand government has achieved greater success in promoting the concept of sustainable tourism (Tourism Industry Aotearoa, 2017). Sustainable tourism has gained the extensive attention of New Zealand tourism businesses who actively display their sustainable strategies as an imperative part of their corporate official websites.

Among the three New Zealand tourism businesses, the performance of Real Journey is

the most comprehensive with regard to its commitments, philosophy, strategies and initiatives of sustainability. Real Journey also demonstrates the various awards it has received in terms of environmental protection and sustainability and conservation programmes which are aimed at restoring the primitive local ecosystem and the population of native animals and plants, and also financial support for non-profit environmental organisations and environmental foundations. Real Journeys also has Qualmark Enviro Silver status and won the New Zealand Tourism Industry Association's Conservation in Action Award which are presented prominently on their website (Real Journeys, 2018).

One possible reason why Real Journeys outperforms the other two New Zealand tourism businesses is that it has the longest history among the three businesses. Real Journey was founded in 1954 (Real Journeys, 2018), and Rotorua Canopy Tours was founded later, which was established in 2012 (Rotorua Canopy Tours, 2018). As cited by Visser (2010), a corporation has a long corporate history and accumulates much experience, which can assist its corporate strategies to be more comprehensive and rich. Real Journey can perform better in the formulation and practices of its sustainable strategies by virtue of its previous accumulated experience in environmental protection.

In China, all three Chinese tourism businesses present their social and environmental performance on their corporate social responsibility reports, CITS perform the most comprehensively on sustainable practices among three Chinese tourism businesses. It not only carried out environmental protection and social charity activities, such as advocating civilised tourism and helping tourist destinations overcome poverty through developing local tourism, but also established an environmental management department to supervise its implementation of energy conservation and emission reduction strategies (China Travel Service, 2017).

It is presumed that there is some association between the tourism businesses' size and their focuses on sustainable strategies. The larger size of a tourism business, the more

attention a tourism business gives to sustainability. According to Rahman and Widyasari (2008), resources and finance of corporation are limited. They have to invest not only in production, operations, and employee salaries, but also in fulfilling their corporate social responsibilities on society and the environment. Therefore, a small corporation generally considers more the expansion and development of the corporation than corporate social responsibility. For example, CITS is one of the largest Chinese tourism business, and it shovels vast financial and social resources in fulfilling its corporate social responsibilities in environment and society annually, such as making poverty alleviation projects for impoverished regions and conducting the technological transformation of environmental protection (China International Travel Service, 2017).

5.2 Research Question 2: What Specific Factors of Sustainable Tourism Are Presented by Chinese and New Zealand Tourism Businesses?

As cited by Tepelus (2005), tourists pay more attention to the performance of tourism businesses on environmental and sustainability issues and are willing to further understand the specific factors of tourism businesses' sustainable strategies. All the six tourism businesses prioritise sustainable strategies and attempt to present their performance on environmental and sociological sustainability, because an increasing number of travelers realise the adverse impacts of tourism on tourist destinations' environment and socio-culture, and they are eager to contribute to lowering their harmful impacts (Budeanu 2007).

As shown by the results of the sustainable strategies' categories (shown in Table 2), there is a difference between New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses on the environmental category, the subcategories that they focus on are different. In detail, the coverage rate 'the percentage of yes' of five subcategories of both countries reaches 67% which is a high percentage. The findings also demonstrate that all six tourism businesses cover two subcategories, 'socio-culture' and 'energy and resources'. At the same time, coverage rate 'the percentage of yes' of another two subcategories, 'air' and 'waste', are 67% which means two tourism business of each country focus on them. Besides, all three

New Zealand tourism businesses include 'Flora and fauna', but just two Chinese tourism businesses cover this subcategory. The difference between the New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses is for the environmental category the New Zealand cases place more emphasis on the sub-categories than the Chinese cases.

Compared with other subcategories, 'air', 'waste', and 'flora and fauna', sustainable strategies of both New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses lay more emphasis on subcategories 'socio-culture' and 'energy and resources'. The reason why this situation happens is due to tourism businesses consider that the other three subcategories receive less attention from tourists than other two subcategories, tourism businesses usually mention the content which is more in line with the attention of tourists in order to impress tourists and advertise themselves (Kamanga and Bello, 2018). For example, there are numerous activities, including sightseeing and enjoying the Maori culture, heritage, arts and crafts, which are unique for tourists to visit New Zeeland (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

Moreover, by contrasting the coverage rate 'the percentage of yes' of 'flora and fauna', a gap between New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses arises. The reason for this is New Zealand's comprehensive system of environmental protection and sustainable tourism. As cited by UNWTO (2013), the Chinese government has not put forward a complete sustainable or environmental policy for guiding the tourism industry, what sustainable categories tourism businesses adopt depends on themselves mostly, rather than on criteria designed by authoritative organisations. Another reason is Chinese tourism businesses pay more attention to economic and socio-cultural sustainability (Ding and Packer, 2008)

All three New Zealand tourism businesses have mentioned all five subcategories in their sustainable strategies. And two subcategories, 'air' and 'waste', were not been covered by Rotorua Canopy Tours, because its tourism products are dependent on the local natural and ecological environment, it give priority to animals and plants (Rotorua Canopy Tours,

2018). The comparison of the five sustainable subcategories between two countries reflects that although in 2013 the State Council of China outlined the Chinese tourism future development (UNWTO 2013), tourism participants still pay too little attention to environmental sustainability (Ding & Packer, 2008).

5.2.1 Socio-culture

Although people's focus is mostly on the environmental influence of tourism, tourism also has an influence on socio-culture (Boksberger & Laesser, 2007). As indicated by the findings of the frequencies of codes in the subcategory 'socio-culture' (shown in Figure 1), both New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses cover all five codes. The frequencies of 'community', 'charity' and 'education', of both countries' cases, are more than other two codes, 'culture' and 'history', and 'charity' is the most frequent among the five codes for both countries' cases. This indicates that both New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses give priority to local residents, schooling, philanthropy, and the inheritance of local culture and history. This also can be attributed to the tourist desire to contribute to sustainability in this context as local communities, education and charity serve a vital role in sustainable tourism promotion and development.

Those three codes are prioritized, because the local communities, education and charity serve a vital role in sustainable tourism promotion and development. Sound infrastructure, tourist supporting facilities at tourist destinations and the attitudes of local communities towards tourists are also important (Beeton, 2006). At the same time, cultural and historical tourism resources play a vital role in tourism. Besides pulling in more tourists, protecting those kinds of resources also can encourage the preservation of historical and cultural heritage as well as the renaissance of cultural traditions, such as traditional arts and crafts (Fernandes, Coelho & Brázio, 2015). For example, CITS assists ethnic minorities areas to develop local tourism to overcome poverty relying on their unique cultural traditions, folklore, customs, architecture and history to attract tourists (China Travel Service, 2017).

5.2.2 Air

As presented by the findings of the frequencies of codes in the subcategory 'air' (shown in Figure 2), the New Zealand tourism businesses mention both codes, 'carbon footprint' and 'low carbon'. In contrast, Chinese tourism businesses only concentrate on the 'low carbon', and none of them referred to the other code 'carbon footprint'. It is shown that New Zealand tourism businesses pay close attention to the way to monitoring carbon emissions, rather than just the idea of low carbon emissions like Chinese tourism businesses.

Both Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses pay attention to climate change, due to it is a global problem which poses a threat to tourism sustainable development in many countries. While tourism is making an increasing contribution to total global greenhouse gas emissions, because of the popularity of low-cost airlines, more and more tourists choose to fly as their main trip mode (Scott, et al., 2008). Therefore, to alleviate the negative influences of climate change on tourism, it is necessary for tourism businesses to take note of the concepts relating to climate change.

5.2.3 Waste

As shown by the findings of the frequencies of codes in the subcategory 'waste' (shown in Figure 3), a general description 'emission or waste (reduction)' is used more times than the other two 'plastic waste' and 'sewage' in this subcategory both for New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses. Both of them are so concerned about 'emission or waste reduction', because various and numerous waste is generated by an increasing number of tourists and their activities which have a direct impact on the environment (Heitmann & Robinson, 2016). At the same time, many global environmental problems are caused by excessive emissions, such as global warming, greenhouse effect and air pollution, no country is immune, meaning governments, organizations and enterprises are highly concerned (Holden, 2017).

The other two codes are covered by all three New Zealand tourism businesses, while only code 'sewage' is mentioned by one Chinese tourism business. It shows that the understanding of environmental pollution of New Zealand tourism businesses' is more specific than that of Chinese tourism businesses. For example, according to Desai and Potter (2013) tourism has negative impacts on the environment, which can affect tourism businesses, tourists and things unrelated to tourism.

5.2.4 Energy and Resources

As presented by the findings of the frequencies of codes in the subcategory 'energy and resources' (shown in Figure 4), Chinese tourism businesses are more prone to use the term 'green or eco-friendly' and 'energy and resources (conservation)' to describe issues related to the environment than New Zealand tourism businesses. The principles of sustainable tourism include the sustainable use of tourism resources, which signifies that socio-cultural and natural resources in tourist destinations should be preserved for future hosts and tourists to use in the same manner (Heitmann & Robinson, 2016). However, the word 'recycling (reusing)'is more frequently utilised by New Zealand tourism businesses than Chinese tourism businesses. Because tourists can generate a lot of garbage during their tour, and tourism businesses are well suited to develop recycling programs that are often considered by tourists to be more important than waste reduction (Jafari, 2002).

Besides, as for the codes of specific factors, 'fuel' and 'water resources' are few frequently referred to by New Zealand tourism businesses. In contrast, Chinese tourism businesses concentrate on 'water resources', 'fuel' and 'electricity' more than New Zealand tourism businesses do, in order to save power energy and increase fuel efficiency, because the transportation, including aviation and tour bus, an essential role of tourism, represents the largest part of the consumption of the petroleum-based fuel and causes various environmental problems such as haze (Zhao & Li, 2018), it is necessary to use new energy and clean energy to reduce emissions of carbon compounds and air pollution gases (Turan & Karakoc, 2010).

Both Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses mention the code 'environmental conservation' many times on their official websites and corporate social responsibility reports, and its frequency of New Zealand tourism businesses are twice more than that of Chinese tourism businesses, because the environment is a substantial dependence for tourism, the environmental resources protection are prime considerations for the tourism industry (Nakagami et al., 2009).

5.2.5 Flora and Fauna

As demonstrated by the findings of the frequencies of codes in the subcategory 'flora and fauna' (shown in Figure 5), both countries' tourism businesses mention, more frequently, the three codes, 'forests or plants', 'wildlife or animals' and 'ecosystem', which indicates that all the tourism businesses consider it necessary to promote, protect and educate tourists about flora and fauna as well as their living ecosystem.

The frequencies of 'forests or plants' and 'wildlife or animals' Chinese tourism businesses are at least a dozen times than their frequencies of New Zealand tourism businesses, and the big gap indicates that New Zealand tourism businesses lay emphasis on protecting animal and plant resources more than Chinese tourism businesses do. As cited by Benckendorff, Sheldon, and Fesenmaier (2014), areas with rich diversity of animals and plants naturally attract tourists who enjoy traveling to view special birds, animals and plants in their habitats, for example New Zealand is a birds' paradise (Mason, 2015), implying that the New Zealand tourism businesses are particularly concerned about the ecosystem and biodiversity on which they depend, especially on native flora and fauna.

Both countries' tourism businesses pay close attention to 'ecosystem' which is more frequent than the other two codes, 'biodiversity' and 'endangered species', and none of the Chinese tourism businesses mention those two codes. Chinese tourism businesses seem to lack further understanding of ecosystem (Xu, Ding & Packer, 2008). The code 'habitats or reserves' is only mentioned by New Zealand tourism business. According to Holden (2017), the rich biodiversity that makes the tourist destination attractive to mass

and niche tourism markets can also be threatened by tourism development, so establishing habitats and reserves for endangered species benefits the maintenance of biodiversity.

5.3 Summary

Overall, the findings show that some gaps and differences exist on the understanding and practices of sustainable tourism between the two countries. For example, Chinese tourism businesses have not paid close attention to the conservation of natural habitats and reserves, unlike New Zealand tourism businesses. Chinese tourism businesses are accustomed to adopt general descriptions of sustainable tourism and summarise the detailed factors when they describe sustainable issues. On the other hand, there are some similarities between the two countries. For instance, both Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses actively contribute to local social welfare, educational resources and environmental protection through direct participation or donations to charitable and environmental organizations. The succeeding chapter will involve the overall conclusion, limitations of this study and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

6.1 Conclusion

Over the past few decades, the global tourism industry has developed rapidly, but the adverse influences of tourism on the socio-culture and environment of tourist destinations have become more and more serious (Fletcher et al., 2017). This trend has made tourism participants, such as governments, organisations, tourism businesses, tourists and residents, more concerned with the concept of sustainable tourism as well as its socio-cultural and environmental impacts. In addition, tourism businesses' understanding and practices of sustainable tourism are indispensable for governments to promote sustainable tourism. Although the Chinese tourism industry is paying more and more attention to the sustainability of tourism, there is still a gap between China and other countries with more developed tourism industries. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to study and contrast the sustainable strategies of New Zealand and Chinese tourism businesses as well as find some successful experiences that Chinese tourism businesses can follow.

According to the Global-local nexus framework (Alger, 2014), the researcher first reviewed some of the standards for sustainable tourism proposed by international tourism organisations, such as UNWTO and GSTC, and found that they all covered the economic, socio-cultural and environmental standards of sustainable tourism. However, those are only general criteria for guiding tourism participants, and governments still require developing sustainable strategies and policies for their own tourism to guide their tourism businesses' understanding and practices of sustainable tourism. The researcher went on to review recent national strategies and projects for sustainable tourism development in both countries, and found that the New Zealand government has launched a series of related projects that cover economy, socio-culture, as well as natural and ecological environments. For example, the Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Project (New Zealand Tourism Guide, 2018). In contrast the Chinese government, as outlined in China's tourism development (UNWTO, 2013), focus on tourism development does not involve natural

resources and the environment.

Through the step-by-step exploration of the two research questions, the author found that the sustainability performance and strategies content of all the six cases can be found online, including on the official websites and corporate social responsibility reports. However, such content of New Zealand tourism businesses is easier to find on their official websites than that of Chinese tourism businesses. It reflects that Chinese tourism businesses still need to pay more attention to sustainability performance and strategies, and Chinese tourism businesses have not realised that their performance and strategies of sustainability are conducive to establish a good and socially acceptable corporate image.

As for the second research question, in general, tourism businesses of the two countries have the almost equal performance of five subcategories, especially they attach great importance to the sustainability of socio-culture and resources. However, in terms of animals and plants, Chinese tourism businesses have not performed as sound as New Zealand tourism businesses, because the outline of China's tourism development does not involve natural resources and the environment, which, to some extent, can affect tourism businesses' understanding and practices of sustainable tourism.

By specifically analyzing codes under five sub-categories, first, in terms of socio-cultural subcategories, the researcher found tourism businesses of both countries are more concerned about local philanthropy, education and community. Also, as for environmental subcategories, Chinese tourism businesses are more likely to use general descriptions to express specific factors. Two countries' tourism businesses pay close attention to carbon emissions, energy conservation, emission reduction, eco-friendly, environmental protection, flora and fauna and ecosystems, in addition to carbon emissions and flora and fauna, others are some general descriptions. For specific factors, besides water, fuel and electricity which are scarce resources and energy in China, other specific factors, such as plastic waste, biodiversity, endangered species, habitats and protected areas, have not been paid attention to by Chinese tourism businesses.

Through conducting this study, the author found that sustainable strategies presented on corporate websites and corporate social responsibility reports are used to promote businesses and enhance their corporate competitiveness for appealing to tourists who care about such information. And sustainable strategies provide businesses with a benchmark to set as a strategic goal. Compared with New Zealand tourism businesses, there is still a gap between Chinese tourism businesses in the understanding and practice of sustainable tourism.

The overall findings of the research show that China has an opportunity to learn from other nation's sustainability strategies and that in the future, the Chinese government needs to issue more comprehensive tourism development policies and standards, especially to cover the natural and ecological environment. At the same time, Chinese tourism businesses can actively implement government policies and standards and fulfil their corporate social responsibility. In addition, tourism participants from China and New Zealand can enhance mutual cooperation and communications in the theories and practices of sustainable tourism and promote the sustainable and healthy development of tourism in both countries. Chinese tourism participants can learn relevant successful experiences and advanced concepts from the New Zealand tourism participants to assist Chinese tourism as early as possible to bridge the gap in this regard.

6.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study exists with some limitations, which influence the validity and reliability of the study. For example, scarce literature on China's sustainable strategies and the sources available for extracting research data (corporate official websites and corporate social responsibility report with the content related to sustainability), the timeliness of information presented online, and the subjectivity of the researcher in translation and codes grouping. Another limitation is the small sample size. The six cases may not be able to fully demonstrate the difference in the understanding and practices of sustainable tourism between Chinese and New Zealand tourism businesses. The research did not

consider economic sustainability because economic performance and impacts of sustainable tourism are beyond the scope of this particular study.

This study proposes the following recommendations for similar research in the future. The first is to widen the sample size and increase the number of sources for collecting research data, such as multimedia sources, national marketing strategies. This will enable research that can utilise quantitative and qualitative content analysis. In addition, it is best to incorporate the economic impacts and performance of sustainable tourism into the research scope, which can assist researchers to improve the validity, reliability, persuasiveness and integrity of the research. Further research could inform sustainable tourism development at a national level based on best practice and capture how strategy can inform both the supply of and demand for sustainable tourism.

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