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Socio-economic Factors and Residents' Motivation for Travel - A Conceptual Study

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Abstract

There are several factors which influence the travel attitude of residents in choosing a destination. In tourism research, many researchers have examined social, cultural, economic, psychological, personal, internal and external factors that influence the travel attitudes of residents. This paper attempts to conceptualise the socio-economic factors such as income, education, and health that influence the residents' motivation for travel. The study concludes with a conceptual model indicating the interaction between the socio-economic factors and the residents' motivation/ constraints for travel that can be studied in future using an empirical model.

Keywords: Travel Motivation, Travel Constraints, Socio-economic Factors for Residents' Motivation

1 Introduction

The socio-economic factors such as education, income and health are the major aspects that are considered to be influential in understanding the residents' motivations for travel. The socio-economic factors have a significant role in shaping the personality, attitude and lifestyle of an individual. Additionally, social privilege

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and level of income are directly influenced by socio-economic factors as well. In previous studies, the factors that have been focused on by the sociologists are health, income and occupation, education, culture/ethnicity, place of residence, religion and environment. These factors have been studied in order to know their influence on behaviour, attitude and the lifestyle of an individual (Cheyne, 2000, Milman & Pizam, 1988, Harill, 2004).

Demographic factors include gender, age, income level, culture, food habits, nationality, size of the family (Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016). These factors play a major role in influencing the growth of tourism. An individual's income determines the travel behaviour such as travel destination, amount and time spent for travel, loyalty towards the travel brands and sources of information. High-income travellers spend more money and time on trips as compared to low-income travellers. There is a differential preference for kinds of travel across age groups, where the younger generation prefers adventure and aged residents prefer spiritual places to travel. Male travellers' visit may travel unaccompanied but female travellers may prefer travelling with a companion. Female travellers are mostly involved in shopping during travel, unlike male members. Family size matters while selecting a destination because a family with children may prefer participating intensively in activities, unlike a mature couple who might look for solace.

Economic factors play a significant role in travel selections. In economic factors, the disposable income of a traveller is considered to be very important because tourism-related activities and amenities require spending from personal savings. Travellers with high disposable income spend more than travellers with low disposable income (Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016).

Socio-cultural factors have a significant impact as well in helping tourist's selection for a destination. Traditional attire and ornaments, lifestyle, folksong and folk dances, cuisine and local culture attract tourists considerably (Li & Cai, 2012). These are important resources to mark the travel memorable and adds 'authenticity' to their travel experience. Another important aspect is that different regions have varied cultural features which allows

the travellers to select based on the differential experience provided in each travel location.

2. Purpose

These assumptions laid before have been quite prominent in public memory but they have not been studied in a structured manner. In the absence of a reliable research instrument, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of dependent and contributing variables. Thus the present study reviews available literature and attempts to develop a conceptual model for future research.

3.1 Socio-economic Factors

The socio-economic status is a blend of several components including economic status measured by income, social status measured by education and work status measured by occupation (Dutton & Levine, 1989). Health is a major indicator of the socio-economic status of people. It generally indicates that individuals belonging to a higher class enjoy better health than the people of the lower class. Income and earning has a direct impact on the individual's choice and condition of health (Antonovsky, 1967; Illsley & Baker, 1991). The study by Joaquín Alegre, Sara Mateo and Llorenç Pou (2009) revealed that tourism services are not consumed by a significant percentage of households and the consumption patterns of these households also are equally distributed over the years. They note that the fluctuation is evident because of "the income, travel decisions and participation pattern of residents in different tourism services".

Socio-economic factors such as income, ethnicity and length of residence do not play a major role that could explain the variations that the residents have towards tourism (Perdue et al., 1990). The study done by Brougham and Butler (1981) revealed that there are major variations in the attitudes of residents towards travel that relate to their personal characteristics such as age, language and duration of residence in an area. Ethnicity was found to be the major factor affecting the attitude of residents towards tourism. It includes their attachment to heritage, birthplace and length of residence (Um & Crompton, 1987) whereas according to Liu & Var

(1986) no ethnicity or length of residence based difference in residents' attitude was found towards tourism.

Age is also a major factor. Older residents were less inclined towards tourism as compared to the young. At the same time, older residents were less concerned about the negative or positive impact of tourism (Tomljenovic & Faulkner's, 1999).

3.2 Travel Motivation

Travel motivation is probably the most studied phenomenon in tourism research. Previous research has identified several factors that influence people to undertake travel and participate in travel-related activities. Travel phenomenon has been studied by many researchers who have tried to understand the meaning, (Todd, 1999; Poria, 2004). Internal and external factors have been seen to influence travel behaviour of a person. Personality, attitudes, beliefs and motivations are some common internal factors which are influenced by external variables in travel behaviour (Schmoll, 1977; Mayo & Javris, 1981; Moutinho, 1987). People travel because they have needs that they wish to satisfy and it is motivated by the internal or external factors (Morrison, 2002).

Theories of psychological and physiological needs by Murray (1938), Maslow's (1943) study on Human Needs and its hierarchy, and Motivational needs theory of McClelland (1998) gives direction in understanding the varied dimensions of travel motivation.

There are still several additional factors that influence people to travel. In this context, pull and push factors of travel behaviour have been identified by researchers. Push factors are those that determine reasons for travel i.e. 'why' people escape from their residence to any destination. It also depends upon the needs of the travellers that motivate and "push" them to take up travel. It is the internal factors that stimulate the desire to travel. The push factors include the motivations such as escape, health, adventure, prestige, social interaction, and other socio-economic factors including income, education, occupation, gender and age. The internal forces of an individual push them to take up travel. Travel decisions are influenced by the socio-psychological constructs of individuals and the environment where they live. So push factors put emphasis on

'why' or 'whether to go' and it makes individual inclined to travel to a destination (Uysal, Li and Turk, 1994). The intrinsic motivation originates from 'within' of an individual and is intangible in nature.

Pull factors are the attributes of a destination that attract individuals towards it. It puts emphasis on 'where to go' issues. It generally focuses on decision making before the selection of a destination to travel. Thus the attributes of a destination such as scenic beauty, climate, recreation, culture, amenities, accessibilities, accommodation, image and awareness about safety and security play the role of pull factors that help in selecting a destination for travel. The pull motivation of travel thus includes tangible characteristics such as accessibility and situational factors of a destination. The extrinsic motivation originates from 'outside' of an individual and is tangible in nature. The socio-psychological, and cultural needs of an individual are the 'primary motives' considered to be the push motives of travel whereas the external factors or pull motives are the 'selective motives' and comprised of marketing stimuli and attributes of a destination (Crompton, 1979; Wilkie, 1994). Thus, individuals are motivated by the factors that arise within them (internal) and outside them (external).

Plog's (1972, 1974) model of motivation based on psycho-centric/allocentric explains the push and pull dynamics of travel behaviour. The study proposed that the psychographic characteristics of travellers can help in understanding travel preferences. Gray (1970) identified factors as Wanderlust (escaping from the routine and seeking of novelty) and Sunlust (destination attributes). From individuals' interest in choosing a destination to the individuals' expectations from a destination, motivation plays a significant role. Perceived attraction features play a vital role in the choice of a destination by the individual. So individuals are motivated by the attraction of a destination and such other elements as accessibility, accommodation and amenities. They want all their demand such as needs, desires and expectations to be fulfilled during the trip.

In the context of the tourism system, the major components of the market are 'demand' and 'supply' that is represented by the push and pull attributes of motivation. Push factors are the internal factors that are the inner emotional state of an individual 'that

demands' and the 'same demand is supplied' by the pull factors or external factors. Residents are pushed because of their psychological needs and their demands may be a clean and serene beach resort.

Maslow's two needs of love or social needs and esteem needs were restated by Dann (1981) as anomie and ego-enhancement respectively. In the same vein, Iso-Ahola (1982) describes the motivation for travel using two reasons i.e. novel experience and psychological rewards. Interestingly Gottlieb (1982) classified two vacation styles such as 'peasant for a day' and 'queen for a day'. Vacation styles of upper and upper-middle-class people are interchanged to experience novelty. Such inversions are seen in American societies where people can enjoy a totally different environment than that of their own which has a significant impact on the behaviour of an individual. To extend this study, Graburn (1983) added class, lifestyle, civilisation, formality and health in addition to the environment for experience inversions by tourists during their travel.

The tendency of separating from one's own familiar environment to an unknown or unfamiliar environment was termed as "crossing limen into the liminoidal state" (Lett, 1983; Jafari, 1987; Currie, 1997). The concept of breaking from one habitual routine into an environment where the travel activities are socially accepted, the threshold and 'liminoid' behaviour were adopted by many researchers. These help in understanding that the travellers intend to experience things or activities that they cannot get at their home environment. Vacation or leisure travel thus offers them the opportunity to expose themselves to such an environment.

Table 1.1: Summarising Socio-Economic Factors

Income
Determines the amount to be spent on amenities during trips
Determines travel destination
Determines amount and time to be spent during trips
High-income travellers have higher spending compared to low-income travellers
Education
Influences income status
Determines social status
Helps in good decision making
Health
Income helps in maintaining better health thus people of higher class are able to have to access good health conditions than those of lower class
Poor health is a big hurdle in all walks of human life
Affects mobility and ability to socialise
Age
Young travellers' frequency of travel is more than older ones
Old travellers' frequency of travel is lesser
Gender
Male travelers may travel single
Female travelers prefer a companion

3.3 Travel Constraints

The constraint is something that deters an individual from undertaking the travel. This may have several manifestations like an obstruction in decision making, obstruction in travel frequency or cancellation of a trip. The study carried out by Li, Zhang, Mao and Deng (2011), shows that there are several dimensions of travel ability that explains about the tendency of human to travel to a destination with regard to money, time, skill and health. Primary constraints are lacking time, lacking money, lacking interest and bad or poor health. These barriers have been studied since the 1980s. The constraints were examined concerning the socio-economic characteristics of the sample which were gender, age,

marital status, occupation, education and income group in the study. Gender was not found to be a constraint. Age and marital status were travel constraints for across a stratum, travel information and knowledge constraint was found with people who have received primary education only, and constraints led by documentation issues were prevalent among younger people. Income was found to be one of the socio-economic characteristics that acted as a constraint as well. The findings of the study reveal that language, travel distance, travel document issues, travel cost, time and travel arrangements are the inhibitors to travel abroad. Among these, language capabilities are the top constraints.

Lee and Tideswell (2005) explored the experience, motivation, perception and preferences of senior Koreans with reference to leisure travel. Several constraints were identified in the study. "Lack of equipment' at the tourist destination, lack of information with the visitors, lack of time, lack of money, visitors' fear of disapproval by the family or relatives, physical limitations and lack of social networks" were constraints that were identified by them. The conservative attitude of valuing work over leisure acts as a psychological barrier that deters a stratum, who are aged from travelling. The study further includes that "insufficient money, poor health, lack of companion and not wanting to drive home in the dark" are constraints that relate to culture, lifestyle and family relations.

The study by Nyaupane, McCabe and Anderack (2008) revealed the factors for leisure travel constraints. It provided insight on understanding the age as a constraint and its interaction with other socio-demographic variables. The findings of the study show that people below 59 years of age encounter time and money as constrains whereas people of 75 years of age and older have health issues as a constraint.

The study by Lai, Li and Harrill (2013) puts emphasis on the constraints of Chinese outbound tourists while visiting the United States as, "Interpersonal constraints, Intrapersonal constraints and Structural constraints". Key structural constraints were "time and distance issues, security concerns, inconvenience in getting travel documents, monetary concerns such as inadequate disposable

income and high priced destinations and language barrier". Similarly, Intrapersonal constraints included the need to experiment and explore varied regions. In the same vein, interpersonal constraints included the absence of travel companions and relatives. The study concluded that the Structural and intrapersonal constraints were significant as compared to interpersonal constraints which were fewer. Apart from these, travel intentions are affected by the travel experiences in the past and the availability of attractive alternatives.

Thus, the reviews are summarised and the following constructs and items are obtained:

Table 1.2: Constructing Socio-Economic Factors and Travel Motivation/Constraints Parameters

CONSTRUCTS & ITEMS	SOURCES
Age Average age of the family Age of the family head	Heung, Qu and Chu(2001),Lai, Li & Harill (2013), Nyaupane & Andereck (2007)
Health Current health status Members suffering chronic disease	Gerdtham & Johannesson (1997)
Education Educational Qualification of the family head Educational Qualification of the family members	Limtanakool, Dijst and Schwanen (2006), Lai, Li & Harill (2013), Nyaupane & Andereck (2007)
Occupation Occupation of the family members	Heung,Qu and Chu(2001)
Residence Place of residence Area of residence Years of residence	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Income Family Income(annual) Total members earning in the family	Heung,Qu and Chu(2001), Limtanakool,Dijst and Schwanen(2006),Lai,Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Information about places and activities	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)

CONSTRUCTS & ITEMS	SOURCES
Vacation Motives	
Relief	Zhang(2009)
Smoothing family bond	Zhang(2009)
Break	Zhang(2009)
Understanding self	Zhang(2009)
Rest and relax	Zhang(2009), Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
New experience	Zhang(2009)
Love and romance	Zhang(2009)
Time for family & friends	Zhang(2009)
Expand outlook	Zhang(2009),
Thrilling experience	Zhang(2009), Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010), Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Experience culture	Zhang(2009), Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Share trip experience	Zhang(2009)
Witness different	Zhang(2009)
Be bold & courageous	Zhang(2009)
Rejoice	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Food	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Safe destination	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Religious destination	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Pilgrimage	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Discounted fares	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Shopping	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Travel nearby	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
No language barrier	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Sufficient money	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Pleasant climate	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Boost social status	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Time for travel companion	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Visit a place already friends have	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Influence friends and relatives	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Private time	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
VFR	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010), Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Communication with local community	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Encounter new people	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010), Zhang(2009)

CONSTRUCTS & ITEMS	SOURCES
Travel for appreciation	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Admire nature	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Learn culture	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Know the destination	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Know others' culture	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Sightsee touristic spots	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Be away from home	Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
Travelling to a cosmopolitan city	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001)
Fulfill dreams	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001), Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
New destination	Heung, Qu, & Chu(2001), Puad, Som, Mohammad & Mohammad(2010)
To enjoy rural life	
To experience rural life	
Travel Constraints	
No time for travel	Zhang(2009), Lai, Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007) ,
Health issues	Zhang(2009), Lai, Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007) ,
Age	Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Affordability	Zhang(2009), Lai, Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)

CONSTRUCTS & ITEMS	SOURCES
Less income	Zhang(2009),Lai, Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007), Jovanovic, Dragin, Armenski, Pavic & Davidovic(2013)
Family dislikes for travel	Zhang(2009),
Family interest	Zhang(2009), Nyaupane & Andereck (2007)
No friends & family to stay with	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Family commitments	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Lack of information	Zhang(2009),
Information about places and activities	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Personal safety	Zhang(2009),Lai, Li & Harill(2013), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Fear of the unknown	Jovanovic, Dragin, Armenski, Pavic & Davidovic(2013)
Not easy to find travel companion	Zhang(2009), Nyaupane & Andereck(2007), Jovanovic, Dragin, Armenski, Pavic & Davidovic(2013)
Language barrier	Zhang(2009),Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Far away areas	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007), Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Hectic work schedule	Zhang(2009),Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Not on preferences	Jovanovic, Dragin, Armenski, Pavic & Davidovic(2013)
Absence of areas	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Not convenient	Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Not interested	Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
No recommendations	Jovanovic, Dragin, Armenski, Pavic & Davidovic(2013)
Bad impression	Lai, Li & Harill(2013)
Unfavorable weather conditions	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Too much traffic	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
No fun to travel	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)
Unable to drive	Nyaupane & Andereck(2007)

4. Conclusion

Travelling may be a way to relieve stress, gain knowledge, meet and spend quality time with friends and relatives, meet and experience the culture of different people, be in isolation, fulfill hobbies and improve the potential for work. However, such a phenomenon is not independent of the socio-economic background of tourists. The socio-economic factors are mainly income, education, employment and health which affect individuals' decisions. Tourism needs both the time and disposable income of an individual. People may be interested in travelling but 'why and to where' depends largely on the available time and income with them. "Why do people take an interest in travelling and how socioeconomic factors influence them to take up travel" is a burgeoning research question that needs empirical evidence.

The paper reviewed previous research work on the specific theme and asserts that the internal and external factors influence travel behaviour of a person. Internal factors include personality, attitudes and beliefs, and motivations. People undertake travel because they believe that their needs will be fulfilled out of travel. Needs influence people to be motivated and motivate others too. Socio-psychological and cultural needs motivate people to seek novel experience and psychological rewards. Internal factors are generally the push factors and are origin related, whereas push factors are external and destination oriented.

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