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The Association Between the Need for Affiliation and Traveler Type with the Motivation for Travel

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THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE NEED FOR AFFILIATION AND TRAVELER TYPE WITH THE MOTIVATION FOR TRAVEL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to develop a conceptual framework and measures to identify the association of the need for affiliation and traveler profiles in shifts of motivations for travel. The instrument contained four types of questions: the revised Mehrabian Affiliative Tendency Scales, Driver's Recreation Experience Preference Scales, traveler and demographic profile questions. There was a significant difference between the factor mean scores for four of the five travel motivation factors among the three sub-groups as determined by their respective levels of affiliation. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the factor mean scores for travel motivation among the three sub-groups as determined by their respective preference for types of travel.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the motivation for travel has been seen as crucial for predicting destination choice, travel behaviors, and satisfaction levels. Although the literature contains numerous studies bearing on this subject, there have been limited attempts to integrate and conceptualize findings within a coherent framework (1, 2, 3, 4, 12) and when empirically tested they have relied upon data collected after the travel experience has been completed (24, 25). In reviewing previous research, it became evident that one of the most difficult aspects of determinating travel motivations has been the absence of a personality measure to isolate an individual's basic need as related to their subsequent motivation for travel.

The Plog Allocentrism/Psychocentrism Model has been cited frequently in tourism literature (14, 19, 20, 21). Plog's model suggests that the psychocentric traveler prefers vacations to destinations which are similar to their home. The psychocentric traveler prefers traveling by car or by packages. These individuals are "self-inhibited, non-adventuresome" people who tend to take fewer trips by air transportation, they stay closer to home, and "avoid new and unknown situations, such as meeting people or venturing forth into new activities. They prefer the comfort of a daily routine that varies little, and associating with friends they have known for a period of time" (27, p. 63-64).

The allocentric traveler prefers vacations to destinations which are unique and novel. The allocentric traveler prefer non-touristy

destinations, where they may explore new and different places, discover new experiences unknown to the majority of the population and try new activities. These outgoing, individualistic and adventurous travelers enjoy meeting and observing other people in different cultures (27, 1991). The majority (48%) of the population would be classified a midcentric with moderate characteristics located between the two bipolar extremes of allocentric-psychocentric.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to develop a conceptual framework and measures to identify the relationship of the need for affiliation and traveler profiles in shifts of motivations for travel. The subproblems of the study were: (1) to identify and prioritize the motivational dimensions of travel utilizing an accepted measure, Driver's Psychological Recreation Experience Preference Scales (REP); (2) to identify the need of affiliation tendency among the respondents utilizing an accepted measure, Mehrabian's Affiliative Tendency Scales (M-ATS); (3) to test for differences in travel motivations between subgroups of high, neutral, and low affiliative tendency; and (4) to test for differences in travel motivations between sub-groups of limited, moderate, and extensive travel experience/international and non-international travel experience/allocentric, midcentric, and psychocentric traveler type.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation of the instrumentation required a four week test-retest measurement of the M-ATS and the rather lengthy REP scales, therefore it was determined that a nonprobability judgement sample would be used in this phase of the study. It was more critical that the two applications of the questionnaire instrument be completed and matched to the same groups to ensure the development of a reliable instrument. The sampling frame was comprised of four groups: undergraduate students enrolled in 3 classes at a south-central university, undergraduate students enrolled in 2 classes at a western university, senior citizens living independently in midwestern city, and senior citizens living independently in a western city. Data was collected in two stages. During both stages the entire questionnaire was administered to respondents in each of the four locations. Coded numbers were used to ensure comparison of the data between the first and second administration of the survey. There were zero refusals and only eight incomplete surveys received. A total of 418 and 413 usable surveys were received during the first and second stages, respectively.

The instrument developed for this study contained four types of questions: the revised M-ATS (1974), the REP (1977) scales, traveler profile and demographic profile questions. The revised Mehrabian (1974) Affiliative Tendency Scales contained 26 items on a nine point Likert-type scale. The scales ranged from +4 (very strong agreement) to zero (neither agreement or disagreement) to -4 (very strong disagreement). The subjects were requested to indicate the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each scale item by entering the appropriate numeral in the space provided for each item. The scales were balanced for response bias with thirteen items being phrased positively and thirteen items being phrased negatively. A total score was computed for each subject by algebraically summing his or her responses

to the positively worded items and by subtracting from this quantity the algebraic sum of his or her responses to the negatively worded items (the total scores would range from -78 to +78).

A traveler profile was developed for the respondents of this study through the use of several probes including questions regarding the number of round trips within the continental United States in the past twelve months, the number of round trips outside the continental United States in the past five years, the number of vacation trips, and how they spent their time during their most recent vacation. The traveler type profile was developed utilizing the 1992 Plog Allocentrism/Psychocentrism scale. This scale consists of ten personality-based questions with three specific response choices per question. The questions were designed to provide a classification of travelers into the categories of allocentric, midcentric and psychocentric (26, 27).

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the project was a multi-phase process. The preliminary analysis included a test-retest reliability reassessment to determine the ability of the M-ATS and the D-REP to obtain stable ratings. This was conducted to assure that the two measurements of each scale over time did in fact measure the same construct. An overall test-retest reliability coefficient of .80 or higher would indicate that the two individual measurements correlated strongly and were indicative of a consistent test instrument (22, 23).

The individual REP scale items were examined using Principal Axis Factor Analysis with varimax rotation. A minimum eigenvalue of 1.0 and minimum factor loading of .40 was established as the basic criteria for the retention of a scale item in a factor. Cronbach's Alpha and Theta (minimum=.60), internal consistency coefficients were used to determine the reliability of the multi-dimensional factors. A confirmatory factor analysis utilizing Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis was conducted. Each individual was assigned to a sub-group ex *post facto* according to their summed score on the second measurement of the M-ATS. The respondents were rank ordered according to their summed score on M-ATS and the top one third were assigned to the high affiliative tendency sub-group, the middle one third were assigned to the neutral affiliative tendency subgroup, and the bottom one third were assigned to the low affiliative tendency sub-group. Traveler profiles were constructed by summing the responses to the various travel experience questions and respondents assigned ex *post facto* to three sub-groups of limited (0-3 trips a year), moderate (4-7 trips a year), and extensive (8 or more trips a year) travel experience. A similar process was utilized to assign respondents to groups of international and non-international travel experience and allocentric, midcentric, and psychocentric traveler sub-groups. The hypotheses were evaluated utilizing an analysis of variance of the achieved travel motivation factor score means by sub-groups of affiliative tendency, traveler type, travel experience, and international travel experience profile. A probability of .05 for the achieved F-statistic was established as the minimum acceptable level of significance and used to evaluate the existence of an overall significant difference. Since the study utilized a convenience sample and due to the number of analyzes involved in the hypotheses, the significant p-values must be interpreted cautiously. Therefore, *eta squared* and the Student-Newman-Keuls range tests were

utilized in the interpretation of the significant associations (11, 13).

RESULTS

The test-retest measurement of the two applications of the survey instrument yielded a product-moment correlation coefficient of 0.93 for the M-ATS and a range of 0.81 to 0.96 for all items in the five factors derived from the REP. Therefore, the study was successful in achieving a satisfactory test-retest requirement demonstrating the consistency or repeatability of the two measurement scales.

The principal axis factor analysis of the 39 item REP scales yielded seven factors, of which five factors were retained according to the previously stated criteria. The five factors explained 70.9% of the variance after varimax rotation. The first factor included 14 items related to the escape, rest and relaxation domains of the a *priori* REP domains. A second factor included 8 items related to experiences of nature, scenic beauty, and discovery domains. The resulting third and fourth factors corresponded completely with the a *priori* assignment of social contact, being with people, meeting-observing people, and family togetherness domains. All socially related scale items were ranked between 5.478 and 6.148 on the seven point response scale. The final factor included three items and reflected the a *priori* REP assignment of the nostalgia domain (Table 1). The Maximum-Likelihood factor analysis revealed a similar factor structure accounting for 70.5% of the variance. These results support the future application of the REP scales to the measurement of travel motivations.

The results from testing the affiliation related hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference between the factor mean scores for four of the five travel motivation factors (excluding the nature appreciation factor) among the three sub-groups as determined by their respective levels of affiliation (Significant at the .05 level) (Table 2). The range tests revealed the following results: The low need for affiliation group was significantly different from the neutral and high need for affiliation groups with regard to their responses on the factors of social contact (n2=.62) and family togetherness (n2=.62). The low need for affiliation group's factor score means were lower than the factor score means for the escape-rest (n2=.26) and nostalgia factors (n2=.10). Therefore, the M-ATS and REP scales were successful in revealing a shift in travel motivations which reflected the respondents need for affiliation. Similar results were achieved for travel experience and traveler type related hypotheses (n2 ranged from =.63 to .09). The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the factor mean scores for travel motivation among the three sub-groups as determined by their respective preference for types of travel (Table 3 and 4). The psychocentric travelers were significantly different from the midcentric and allocentric travelers with respect to their responses for all travel motivation factors. The psychocentric traveler type group's factor score means were significantly higher than the factor score means for the other two groups on the social contact factor and the family togetherness factor. The testing of the international and non-international travel experience revealed no significant differences among sub-group's travel motivations.

DISCUSSION

Previous studies have been successful in segmenting the travel market utilizing the traditional demographic characteristics, travel motivations, previous visits, and length of stay (30). The findings of this exploratory study indicate that it may be beneficial to segment the travel market utilizing the dimensions of the need for affiliation and traveler profiles. It is recommended that a subsequent study be conducted utilizing a probability sampling design which would stratify the sample across modes of travel, travel information/reservation source, and travel activity to ensure the conclusions could be generalized to the travel population.

Traveler Types

This study was successful in revealing shifts in travel motivations among traveler types. A previous study conducted by Plog (27) which utilized five different scenarios from which respondents could select the scenario most representative of why they traveled was not successful in detecting this association. Therefore, future applications of the Allocentrism-Psychocentrism scale and the REP scale utilizing a probability sample design may be useful in understanding why people are motivated to travel to different destinations.

It should be noted that there was a significant association between the location and traveler type, or more specifically, the two university sub-samples versus the two senior citizen sub-samples. Additionally, the primary characteristic upon which the two University sub-samples were different from the two senior citizen sub-samples was age. Therefore, a significant association may exist between the traveler type and age and warrants further investigation.

The application of Plog's scale in this study revealed only 15 allocentric and near-allocentric travelers among the overall sample (N=413), whereas Plog's model hypothesizes that there should have been 16% of the sample or 66 allocentric and near-allocentric travelers among the respondents. This is of particular concern because the students attending the University of Utah report typical activities of skiing, rock and ice climbing, mountain biking, and whitewater rafting, which should be indicative of a near-allocentric or allocentric personality type. Therefore, the study detected an inconsistency in Plog's Allocentricism-Psychocentricism Model. In a study examining Plog's model of tourism destination preference and a personality based scale similar to Plog's scale, Smith (28) failed to confirm an association between personality based measures and destination choice. He asserts "that tourism researchers need to be more willing to formulate and test models about all aspects of the tourism system and not rely on tradition or untested hypotheses for explanations about how the tourism system works" (28, p. 41). The findings of this study certainly support Smith's conclusion with regards to Plog's scale.

A similar study utilized psychographic and demographic variables to cluster travelers into knowledgeable, budget conscious, and travel planners (8). Gladwell's vacation life-style variable included such scale items as venturesomeness, camper traveler, tent traveler, relaxing traveler, first class travel, one-up-manship travel, education travel, sport participation, vagabond traveler, historic traveler, vacation gregariousness and familial traveler. Gladwell was successful in demonstrating the critical need and usefulness of this type of marketing information Perhaps a multiple characteristic variable or combination of

variables could be used to better identify an association between traveler type and the motivation to travel.

Travel Experience

The results from testing the third hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference between the factor mean scores for travel motivation among the three subgroups of low, moderate, and extensive travel experience. The low travel experience group was significantly different from the moderate and extensive travel experience groups with regard to their responses on the first three factors. The low travel experience group's factor score mean was lower than the factor score mean for the other two groups on the social contact factor. Additionally, the low travel experience group's factor score mean was significantly higher on the escape and rest factor (Table 5 and 6). These findings are consistent with the conclusions of the Haukeland study (9) which suggested that non-travelers, or in this case, individuals with limited or no travel experience fulfill their social needs through non-travel activities and seek travel for escape and relaxation. Although the *eta squares* for factors 2 through 5 indicated that the independent variable of travel experience explained a minimal amount of variance of the dependent variable, travel motivations, the results suggest that future research is required in this area.

The tourism research journals have reported a few studies regarding the intensity of travel experience. For example, Spotts and Mahoney (29) segmented travelers into three groups of travelers: light spenders, medium spenders and heavy spenders. They found that there existed significant differences among the three groups regarding purpose of trip, activities selected, and planning behaviors. It is recommended that this component of the research receive additional attention in future studies.

International Travel Experience

The findings resulting from testing the fourth hypothesis revealed that there was not a significant difference between the factor mean scores for travel motivation among respondents with international travel experience and respondents without international travel experience. The fourth hypothesis was not rejected. These findings are consistent with conclusions of Fisher and Price (7). Their study examined the relationship between international travel experience and post-vacation attitudes and found that the results did not support an association between international travel experience, post-vacation attitude change, and travel motivations (7, p. 205).

SUMMARY

This study was conducted in an attempt to identify the influence of the need for affiliation in shifts in motivations for travel. The primary objective of the study was to develop stable measurement instruments of the need for affiliation and travel motivations. Results supported the need for affiliation model and all null hypotheses were rejected with the exception of the null hypothesis related to international travel experience. There was a significant difference between sub-groups as determined by the need for affiliation, traveler type, and travel experience with regard to the motivations for travel.

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TABLE 1

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF MOTIVE ITEMS FOR THE TOTAL SAMPLE
(N=413)

MOTIVE FACTOR	FACTOR LOADING	PERCENT* VARIANCE (*a*)
FACTOR 1: ESCAPE & REST		39.8
		.9708
To experience the unknown.	.83054	
To help me get rid of some up-tight feelings.	.89579	
To try and improve my skills while vacationing.	.67985	
To give my body rest.	.86168	
To get away from crowds of people for a while.	.85244	
Because of the sense of discovery.	.81542	
To help get rid of some anxieties.	.89129	
To get away from crowded situations for a time.	.65192	
To relax physically.	.90411	
To take it easy physically.	.86232	
To help reduce some frustrations I have been feeling.	.88487	
To escape the family temporarily.	.68967	
For the physical rest.	.78691	
To be without the rest of the family.	.72985	
FACTOR 2: NATURE APPRECIATION		19.7
		.9377
So I could take in the natural settings.	.89397	
To gain an experience I can look back on.	.76784	
To be in a natural setting.	.85144	
To see new and different things.	.78144	
To enjoy the scenery.	.84449	
I think it will help me feel like a better person.	.47173	
To find out about things.	.49610	
To observe the scenic beauty.	.48645	

MOTIVE FACTOR	FACTOR LOADING	PERCENT* VARIANCE (*a*)
FACTOR 3: SOCIAL CONTACT		4.9 *.9311*
So I could do things with my companions.	.48309	
To see new faces.	.67234	
To be with people having similar interests.	.66174	
It would be a chance to meet new people.	.78701	
To be with others who enjoy the same things I do.	.65804	
To build friendships with new people.	.78188	
So I could be with friends.	.49943	
To talk to new and varied people.	.71682	
FACTOR 4: FAMILY TOGETHERNESS		3.5 *.8955*
Because the entire family would like it.	.67478	
So the family could spend some time together.	.58683	
I think it would be a good experience for the family.	.60344	
To get the family together for a while.	.69972	
FACTOR 5: NOSTALGIA		2.9 *.8939*
To recall past satisfactions.	.55837	
Because it will bring back pleasant memories.	.67612	
I think it will help me feel like a better person.	.51950	

a = Cronbach's Alpha
*Total Percent Variance = 70.9

TABLE 2

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION FACTOR SCORES FOR AFFILIATED GROUPS
(N=405)

Factor 1

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	85.5448	2	42.7724	55.436*
Within Groups	310.1664	402	.7716	
TOTAL	395.7111	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 2

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	3.0486	2	1.5243	1.6261*
Within Groups	376.8445	402	.9374	
TOTAL	379.8931	404		

*Not Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 3

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	31.3863	2	15.6931	18.798*
Within Groups	335.5922	402	.8348	
TOTAL	366.9785	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 4

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	18.6061	2	9.3031	11.330*
Within Groups	330.0709	402	.8211	
TOTAL	348.6770	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 5

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	9.7923	2	4.8962	5.9706*
Within Groups	329.6554	402	.8200	
TOTAL	339.4478	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION FACTOR SCORES FOR TRAVELER TYPES
(N=405)

Factor 1

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	249.3884	2	124.694	342.58*
Within Groups	146.3227	402	.364	
TOTAL	395.7111	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 2

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	10.3895	2	5.1948	5.6516*
Within Groups	396.5036	402	.9191	
TOTAL	379.8931	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 3

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	30.9290	2	15.4645	18.499*
Within Groups	336.0495	402	.8359	
TOTAL	366.9785	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 4

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	18.3158	2	9.1579	11.143*
Within Groups	330.3612	402	.8218	
TOTAL	348.6770	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 5

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	25.6079	2	12.8040	16.401*
Within Groups	313.8398	402	.7807	
TOTAL	339.4478	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF MEAN FACTOR SCORES BY TRAVELER TYPES
(N=405)

FACTOR	PSYCHOCENTRIC (N=204)	MIDCENTRIC (N=187)	ALLOCENTRIC (N=14)
1	-.7769	.8106*a*	.4930*a*
2	.1269	-.0913	-.6294
3	.2698	-.2932*a*	-.0142*a*
4	.2099	-.2045*a*	-.3279*a*
5	-.8026	-4.5123*a*	-2.5976*a*

Note: Means with the same subscript are not significantly different at the .05 level (Student-Newman-Keuls Procedure).

TABLE 5

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF TRAVEL MOTIVATION FACTOR SCORES FOR TRAVEL EXPERIENCE GROUPS (N=405)

Factor 1

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	111.2659	2	55.6330	78.625*
Within Groups	284.4452	402	.7076	
TOTAL	395.7111	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 2

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	10.6679	2	5.3340	5.8074*
Within Groups	369.2252	402	.9185	
TOTAL	379.8931	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 3

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	8.9722	2	4.4861	5.0374*
Within Groups	358.0063	402	.8906	
TOTAL	366.9785	404		

*Significant at the .05 level

Factor 4

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	9.4157	2	4.7078	5.5784*
Within Groups	339.2613	402	.8439	
TOTAL	348.6770	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

Factor 5

SOURCE OF VARIATION	SUM OF SQUARES	df	MEAN SQUARE	F
Between Groups	6.5082	2	3.2541	3.9291*
Within Groups	332.9396	402	.8282	
TOTAL	339.4478	404		

*Significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF MEAN FACTOR SCORES BY
TRAVEL EXPERIENCE GROUPS
(N=405)

FACTOR	LOW TRAVEL EXPERIENCE (N=116)	MODERATE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE (N=168)	EXTENSIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE (N=121)
1	.8251	-.3700*a*	-.2773*a*
2	-.2519	.0716*a*	.1421*a*
3	-.2310	.1199*a*	.0549*a*
4	-.2103*a*	.1589*b*	-.0191*ab*
5	-.1909*a*	.1148*b*	.0237*ab*

Note: Means with the same subscript are not significantly different at the .05 level (Student-Newman-Keuls Procedure).