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# To travel or not to travel: Towards understanding the theory of nativistic motivation

## Abstract

*Largely employing the frameworks provided by the opponent process theory, the trans-theoretical model of change, and the two factor theory of motivation, the present paper introduces the concept of 'nativistic motivation' into the tourism literature. Although nativistic motivation might turn out to be an important category in the nomological network of tourism theory, it has thus far escaped the attention of tourism researchers. The traditional conceptualization of tourism motivation included only those factors that 'positively' motivate individuals to travel and considered that lower ratings on these factors alone constituted demotivation to travel. Nativistic motivators may be defined as those counter-touristic drives that motivate individuals not to travel before they embark on travel and motivate them to go back to their places of residence once they are on the move. The paper reports the development of a valid and reliable instrument to measure nativistic motivation. It hypothesizes the stages of touristic and nativistic motivations and the interactions between them. The simple yet comprehensive model proposed in this paper views tourism phenomenon essentially as a negotiated process between touristic and nativistic motivators.*

## Keywords:

*touristic motivation; nativistic motivation; scale development; interaction of motivational factors*

## Introduction

It is generally believed that tourists undergo different stages of travel preferences just like a tourism destination undergoes lifecycle changes. In line with the above observation, a potential tourist is generally driven by the desire to escape the day to day pressures of modern life. It is also speculated that in the pre-trip stage, the potential tourist will be driven by the need to escape from the trivial and the run of the mill daily chores of work and family and ease into the 'touristhood' state of mind. However, despite this longing to be drifted off from the known to the unknown, the tourist does not fully forget the cost involved in such a 'travel mode' situation. The potential tourist ponders over the inconvenience of leaving the security and the comforts of home.

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Therefore one could confidently say that a potential tourist always struggles with the thought of resisting the idea of leaving comforts of home for an exotic far away experience. However, while on travel the tourist actively seeks emancipation and engages in behaviors that befit the one emancipated from the bounds of routine life. It is not that the feeling for home is fully removed from the tourist: that feeling always remains, but at a very subtle level. At some point during the trip, the tourist crosses the cultural threshold of home into the realm of the '*other*'. However, the experience of the 'touristic space-time' is slowly overcome by the rising awareness that 'I have miles to go before I sleep'. The regular self that the tourist suppressed so far gains its lost position as the tourist travels back home.

From the above description, it is apparent that two opposing drives compete to control the behavior of the holidaymakers: those that prompt them to go and those that prompt them not to go or to come back. However, much less importance is given to this aspect in the tourism research. Even now, tourism theory or its marketing practice does not identify what is going to be defined in the following section as 'nativistic motivator' as a separate category worthy of attention. Such neglect should not be allowed to slow down the development of a comprehensive understanding of the concept of motivation in the tourism. Hence, this paper purports to look in to this much neglected aspect of tourism theory and aims to develop a balanced cognition of the aspect through empirical understanding.

### **Touristic and nativistic motivations**

Nativistic motivators are those counter-touristic drives that motivate individuals not to travel before they embark on travel and motivate them to go back to their places of residence once they are on the move. The theoretical foundation for the existence of such a construct may be sourced from Hurvich and Jameson (1974). These researchers proposed that every psychological process triggered its opposite and most part of the human neural organization can be modeled after such opponent processes. This model asserts that emotions are paired and that when one emotion in a pair is experienced the other is suppressed. However, the suppression is released at some point of time and the opposite emotion is allowed to take the front stage due to the influence of a range of internal and external forces. In effect, emotions modulate around a point of neutrality and opposing emotions cancel each other out (Solomon, 1978). In fact, motivational researchers like Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) who primarily focused on management science, while proposing the two factor theory of motivation, have identified these push-pull forces in a slightly different way. If the much researched construct of touristic motivation does exist, then the simultaneous existence of its counter motivation cannot be challenged.

Given its central position to the discipline, motivation related studies constitute an evergreen area of research in tourism. A Google Scholar search with the term 'tourism motivation' yielded 116000 results; when the filter 'since 2009' was applied, the search result still showed a count of over 16000. Historically, many schools of thought have

dominated tourism motivation literature: social psychology based theories, expectancy theories, value based theories, cultural theories, economic theories, and content based theories (Crompton, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Pitts & Woodside 1986; Smeral, 1988; Witt & Wright, 1992).

In the recent past, researchers have studied the relationship between tourist motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty (Yoon & Uysal, 2005); travel experiences and motivations (Pearce & Lee, 2005); the new environmental paradigm and motivation (Luo & Deng, 2008); gender differences in tourism motivation (McGehee, Kim, & Jennings, 2007); and motivation in rural tourism (Park & Yoon, 2009). From an application perspective, travel motivations have been extensively used as bases of market segmentation and target marketing (Page & Connell, 2006). Despite all these, motivation research in tourism remains by and large as a fuzzy set as lamented long back by Cohen (1974).

A major chunk of motivation research in tourism so far can be classified under two categories: one set of studies aim at identifying the push factors (factors in the internal, mental, world) and the other set of studies aim at identifying the pull factors (factors in the external, physical, world). The push-pull framework is very intuitive: a potential traveler is pushed from within and he or she is also pulled by tourism opportunities in the outside world; push is the result of a need and pull is the offerings that satisfy the need. Entirely based on the push-pull framework, Kim, Lee and Klenosky (2003) have been able to successfully model visitation at Korean national parks.

While these studies have been able to enlist the various push and pull factors, they, with a few exceptions, did not examine the changing dynamics of the intensity of these factors on a time scale. In other words, these studies assumed as if these factors remained constant throughout the tourist transformation cycle discussed above. Works by Lundberg (1971), Cohen (1979), Crompton (1979), Dann (1981), and Pearce and Caltabiano (1983) were all based on this assumption.

In this paper, we posit that touristic need fulfillment does not take place at a single point in time. It rather happens gradually and moves towards an ideal point at which the actual state of mind attains the desired state of mind. Crompton (1979) calls this as a state of 'equilibrium', which exists to the extent that physical, social, and psychological needs are met. It should be stressed that this peak of touristic transformation is an ideal situation: what tourists in the real life can hope is to reach the ideal state as close as possible. Probably, rather than reaching that ideal state, the process of gaining velocity to reach it gives tourists their sense of fulfillment.

Along with this increasing velocity to reach the ideal, touristic motivation increases and nativistic motivation decreases. However, at some point in time in that journey of mind, sometimes quite close to the ideal and in some other cases quite far away from it, the speed begins to decrease. The decrease in touristic motivation is accompanied by

a corresponding increase in nativistic motivation. The tourist will continue to be sufficiently motivated to remain as a tourist until the resurging nativistic motivation and the declining touristic motivation meet at a point of intersection. In fact, this is the actual equilibrium point through which every tourist necessarily passes through, rather than the ideal one proposed by Crompton (1979). The tourist has no more incentive to remain as a tourist once the nativistic motivation exceeds touristic motivation. In most cases, he/she would have begun the journey back home at some point in time when these competing motivations are on or near this point of intersection.

This study was designed in order to achieve the following objectives:

- To enrich the conceptual and applied knowledge on tourist motivation by introducing a new construct of nativistic motivation and by developing a valid and reliable instrument to measure it.
- To examine the interactions of touristic and nativistic motivators across the various phases of the tourist life cycle.

### **The development of nativistic motivation scale**

The procedure commonly adopted to develop a measure normally involves the following steps (Jackson, 1971; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Ruckert & Churchill, 1984): defining the construct to be measured; generating items that pertain to the construct; judging the content validity of the generated items; determining the internal reliability of the items; determining the temporal stability of the internally reliable items; measuring the content validity of the selected items as a whole; measuring the criterion-related validity; and, testing the construct validity of the scale. Finally, a promising scale will be used in future research activities and such uses will help situating the construct that the scale measures in ever-closer relationship with the nomological network of related categories.

Initially, around 120 item-statements were generated from a review of consumer motivation related literature as well as from the insights generated out of qualitatively interacting with tourists. These initial items were refined and edited for judging the content validity by a group of four experts who were faculty members or doctoral candidates in marketing or allied areas with at least some domain expertise in tourism. Since the construct of nativistic motivation we intend to operationalize is new, we did not yet have any clear idea of its constituent dimensions.

The judges were given the conceptual definition of nativistic motivation and were asked to rate each statement in terms of its ability to represent nativistic motivation. Each statement was rated on the following three-point scale: (a) clearly representative of nativistic motivation; (b) somewhat representative of nativistic motivation; (c) clearly unrepresentative of nativistic motivation. Average rating for each statement was calculated. Statements that were rated as clearly not representative of nativistic motivation were dropped right away and those rated as clearly representative were accepted. Those statements that came under the somewhat representative category were given for

brainstorming at a virtual (Yahoo! Messenger) chat session. Seven professional contacts of the first author attended this session; four out of them were the judges mentioned above and the remaining three were travel industry practitioners. After this discussion, some of these items were accepted and remaining ones rejected based on broad consensus. With the intention of reducing the net number of items while not compromising face validity, some judges suggested merging or re-wording a few statements and these were accepted. In the end, 63 items passed the judgment of face validity.

As part of the refinement of the instrument, these 63 items (along with a few other statements) were administered to the graduate students of Goa University and Pondicherry University, India. The data collection was completed between January 2005 and August 2007. All respondent ratings were taken with a seven point Likert scale. A seven point scale is a good compromise between five and nine point force-free choice methods: it facilitates a better spread of responses while at the same time does not require the respondents to distinguish between minutely separated rating points (Dawes, 2008). The total sample size from these three groups taken together was 237. However, valid cases used for the analysis were only 205 (85.8%) as 34 respondents were excluded from the analysis due to incomplete responses. Within the potential bias attributable to a homogenous student samples, this sample size is justifiable for 63 items (Churchil, 1979).

#### **RELIABILITY AND FACTOR ANALYSIS**

Responses to the 63 item statements were subjected to reliability analysis: The analysis showed a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.877. It was noted from the 'alpha if item deleted' table that alpha would not increase above 0.89 even if an item were removed. The rule of thumb for reliability analysis, according to Nunnally (1978) is that reliability level of 0.70 will suffice in exploratory settings though in those applied settings where important decisions are made a minimum reliability coefficient of 0.90 is a must.

Initially, an exploratory factor analysis was performed. The scree plot implied around 7 to 9 potential factors. However, scrutinizing the component matrix, no sense could be made. On a trial and error basis, we have gradually reduced the number of factors. When 5 factors were specified (Principal component method; Varimax rotation; Suppressed absolute values less than 3), the items were found to be loading in a meaningful way across the five factors. Whenever an item was found loading almost equally upon more than one factor, discretion was applied based on whether that item would meaningfully fit into the operational definition of a particular factor. We have discussed this matter in detail and any such change was the result of consensus. The rotated component matrix output of the confirmatory factor analysis along with the variance explained by each factor is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

**ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX**

Item Statements	Factor Loadings				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b><i>Nativistic Functionality</i></b>					
I am not sure how to handle travel related formalities such as passport and visa.	0.901				
Advances in communication technology have made much of business travel redundant.	0.913				
You can learn a lot about a place by watching a video rather than actually visiting it.	0.942				
Tourism service providers extract a lot of profit from tourists.	0.926				
I do not have employer paid holidays.	0.926				
I just took a vacation in the recent past.	0.933				
My health does not permit me travelling.	0.849				
I have more important things to do when I have some free time than to travel.	0.908				
If I wait some more time, I can possibly get a much better vacation deal.	0.912				
I get at my hometown almost everything that I can buy in a tourist destination.	0.801				
I have already seen most of the places I wanted to see in this life.	0.887				
It is difficult to find a time for vacation suitable for everyone.	0.879				
It may be great to see places, but traveling is a pain.	0.533				
I have people dependent upon me at home and cannot go on vacation leaving them.	0.580				
There is a limit to what I can see in this life time and no point in worrying about it.	0.563				
<b><i>Nativistic Certainty</i></b>					
Unfamiliar places evoke a sense of fear and anxiety in me.	0.777				
I dislike uncertainties associated with being a tourist.	0.948				
I am not comfortable dealing with unfamiliar people.	0.752				
Unusual buildings and landscapes generate in me a sense of insecurity.	0.927				
I have faced problems of some sort or another whenever I travelled in the past.	0.888				
Thinking of buying a vacation reminds me of the bitter experiences I had in the past as a tourist.	0.914				
No other place gives me the same sense of safety and security as my home place.	0.933				
I think long distance travel is not safe.	0.897				
I am more likely to be cheated when I am at a tourist destination.	0.917				
Tourists are one of the major targets for terrorists these days.	0.937				
While on the tour, I might get sick due to poor hygienic standards.	0.926				
Given the current economic conditions, I should save more rather than vacationing.	0.938				
I am afraid of possible scams that I might be subjected to as a tourist.	0.935				
My financial information may be misused by unscrupulous vendors and service agents.	0.910				
My comfort zone ends at my home town.	0.705				
When I am in unfamiliar places, I do not know what to do if something goes wrong.	0.697				
I will be more comfortable to buy tours that offer some sort of guarantee.	0.694				

Table 1 CONTINUED

Item Statements	Factor Loadings				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Nativistic Habituality</b>					
Living at the place where I live now has become a habit for me.			0.888		
I enjoy being at home for its own sake, not for what it will get me.			0.906		
I rarely feel my work to be monotonous or boring.			0.959		
I am sort of addicted to what I can do remaining at home.			0.970		
I cannot live at any other place the way I live at my home place.			0.910		
Holidaying is too much of a hassle.			0.946		
It is difficult to learn the customs and manners of other places.			0.920		
During the trip, I might be required to consume food that does not fit my dietary rules.			0.905		
I am not accustomed to other climatic conditions.			0.944		
<b>Nativistic Identity</b>					
No place that I can visit as a tourist is as good as my place of residence.				0.801	
I talk in high spirits, given a chance to talk about my hometown.				0.883	
Taking a vacation is like compromising certain aspects of my personality.				0.905	
If asked, I am glad to spare some time in help enhancing the image of my home place.				0.903	
My home place is no less beautiful than many known tourists destinations.				0.933	
Being a tourist gives me only a superficial experience of things.				0.902	
The place where I live regularly gives me ample opportunities for recreation.				0.953	
I feel pained when negative news about my home place appears in the media.				0.934	
Being at home with not much to do is the best time I can spend with myself.				0.892	
Being at home truly reflects the most lovable aspect of my self.				0.894	
It is wrong to indulge yourself when millions do not have the means for a good meal per day.				0.464	
By nature, I am not too fond of holidaying.				0.482	
<b>Nativistic Culturality</b>					
Some people who are significant for me in my life do not like me going on vacationing.					0.447
Becoming a tourist will communicate wrong images about myself to people who matter to me.					0.453
I would prefer to spend my free time with my friends and family at my home than go on a tour.					0.468
People in my locality adore me for who I am and what I am.					0.919
Being a tourist is like surrendering my freedom to do things the way you want to.					0.936
My food habits are best served by the local cuisine available where I live.					0.928
Tourists are generally irresponsible to the environment.					0.916
Tourists do more harm to destination communities than any good they can possibly do.					0.936
The pleasures of travel are very short-lived.					0.925
Most of my family, friends, and relatives live close to my home place.					0.907
<b>Per cent of variance explained</b>	<b>19.91%</b>	<b>19.71%</b>	<b>16.61%</b>	<b>16.28%</b>	<b>11.10%</b>
<b>Cumulative percentage</b>	<b>19.91%</b>	<b>39.62%</b>	<b>56.23%</b>	<b>72.51%</b>	<b>83.61%</b>
<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>	<b>0.878</b>	<b>0.902</b>	<b>0.789</b>	<b>0.856</b>	<b>0.884</b>

Based on the common theme underlying each factor, the factors were named as follows:

*Nativistic Functionality* is the name given to the Factor 1. It may be defined as the motivation to stay in one's home environment, derived partially from the utilitarian needs of life it satisfies and partially from the functional disutility staying away from home creates. This motivation refers to the compulsions individuals have in their regular lives such as the need to work every day including holidays, the need to take care of others at home, poor health, doubtful inter-cultural communication skills, etc.

The second factor is *Nativistic Certainty*, defined as the motivation to stay in one's home environment, derived from a sense of predictability and manageability of issues in the home environment and the uncertainty about these in foreign environments. The possibility of losing something valuable is a powerful negative force upon many potential tourists: if the perceived risk associated with holidaying is significantly high, the same might make them to avoid the entire trip (Bianchi, 2006). Studies show that many individuals are a lot more motivated by what they can lose than by what they can gain and consequently do not like to chance it (Dolničar, 2005).

*Nativistic Habituality*, as the third factor, may be defined as the motivation to stay in one's home environment, derived from the benefits of following certain behaviors tested over time during one's intensive and extensive interactions with that environment. Generally, individuals continue to live in the same environment so that they will not be required to constantly learn and unlearn the differing codes of public conduct characterizing unfamiliar environments. Over a period of time such behaviors become automated, not requiring conscious motivation or awareness. Such habituated responses are difficult to alter, but they also generate 'economies of experience'.

The fourth factor is *Nativistic Identity*, defined as the motivation to stay in one's home environment, derived from a process whereby an individual identifies his or her self with the self of that environment and develops affective attachment with it. Identity stands for one's inherent values, beliefs, interests, or needs that constitute one's conception of own self and that motivate one toward certain behaviors since such behaviors are assumed to be symbolic of these values, beliefs, interests, or needs.

Finally, *the Nativistic Culturality* is the last factor, defined as the motivation to be restrictive in one's travel choices, derived from the need expected of individuals to follow a set of cultural codes characterizing the home culture. Stay and immersion into the cultural life of a place will lead to acclimatization in the short term and adaptation in the long term. Cultural norms are often transferred from generation to generation through families and other social groups present in those environments and are institutionalized forever.



After the factors were identified, an additional round of reliability analysis was performed which yielded the following alpha scores: 0.878, 0.902, 0.789, 0.856, and 0.884, for factors 1 to 5 respectively. The relatively lower score for internal stability (compared with the overall scale score of 0.877) for factors 2 and 3 could have happened when certain items were judgmentally removed from some factors to make those factors semantically more coherent. While all the items in the item statements used for data collection have been included in the above matrix, researchers who use the nativistic motivation scale can be more prudent: for instance, by selecting only those items that score 0.60 or more.

#### **DISCRIMINANT AND CONVERGENT VALIDITY**

To test the discriminant validity of the newly developed scale, data collected from 35 student respondents for the nativistic motivation scale and the touristic motivation scale (Fodness, 1994) were correlated. This yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.28 ( $p < 0.05$ ). While an analysis involving only 35 student respondents cannot be claimed as the basis of strong discriminant validity, the results still support the assumption that touristic motivation semantically discriminates itself from nativistic motivation. Since nativistic motivation is a radically novel construct, the search for another similar construct to test convergent validity was not successful. However, future researchers may attempt this again.

#### **PREDICTIVE VALIDITY**

The final question in the questionnaire used to collect data for the scale development purpose was "How likely are you to go on a vacation in the next three months". The overall average rating given by each respondent for the nativistic motivation scale and the response to the above question was subjected to a linear regression analysis. The analysis yielded an adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.48 ( $p < 0.01$ ). This is admittedly a row analysis, but still implies the predictive or classificatory power of the nativistic motivator construct.

### **The touristic-nativistic motivator interaction**

An acceptable method in social research to understand the change in the degree of motivation is to administer the motivation scale to the respondents at multiple points in a time continuum. For the present study, this would mean that two scales, one to measure touristic motivation and another to measure nativistic motivation, were to be administered to tourists at various points in time across their 'touristhood': that is, one at the time a decision is made on whether to go or not, one immediately before the beginning of the journey, one during the onward journey, one immediately after reaching the destination, one or more during the stay at the destination, one immediately before the beginning of the return journey, one during the return journey, and immediately after reaching back at home, and a few days after reaching the home.

It was decided that, for a preliminary examination of the touristic –nativistic motivation interaction, the touristic motivation scale developed by Fodness (1994) and the

nativistic motivation scale reported above may be employed. However, since making respondents to rate items on two scales at multiple points of time was in itself a laborious task, we explored various other methodologies. Simulation was suggested by some colleagues as an alternative. However, on account of the non-availability of suitable methodology where controlled experiments could be performed and observed, the idea was discarded. Then, on an experimental basis, we tried using what is called 'image averaging technology' with the idea to provide respondents with graph sheets marked with X (horizontal) and Y (vertical) axes. The X axis stood for time and the Y axis stood for the intensity of motivation. Each respondent was provided with two pens (one with black ink and the other with blue ink). This way, each respondent could mark on the provided sheet his or her subjective feeling of the intensities of the touristic motivation and the nativistic motivation at various intervals. Later, a continuous curve could be made to fit all these marked points. These graph sheets could be scanned and fed in to a computer. Since the graph sheets were of the same dimensions and were marked similarly, an image averaging software like could be used to generate an average graph depicting the flows of the touristic and nativistic motivations across time. Yet, during the test stage, the image averager did not provide any legible output and this experiment too had to be abandoned.

Finally, we identified 5 graduate students who would participate in this laborious task. These students were able to respond to both the questionnaires at various points immediately before, during, and immediately after a two week long study tour. Each student was asked to respond to the instruments at 5 points in a time line: immediately before leaving home, after reaching at the first destination, at the midpoint of the trip, before leaving the final destination, and immediately after reaching back at home. One of the authors accompanied these students during most of the trip (except during the first and the last stage of the survey) and hence could monitor the way they have responded. The students responded on a 7 point scale for both the instruments and their average responses (rounded off to the first decimal point) are summarized in Table 2:

Table 2  
**SUMMARY OF NATIVISTIC-TOURISTIC MOTIVATION SCORES**

	Immediately before leaving home	After reaching at the first destination	At the midpoint of the trip	Before leaving the final destination	Immediately after reaching back at home
Nativistic motivation	5.6	3.8	2.6	5.6	6.2
Touristic motivation	6.4	5.6	6.2	4.6	3.9

While generalization is beyond the scope of any analysis involving only 5 responses, we can still discern certain patterns. For instance, the drive to go and not to go, both are on the high immediately before the trip and before leaving the final destination. At the mid-point of the trip, student travelers seem to have almost forgotten their home. Yet, immediately after reaching home, they begin to enjoy the home experience (missed

for two weeks at a stretch!) more than the touristic pleasure that they experienced in the interim period. It will be interesting to re-do this analysis with more respondents and more data points. Different respondent classes (such as different cultural and occupational groups) may provide different patterns, too. Some other factors that might impact the dynamics are: length of the trip; first time traveler or repeat traveler; alone or in group; etc. In summary, this experiment gives us the first impression that the 'net' tourism motivation is the difference between what we traditionally understand as tourism motivation and the nativistic motivation.

### **Concluding remarks**

This study was conducted mainly with the objective of introducing the concept of nativistic motivation into the tourism literature. We also wanted to better understand how the two forces of touristic and nativistic motivators would interact to determine the 'destiny of a tourist'. Towards this end, first we developed a valid and reliable scale to measure nativistic motivation and later used this scale to see how, across the tourist life cycle, touristic and nativistic motivations negotiate with each other. It is to be acknowledged that, for a long time, motivation theory in tourism has not made a radical shift in its scope. This 'staticness' is shocking especially since tourism is a multi-disciplinary area of research on the frontiers of disciplines, making it more likely to get a variety of theoretical perspectives.

However, we believe that the introduction of the concept of nativistic motivation to tourism motivation literature is powerful enough to make a fundamental and progressive break from that traditional mold of thinking. The attempt that we gave was utmost modest, admittedly with a lot of flaws.

Some issues that warrant discussion are more trivial in this type of research: for instance, the question of whether the sample used for the study was representative enough and what was the role of response set bias. Sears (1986) reviews the myriad problems that student-dominant samples pose to generalizability. Procedures to minimize response set bias have been detailed by many authors (Paulhus 1991; Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman 1991) and these insights may be utilized in improving this scale. Given the time and resource limitations surrounding them, we were not able to employ these insights in the present study. Also, the study needs to be replicated on a larger sample.

Again, in many instances during the data collection for the present scale, in negotiating a comfortable position with the respondents, the data collecting personnel had to influence the responses in some way or the other. Information loss and misrepresentation are acute limitations of such an undertaking like this. Serious communication problems were to be overcome when non-English speaking tourists were interviewed. Despite all these limitations, given the potential centrality of nativistic motivation to tourism literature, we implore future tourism researchers to take lead from us and advance this concept and its applications.

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