Pleasure travel (tourist) motivation: A factor analytic approach

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The major motives underlying pleasure travel were investigated by factor-analyzing Figler's Travel Motivation Survey, which is based on a variety of motives for pleasure travel suggested in the tourism literature. This questionnaire was administered to 325 subjects. The data analysis uncovered five orthogonal factors, which together accounted for 46.6% of the total response variance. The five factors, as well as the percentage of variance accounted for by each one, were as follows: anomie/authenticity-seeking (20.1%), culture/education (9.6%), escape/regression (7.4%), wanderlust/exploring the unknown (5.1%), and jetsetting/prestige-seeking (4.4%). The test-retest reliability of each factor was also established. These data empirically support some of the notions proposed in previous travel literature, although past studies have usually focused on only a few motives, have been nonquantified, and/or have not provided data on the relative importance of each motive. The present data quantitatively revealed a hierarchy of independent motives underlying pleasure travel.

Although tourism is an extremely important component of the world's economy, the motivations of the individual pleasure traveler (tourist) are not fully understood (Figler, 1990; Pearce, 1982). A number of attempts have been made in fields such as psychology (Farber, 1954; Pearce, 1982), sociology (Dann, 1977; MacCannell, 1976), and anthropology (Cohen, 1979; Graburn, 1977) to explain the underlying motivations of the tourist. Unfortunately, most of the previous work in this research area has been anecdotal or nonquantitative.

In the present research, we attempted to quantitatively evaluate a recently developed pleasure travel motivation scale, which is based on the motivations that have been suggested in the previous literature on tourism. Specifically, the Travel Motivation Survey (Figler, 1983) motivational items were subjected to principle components analysis, and the test-retest reliability of each emergent factor was assessed.

EXPERIMENT 1

Method

Subjects. A total of 325 respondents participated in Experiment 1; 154 males and 171 females. They included students enrolled at Towson State University, clients seeking travel advice, and travelers waiting at Baltimore-Washington International Airport or Pennsylvania Train Sta-

tion, Baltimore. The demographic characteristics of the subjects are shown in Table 1.

Materials. Figler's (1983) Travel Motivation Survey consists of 45 items. The first 10 items consist of demographically oriented questions (see Table 1), and the remaining 35 motivation-related items were developed on the basis of motives typically cited in previously reviewed tourism literature. (The response categories of these motivation-related items were as follows: 0, *strongly disagree*; 1, *disagree*; 2, *no opinion*; 3, *agree*; and 4, *strongly agree*.) The motivational items are presented in Table 2, numbered 11-45 as they appear in the Travel Motivation Survey.

Procedure. The subjects were informed that they would be participating in a study designed to assess a variety of factors that motivate people to engage in nonbusiness forms of travel (i.e., travel for pleasure). They were instructed to record all answers on a provided coding sheet. The survey itself contained the directions for completing the questionnaire; the subjects were also instructed verbally. Although no time limit was imposed for completion of the survey, most subjects finished it within 10 min.

Approximately 250 surveys were mailed directly to travel agencies in the Baltimore area. About 20% of these were returned. The remaining surveys were collected directly from students and from persons waiting at the airport and train station, as previously described.

Results

Factor analysis was employed on the motivational items (Nos. 11-45) to reduce the dimensions of the data set (i.e., to define a smaller set of variables, called factors, that could account for a majority of the variance in the data). Because common variance among the survey items was generally low, total variance was analyzed with principle component procedures. Principle components analysis (PCA) is one type of factoring algorithm that defines uncorrelated factors. Varimax rotation was used to refine the original factor matrix. Rotation of the initial solutions maximizes variance loadings within each factor. Rotating the original matrix aids in the identification of the variables that best define the factor.

A factor-loading criterion of .40 was used as a cutoff for inclusion of any item among the various factors. In other words, any item whose factor loading (the correla-

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Table 1
Summary of Demographic Characteristics: Frequencies and Percentages

1. Sex of respondent	• Male: 154 (47%)	• Female: 171 (52%)			
2. Age	• < 18: 11 (3%)	• 18–35: 225 (69%)	• 36–43: 37 (11%)	• 44–61: 46 (14%)	• ≥ 62: 5 (2%)
3. Marital Status	• Single: 177 (55%)	• Married: 123 (38%)	• Divorced: 10 (3%)	• Separated: 7 (2%)	• Widowed: 3 (.9%)
4. Education	• Did not graduate from high school: 7 (2%)	• High school graduate: 53 (17%)	• Attended college: 144 (45%)	• College graduate: 63 (18%)	• Graduate training: 53 (17%)
5. Occupational status	• Full-time employment: 143 (45%)	• Full-time student: 120 (38%)	• Part-time student: 18 (6%)	• Unemployed: 28 (8%)	• Retired: 9 (3%)
6. Yearly family income (in thousands)	• \$0–10: 31 (10%)	• \$11–20: 57 (18%)	• \$21–30: 62 (20%)	• \$31–40: 56 (18%)	• > \$40: 112 (35%)
7. Have traveled to foreign country	• Yes: 212 (65%)	• No: 113 (35%)			
8. Number of separate foreign trips	• 0: 116 (36%)	• 1–3: 107 (33%)	• 4–6: 43 (13%)	• 7–9: 19 (6%)	• ≥ 10: 40 (12%)
9. Average number of separate trips per year (foreign and domestic) during which you stayed longer than 24 hours	• 0: 37 (12%)	• 1–3: 178 (55%)	• 4–6: 68 (21%)	• 7–9: 16 (5%)	• ≥ 10: 23 (7%)
10. Country of origin (your nationality)	• North American: 272 (84%)	• Central/South American 12 (4%)	• European: 32 (10%)	• Asian: 4 (1%)	• African: 3 (.9%)

tion of the variable with the factor) exceeded .40 was included. No item emerged that had a factor loading greater than .40 with more than one of the five factors. The factor loadings and corresponding survey items that emerged after varimax rotation are presented in Table 3. The percentages of total variance accounted for by each factor were as follows: Factor 1, 20.1%; Factor 2, 9.6%; Factor 3, 7.4%; Factor 4, 5.1%; and Factor 5, 4.4%.

A total of eight orthogonal (i.e., independent) factors were derived through PCA. Only the first five are included in the present report. The final three factors were excluded from any further analysis, because of a very low percentage of total variance accounted for and a paucity of significant loadings within each of these factors.

Specific factor labels were determined by the general content that appeared to be expressed by the items making up each factor. Factors were given dual labels, not because they expressed bipolar motivations, but because no one factor presented itself with singular meaning.

EXPERIMENT 2

Experiment 2 was undertaken to assess the test-retest reliability of each of the five travel motivation factors that emerged in Experiment 1.

Method

Subjects. The subjects were 84 undergraduate students (26 male, 58 female), who were enrolled in various psychology courses. All were volunteers. All subjects in Experiment 2 did not participate in Experiment 1.

Materials and Procedure. A computerized version of Figler's (1983) Travel Motivation Survey was used; it was run on an IBM-compatible microcomputer. Subjects were tested individually after being told that they were to be involved in a study of pleasure travel motivation, as in Experiment 1. They were also informed that they were to return on a designated day to retake the same scale. The instructions for completing the Travel Motivation Survey were presented via computer.

Results

Using the values shown in Table 3, separate factor scores were computed for each subject by taking the response values for the motivational items that clustered to form each particular factor, multiplying each of these item values by its respective factor-loading coefficient, and summing all of the products (item value $\times$ factor-loading coefficient) across the items that the factor comprised. This procedure resulted in five separate factor scores for each subject on each day of testing. The interval between the initial and subsequent day of testing was approximately 3 weeks ($M = 20.54$ days, $SD = 1.00$).

Separate Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients comparing the initial (test) and subsequent (retest) factor scores were calculated for each of the five factors. The anomie/authenticity-seeking factor showed test-retest reliability [$r(82) = .77, p < .001$], as did the factors of culture/education [$r(82) = .75, p < .001$], escape/regression [$r(82) = .74, p < .001$], wanderlust/exploring the unknown [$r(82) = .75, p < .001$], and jetsetting/prestige-seeking [$r(82) = .79, p < .001$].

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present data provide quantitative support for a number of past conjectures about the motives that underlie pleasure travel. Although many of the past studies may have been focused on one or a couple of these motives and/or may have been done in a nonquantitative fashion, each of the five motives revealed in the present study has been suggested in prior studies.

For example, the anomie/authenticity motive that emerged in this study strongly supports the position of Dann (1977) that people travel in search of something better or more comfortable for themselves. Pearce and Caltabiano (1983) have suggested that positive travel experiences reflect fulfillment of self-actualization, and needs for love and belongingness, concerns that are related to this factor. The anomie/authenticity-seeking motive also supports the work of Cohen (1979)—especially his description of the diversionary, experiential, experimental, and existential tourist modes. MacCannell's (1976) basic thesis is that the major reason for

Table 2
Motivational Items from the Travel Motivation Survey

11. To see new things
12. To get away from a boring situation
13. To develop self-reliance
14. To increase my social prestige
15. To find a culture in which I feel more comfortable
16. To get a better understanding of my ethnic roots
17. To be in a setting where I can be myself
18. For rest and recuperation
19. Because of an inexplicable yearning to roam
20. To seek a better existence
21. For a change of pace
22. For educational purposes
23. To be able to be more anonymous than usual
24. To seek new social contacts
25. To be with people with whom I might feel more comfortable
26. To explore the unknown
27. To get away from family
28. To experience more sexual liberation
29. To seek a more authentic existence
30. To experience a better climate
31. To get away from responsibility
32. To see famous cultural and historical sites
33. To be closer to nature
34. Simply to be on the move
35. Because of curiosity about other cultures
36. To participate in certain athletic activities
37. To experience novel foods
38. To experience geographical beauty
39. To be a part of history
40. To experience danger
41. To visit friends and acquaintances
42. To be able to act like a kid
43. In order to live without being on a timetable
44. So everything can be done for me
45. To be where the "jetsetters" are

so-called pleasure travel is to seek a more authentic existence, even if it is only temporary.

In short, the present data support the primacy of this motive. However, the relative importance of anomie/authenticity-seeking could be due to specific characteristics of the present sample (e.g., geographic region, income, age, educational level). A recently completed study (Robie, Ellison, & Figler, 1991) has generally supported the original factor analysis, but has shown that with a sample composed exclusively of college students, the culture/education motive is most important, with the anomie/authenticity-seeking factor being second in importance.

With regard to the culture/education motive, the present data reinforce the frequently suggested explanation of pleasure travel as involving cultural enhancement and educational pursuits. However, some prior reports have viewed cultural/educational pursuits as "pull" factors (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977)—that is, motives aroused by particular attributes of a destination, rather than individual, social-psychological variables that predispose one to travel (i.e., "push" factors).

The escape/regression motive uncovered in this study generally supports the notion of a number of past researchers (Cohen, 1979; Crompton, 1979; Farber, 1954) that pleasure travel involves escape from the pressures, dissatisfaction, or routine of the home environment. Some of the items that loaded into this factor also reflect the desire to be removed from general responsibility. Crompton (1979) has suggested that pleasure travel provides the chance to engage in more puerile, adolescent behavior. Indeed, escaping the context of one's ordinary environment promotes a reversion to a lifestyle in which certain mores and inhibitions are relaxed (Lett, 1983).

Although wanderlust has been widely discussed within the context of pleasure travel, little empirical evidence for this motive has been presented previously. The items that clustered to form this factor all relate to the desire to roam and/or explore. Again, past researchers (Cohen,

1979; Vogt, 1976) have acknowledged this motive, but the present data provide an empirical, quantitative foundation for it.

Finally, the jetsetting/prestige-seeking motive implies a desire for personal recognition, social status, or "high living." This motive is frequently aroused by the travel media to encourage tourism. Travel commercials on television and advertisements in travel magazines and brochures strongly reinforce the notion that life is more glamorous among the "beautiful people." Lett's (1983) analysis of charter yacht tourism in the Virgin Islands strongly supports the image of relaxing sexual inhibitions and engaging in high-status sports activities as having the effect of enhancing one's ego (Dann, 1977) or social prestige (Crompton, 1979) at home.

In general, the present data have provided evidence for the motives discussed above, and they have suggested a hierarchy of their importance, at least for the sample used in this study. Also, the test-retest reliability data give preliminary support to the conclusion that these motives are reasonably stable over the time period used here, and that the Travel Motivation Survey itself is a reliable instrument for measuring pleasure travel motivation.

Of course this study has only provided preliminary findings; they may vary as a function of sample characteristics, as previously mentioned.

Table 3
Factor Loadings for Each of the Five Major Travel Motives
Derived from Principle Components Analysis

Item	
	Factor 1
15. To find a culture in which I feel more comfortable	.73
17. To be in a setting where I can be myself	.71
25. To be with people with whom I might feel more comfortable	.71
20. To seek a better existence	.61
16. To get a better understanding of my ethnic roots	.58
13. To develop self-reliance	.56
29. To seek a more authentic existence	.56
24. To seek new social contacts	.54
23. To be able to be more anonymous than usual	.45
	Factor 2
32. To see famous cultural and historical sites	.77
35. Because of curiosity about other cultures	.74
22. For educational purposes	.64
39. To be a part of history	.55
38. To experience geographical beauty	.48
11. To see new things	.48
	Factor 3
31. To get away from responsibility	.76
44. So everything can be done for me	.71
43. In order to live without being on a timetable	.63
30. To experience a better climate	.62
42. To be able to act like a kid	.57
	Factor 4
34. Simply to be on the move	.67
19. Because of an inexplicable yearning to roam	.65
40. To experience danger	.63
26. To explore the unknown	.54
	Factor 5
36. To participate in certain athletic activities	.64
14. To increase my social prestige	.61
45. To be where the "jetsetters" are	.57
28. To experience more sexual liberation	.47

Note—Factor 1 = anomie/authenticity-seeking. Factor 2 = culture/education. Factor 3 = escape/regression. Factor 4 = wanderlust/exploring the unknown. Factor 5 = jetsetting/prestige-seeking. Values for percent of variance were 20.1, 9.6, 7.4, 5.1, and 4.4, respectively. Total percent of variance accounted for was 46.6.

It is again stressed that approximately 47% of the response variance was accounted for by the five factors, which means that other variables, not addressed in the present work, are operating. Also, the validity, particularly the predictive validity, of this instrument must be assessed. One such approach might be to evaluate the relationship between one's profile of factor scores and actual travel behavior or satisfaction with particular destinations or modes of travel.

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