

ABSTRACT

As the Baby Boomer cohort (1946-1964) within the United States age, the travel industry will demand a shift in services provided to the senior market. Although there are many research studies on older adults and others on tourism behaviors, little research has considered the influence of innovation in the travel behaviors of this generation as they age. Innovation Theory (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007) considers the role of innovation as an opportunity to create a challenging and meaningful life through a *growth mechanism*. In this study, innovation is conceived as new experiences older adults acquire during international tourism.

In an effort to test the reliability of Innovation Theory, the current study adapted a previous study (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010), which examined Israeli retirees' tourism behaviors with a sample of North Carolina Baby Boomers. The researcher collected 150 questionnaires completed by North Carolina residents who met the criteria of being born between 1946 and 1964 and traveling internationally within the last three years. The current study confirmed findings from the previous study resulting in three clusters of innovators as well as supporting Innovation Theory. The current study also included analyses of variance to compare clusters of travelers according to the benefits of their travel as well as the frequency of their participation in destination activities.

Findings indicated that North Carolina Baby Boomers were similar to older adults in Israel related to innovation in international travel behaviors. Findings from the current research expand the literature on theories of aging to consider the emergent generation of older adults. Further, findings may inform the tourism industry about appropriate services to a new market segmentation of senior travelers.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM LATER IN LIFE:
INNOVATION THEORY RELATED TO BENEFITS GAINED

A Thesis

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by

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The United States population is aging. There are currently more than 89 million Americans 50 years of age and older (US Census Bureau, 2000). Within this senior age segment (Dann, 2007, p. 1), demographers have identified multiple cohorts including the Lost Generation, the Silent/Swing Generation, and the Baby Boomers (Gillon, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000). The Silent or Swing Generation consists of approximately 33 million Americans who were born between 1930 and 1945 (Gillon, 2004), who were 64 to 79 years old in 2009. The Baby Boomer cohort accounts for more than 78 million Americans including adults born between 1946 and 1964, and aged 45 and 64 years old in 2009 (American Community Survey Table B01001, 2005-2007). This increase in population from the Silent generation to the Baby Boomer generation will have impacts on many areas of society including leisure and tourism (Patterson, 2006).

Researchers have suggested that the Baby Boomer generation is unique compared to the aging populations of America's past (Lehto, Jang, Achana, & O'Leary, 2008; Muller & Cleaver, 2000). This large cohort was born after World War II into a booming economy and participated in political and social movements while becoming the most highly educated and well traveled generation to reach older age (Lehto et al., 2008; Patterson, 2006; Smart, 2001). In addition to education and travel experience, Baby Boomers are health conscious as well as seekers of adventure and self-fulfillment in their travels compared to previous generations (Lehto et al., 2008). The combination of education, health and income has contributed to a changing face of middle to later life in America that appears much different from the previous senior cohort (Gillon, 2004).

With these changes come changes to senior travel. The senior travel market is demanding a shift to accommodate the travel patterns of Baby Boomers. Tourism professionals are realizing that current services aimed at the senior market are not matching the desires and needs of the new generation approaching their later years (Elderhostel, 2005 January; National Tour Association, January 2002). AARP (2005) reported that within the last three years, approximately one-quarter of the 78 million Baby Boomers traveled outside of the United States. *The Mature Traveler Report* (Travel Industry of America, 2008) expanded on the travel patterns of Baby Boomers indicating that this cohort spends more money on their travel than other age groups. According to Cochran, Rothschadl & Rudick (2009), Baby Boomers work hard and play hard which requires a shift in mindset for researchers and practitioners to accommodate this demanding generation. With a lifetime devoted to working hard for retirement and a mindset devoted to self-fulfillment, the travel patterns of Baby Boomers will be markedly different from previous generations.

Within the changing patterns of Baby Boomer tourism, the role that innovation plays in travelers' destination activities and the benefits they gain from travel may be different from past generations (Lehto et al., 2008; Nimrod & Rotem, 2010; Shoemaker, 2000). As such, this study relied on Innovation Theory, a newer theory of successful aging.

Description of the Theory

Theories of successful aging (e.g., disengagement theory, activity theory, continuity theory, socialization optimization and compensation model) have been used to explain behavior changes associated with aging. Disengagement theory posits that as people age, it is inevitable that they will become withdrawn from social networks (Cumming & Henry, 1961). In contrast, activity theory explains that older adults do not want to disengage from society after mid-life, but

rather desire to stay active (Havinghurst, 1963). Continuity theory explains that as people age they attempt to maintain internal and external continuity such as identity and one's role within a community (Atchley, 1989). Baltes and Baltes (1990) suggest the socialization, optimization and compensation (SOC) model to demonstrate how older adults adjust their participation in activities by choosing an activity they can perform, doing that activity to the best of their ability and adjusting their participation due to possible constraints of aging. However, these theories have proven unsuccessful in accounting for older adults' continued personal development and desire for new experiences.

Innovation Theory builds on these previous theories of successful aging to describe, "...when and how change contributes to elders' well-being" (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007, p. 17). According to Innovation Theory, as adults age they may seek two types of innovation: *self-preservation* and *self-reinvention*. Self-preservation innovation offers an opportunity for maintenance from previous life stages through renewal, refreshment and growth of interests. In contrast, self-reinvention innovation allows a chance for re-creating or re-inventing oneself. Individuals continue with either preservation or re-invention innovation throughout their lives, which positively influence older adults' well-being. A significant role of innovation is the opportunity to create a challenging and meaningful life through a *growth mechanism* (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007) which separates Innovation Theory from previous theories (e.g. disengagement, activity, continuity and SOC).

Researchers posit that international travel provides a mechanism for growth (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). According to research on the tourism behaviors of retirees in Israel (n=298), the older tourism segment may be divided into three categories: absolute innovators, non-innovators and external innovators according to their unique combination of new experiences undertaken

during travel, their participation in activities at a destination and the benefits they report from their last travel experience (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010).

To help older adults achieve their potential for growth and innovation and “to reach this important market in the coming years, marketing messages will likely shift from a youth-oriented focus to a greater concern for the needs, problems, and dreams of middle-aged and older adults” (Travel Industry of America, 2008). Researching the tourism behaviors of Baby Boomers will provide a better understanding of the role of innovation in the overall tourism experience. As a large portion of the population, an understanding of the market segmentation of American Baby Boomers will aid the tourism industry with the services provided.

Description of North Carolina Baby Boomers

The southern region of the United States (which includes North Carolina) has the largest population of Baby Boomers of all regions (American Community Survey Table B01001, 2005-2007). The North Carolina chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), reported 1.1 million members within the state of North Carolina in 2009. As of 2008, 25.6% of the North Carolina population was Baby Boomers with a nearly even divide between males and females. The majority of Baby Boomers residing in North Carolina in 2008 were married, with at least a high school education and a median household income of \$52,852 (American Community Survey, 2005-2007, Tables B12002, B15001, B19049,). As of 2008, most North Carolina Baby Boomers were still in the labor force, but over 100,000 were born outside of the United States (American Community Survey, 2007, Table B23001). In a recent report, more North Carolina Baby Boomers (N=6456) reported their general health as “good” to “very good” compared to “fair” or “poor” (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Results: North Carolina Health Status, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Travel is a popular activity during later life (Moschis & Belgin, 2008), yet there is little research to understand the changing travel patterns associated with Baby Boomers. With a growing number of active older adults in the United States (AARP, 2005; Lehto et al., 2008), it is important for the travel industry to gain an in-depth understanding of this population's travel patterns in order to effectively tailor travel programs to this market. Glover and Prideaux (2009) suggest that as a new generation approaches later life, modifications are needed in the travel industry to avoid a gap in products including merchandise and services.

An understanding of new experiences sought during travel related to well-being may assist in the provision of needed modifications for the new cohort of older international travelers. Therefore, innovation during travel may be an appropriate consideration for the adventurous and self-fulfilling cohort of Baby Boomers. A more thorough understanding of what new experiences Baby Boomers are seeking will be advantageous to both the tourism industry and tourism research.

Tourism service providers can gain a more accurate view of this market segment, which will allow for more meaningful and appropriate tourism experiences. According to Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse (2005), markets are usually heterogeneous yet include "groups of customers with requirements that are similar" (p.125) known as market segments. Tourism providers have the potential to gain a competitive advantage in the market if they understand a segment such as Baby Boomers who seek new experiences as a benefit of international travel.

As a result of this study, tourism researchers will gain a better understanding of this large portion of the American population. As suggested by Shoemaker (2000), an understanding of the benefits realized may provide a key to the benefits sought by travelers. As a new theory of

successful aging, the reliance on Innovation Theory in this study may strengthen the literature for future studies considering the new cohort approaching later life related to new experiences sought. Therefore, this study will allow both tourism providers and researchers to gain a better understanding of what Baby Boomers consider benefits of international travel as well as the role of innovation in their travels.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the benefits aging adults gain from international travel. This study relied on Innovation Theory as its foundation and replicated a recent Israeli study of retiree travel behavior (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010) using North Carolina Baby Boomers. As such, the researcher examined outcomes of travel identified by men and women born between 1946 and 1964 living in North Carolina and determined if the tenets of Innovation Theory are useful for the market segmentation by travel style of American adult travelers. Findings pinpointed benefits that adults gain during international travel and are expected to assist travel agents and destination marketing organizations in their development of opportunities for this emerging market. Researchers have shown that leisure travel plays a role in life satisfaction (Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999). Further, Nimrod (2008) linked leisure innovation during later life to increased life satisfaction.

Study Objectives

This study replicated previous research by Nimrod and Rotem (2010) and examined the travel behaviors of North Carolina Baby Boomers who have traveled internationally within three years prior to February 1, 2010. The relevance of three classifications of innovators (absolute innovators, non-innovators, and external innovators) to North Carolina Baby Boomer travelers was determined. In addition, results described participation in destination activities and benefits

gained according to each style of innovation. Finally, the relevance of Innovation Theory to this cohort of North Carolina residents was determined.

Study Hypotheses

H1: The international tourism market for North Carolina Baby Boomers can effectively be segmented into three categories of innovators (absolute innovators, non-innovators, and external innovators).

H2: There will be a significant difference in the benefits of travel according to the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

H3: There will be a significant difference in the frequency of participation in destination activities according to the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

Limitations

The study population included North Carolina Baby Boomer residents ages 45 to 63 years old (born between 1946 and 1964; Gillon, 2004) who have traveled internationally once within the last three years prior to February 2010. A mailing list of North Carolina AARP members born between 1946 and 1964 was purchased, and then the researcher utilized the Dillman's (2000) mail survey methodology. Purchased mailing lists limit participation, in this case to North Carolina residents who were AARP members. Thus, non-AARP residents of North Carolina were excluded. Although this research design and sampling technique limited the population, there is no finite list of suitable participants.

Assumptions

The researcher made several assumptions related to this study. Since the researcher used a self-administered questionnaire, she assumed that participants would be able to read and understand the questions. In addition, it was assumed that participants answered honestly,

accurately and without outside influences with the understanding that their responses would remain confidential. The researcher also assumed that participants' travel was freely chosen without any outside influences. The benefits of travel scale included close-ended questions that did not allow respondents include other possible benefits. In addition, the items were self-defined and self-actualized by each respondent potentially creating varying responses.

Definition of Terms

In order to understand the major concepts presented in this study the following definitions are provided.

Baby Boomer describes a cohort of Americans born between 1946 and 1964 (Gillon, 2004).

Benefits of international travel in previous studies have included quality of life, satisfaction, general benefits, pre-travel, social, health-related, meeting role expectations and challenge (Neal, Sirgy & Uysal, 1999; Nimrod & Rotem, 2010).

Categories of innovators (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010)

Absolute innovators traveled independently more often than the other innovators and indicated the most frequent participation in both internal and external innovation experiences.

External innovators refer to the largest group of travelers who seek innovation related to new environments or destinations most often in Europe.

Non-innovators experienced the least amount of new experiences of the three categories of innovators yet indicated the most travel experiences.

International tourism is the activity of people visiting destinations outside their own country's boundaries (Pearson, 2009).

Innovation Theory: (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007, p. 17)

Growth mechanism: “Enables one to broaden and deepen the sense of meaning in life, a sense that leads to greater well-being and satisfaction with life”.

Self-preservation innovation: “an opportunity for renewal, refreshment and growth that is continuous in some respects from earlier interests and capacities”

Self-reinvention innovation: “An opportunity for reinvention of self”

Tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization (1995) as “the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes” (p. 1).

Types of travel innovation: (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010, p. 11)

Internal innovation: “Associated with some internal processes and with new understandings of more personal issues such as learning something new about one’s relationships, oneself and about life in general”.

External innovation: “Associated with the external environment visited, and involves learning about unfamiliar cultures, visiting new places, gaining new knowledge, meeting new people and so forth”.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The largest cohort in American history is approaching later life (American Community Survey, 2005-2007) and will be placing increasing demands on the travel industry to accommodate their interests (Glover & Prideaux, 2009). There is limited research on Baby Boomer tourism. Studies related to travel in later life have focused on differences between generations of tourists (Lehto et al., 2008), motivations for tourism (Sellick, 2004) and constraints to travel among older adults (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002). However, little research has considered the outcomes of international travel for this market segment. This study focuses on this gap in literature and explores the concept of innovation as a part of Baby Boomers' tourism experiences. Further understanding of how this generation is integrating new experiences into their international travel will benefit both tourism professionals and tourism researchers. Tourism professionals may transform the findings into more meaningful travel opportunities for this unique generation through market segmentation. Tourism researchers may benefit from this study through expanded knowledge of the applicability and reliability of Innovation Theory related to Baby Boomers.

Theoretical Perspectives

Several theories have provided the framework for research of older adults' well-being as they age. These theories include disengagement theory, activity theory, continuity theory as well as the socialization, optimization and compensation (SOC) model. More recently, researchers have developed Innovation Theory applied to older adults in an effort to explain a possible way of enhancing well-being in later life.

Cumming and Henry (1961) developed disengagement theory and posited that as people age it is inevitable that they will become withdrawn from social networks. According to this theory, either the individual or society can initiate withdrawal from society. The process included three changes: a) a reduction in the number of people one interacts with on a regular basis; b) changes in the qualitative style of interaction; and c) personality changes that result in decreased interactions with others and increased focus on self.

In stark contrast to disengagement theory is activity theory (Havighurst, 1963) which explains that older adults do not want to disengage from society after middle age. Older adults without restrictions of poor health or disability have the same psychological and social needs of younger cohorts. Optimal aging according to activity theory includes staying active and involved in social environments from middle age as long as possible and then replacing activities one can no longer perform.

Another theory of aging is continuity theory (Atchley, 1989), which posits that as people reach middle and older age they “attempt to preserve and maintain existing internal and external structures and that they prefer to accomplish this objective by using continuity” (p. 183). On one hand, matters of internal continuity include self and identity such as memory-related issues including preferences, skills, temperament and affect. External continuity, on the other hand, includes one’s role in a social environment such as a community or a role in a relationship. Continuity may be explained in three degrees including too little, optimum and too much. Too little continuity results in unpredictability whereas too much continuity indicates there is not enough change, which results in one feeling stagnant. Although continuity implies maintaining roles of self and identity as well as roles within social circles, it does not mean sameness. Continuity is knowledge of doing something well and continuing to succeed in that discipline.

For example, politics or art change with society but provide a context for older adults to maintain success throughout senescence.

As people age and continue to participate in activities from earlier stages of life, it often becomes necessary to adjust participation. How older adults adjust their participation can be explained through the selection, optimization and compensation model. Baltes and Baltes (1990) explained the selection, optimization and compensation model (SOC) as the process of choosing an activity that one can perform, doing that activity to the best of one's ability and making alterations in participation due to constraints created by age. One utilizes SOC throughout the lifespan, but it plays a more significant role in the lives of older adults who are facing biological and social constraints due to the aging process. SOC explains how "individuals seek to simultaneously maximize gains while minimizing losses over time" (McGuire, Boyd, & Tedrick, 2004, p. 38). Baltes and Baltes (1990) offered an example of a marathon runner to demonstrate SOC. If someone who has run marathons throughout her adult life wanted to continue into old age at the same level, she would have to stop other activities (selection) and train more often with a focus on learning additional information about topics such as dieting (optimization). Finally, she must focus on specializing in reducing her loss of functioning (compensation).

As suggested by Gibson (2006), leisure and tourism research in later life has relied on theories such as disengagement, activity, and continuity from parent disciplines such as gerontology, sociology, and social psychology. Gibson (2006) established that it is becoming increasingly necessary for leisure sciences to develop theories specific to leisure in later life to progress the body of knowledge on this topic beyond the findings that meaningful activities are beneficial in later life as often concluded in the field of gerontology. Nimrod and Kleiber (2007) developed Innovation Theory which can be related to leisure and aging. Innovation Theory

builds on disengagement theory (Cumming & Henry, 1961), activity theory (Havinghurst, 1963), continuity theory (Atchley, 1989), and the socialization, optimization and compensation model (Baltes & Baltes, 1990).

Existing aging theories have not been successful in including opportunities for new experiences whereas Innovation Theory describes, “when and how change contributes to elders’ well-being” (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007, p. 17). Innovation is a result of triggers which may be intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, or a combination of both. Two forms of innovation include *self-preservation* and *self-reinvention*. Self-preservation innovation offers an opportunity for “renewal, refreshment and growth” of interests maintained from previous stages of life whereas self-reinvention innovation allows a chance for re-creating or re-inventing oneself. Individuals continue with either preservation or re-invention innovation throughout their lives and this theory posits that both forms of innovation tend to positively influence well-being of older adults on a continuum.

A significant role of innovation is the opportunity to create a challenging and meaningful life through a *growth mechanism* (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007) which separates Innovation Theory from previous theories (e.g. disengagement, activity, continuity and SOC). Through the growth mechanism of innovation, one is able to find a more profound meaning in life that may contribute to well-being and satisfaction with life. On one hand, self-reinvention innovation may assist in the transition into retirement, especially for people unhappy with themselves or who are dissatisfied with their accomplishments. On the other hand, self-preservation innovation may provide a sense of continuity such as volunteering throughout the transition into retirement.

Support for Innovation Theory

To date only a few studies have applied Innovation Theory. Previous research testing Innovation Theory compared retired adults (N=378) who had innovated with those who had not innovated (Nimrod, 2008). The researcher observed significant differences in life satisfaction between innovators and non-innovators. Results indicated a significant difference between innovators and non-innovators according to their personal choices, occupation history, time since retirement and satisfaction. Innovators had higher life satisfaction while likelihood of innovating was associated with work, retirement histories, pre-retirement occupation and the ability to determine time of retirement. Self-rated health, area of origin, and physical limitations were factors related to innovation. Further, findings indicated that older adults who innovated had longer retirement durations implying that innovation is a process, not an event. Thus, findings indicated that it was not the quantity of new activities but the quality that was determinant of innovators' life satisfaction.

As the first study to consider tourism abroad as a growth mechanism of Innovation Theory, Nimrod and Rotem (2010) identified innovations of Israeli retirees related to benefits gained and participation in destination activities. Using a national mail survey (N=298) participants' new experiences such as trying new food, learning something new about oneself and meeting new people were classified as either new internal innovation experiences or new external innovation experiences. The researchers suggested internal innovation experiences allowed for a type of self-discovery, which mirrors self-reinvention-- one of the two archetypes of Innovation Theory. In contrast, new external innovation experiences echo self-preservation due to its lack of internal discovery.

Recent studies (Nimrod, 2008; Nimrod & Rotem, 2010) have shown that innovation in later life is not as rare as previously reported (Iso-Ahola & Jackson, 1994). Although researchers have considered innovation in leisure (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2001) and tourism (Hjalager, 1997) outside the realms of Innovation Theory, there is growing support for the recent theory. As the next generation approaches later life, Baby Boomers serve as an optimal cohort for study of tourism trends related to innovation.

Cohort Differences

Before attempting to understand Baby Boomers as the emerging senior cohort, researchers have primarily considered the previous cohort of senior travelers, the Silent Generation. Pennington-Gray and Kerstetter (2001) suggested the importance of studying travel by cohort membership in a study of older Canadians travel preferences. Activities that seniors select during travel are one area of difference among travelers (You & O'Leary, 2000). Shoemaker's (2000) study of Pennsylvania's mature travel market identified similar patterns over a 10-year period and suggested the applicability of continuity theory to travel and tourism.

According to Lehto et al. (2008), significant differences existed between two cohorts (the Silent Generation and the Baby Boomers) related to travel experiences sought. Findings included Baby Boomers' preference of travel for intimacy/romance and adventure/excitement more than the Silent Generation. These results demonstrate that senior travelers are not a homogenous group, but rather that cohorts should be considered independently.

Muller and Cleaver (2000) further imply heterogeneity *within* cohorts. In a study of adventure travel among Baby Boomers, differences in lifestyles of Baby Boomers were identified even though this cohort has a shared past experiences. Therefore, differences related to travel may exist between cohorts as well as within cohorts.

Baby Boomer Tourism

Although previous research has considered innovation related to retirees (Nimrod, 2008; Nimrod & Rotem, 2010) there has not been a study focusing on innovation of American Baby Boomers who are approaching retirement age. According to some, this cohort has a reputation for travel whether it is with a history of joining the Peace Corps, studying a semester abroad or backpacking around the world on a budget as well as being influenced by Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* or Robert Pirsing's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (Elderhostel, 2005). Baby Boomers were the first to have mass-market travel available throughout the majority of their lives including air travel at a younger age than their parents did. "As a result, they've had the opportunity to visit far off destinations at an earlier age than previous generations. Deregulation, the break-up of airline monopolies and an influx of low cost air carriers only served to increase boomers' opportunities for travel and adventure" (AARP, 2005, p. 3).

In addition, researchers have suggested travel as a long-range goal of older adults as well as a rite of passage into a new life stage such as retirement (Gibson, 2002; Nimrod & Rotem, 2010; Staats & Pierfelice, 2003) which may also be true for Baby Boomers. According to AARP (2005), there was an increase Baby Boomers with passports from 10% in 1985 to 28% in 2005. Researchers also observed nearly a twofold increase in international travel by Baby Boomers from 1985 to 2005 including a 25% increase in leisure travel alone among boomers between 2003 and 2005 (AARP, 2005). In 2005, there was an increase in travel to the international destinations of Mexico, Central or South America compared to the Caribbean or to Europe. Although more Baby Boomers were visiting certain international destinations, the most popular international travel destinations were Mexico, Caribbean, Canada and Europe (AARP, 2005). As a more educated and adventurous generation than previous older adults, Baby Boomers may be

interested in more self-fulfilling and active leisure pursuits including travel during their later years (Lehto et al., 2008; Muller & Cleaver, 2000).

View of Baby Boomers within the Industry

Research of Baby Boomer travel has been emerging within the field of tourism. The tourism industry is recognizing the diversity within the Baby Boomer cohort, resulting in such reports as the *Current Assessment Report for the Baby Boomer Market* (National Tour Association, 2002). This report discusses the importance of considering more than just a generation but age, lifestyle and career to understand sub-groups of this generation for travel industry needs. Baby Boomers consider travel a priority and prefer international destinations such as the Caribbean, Europe and Mexico (National Tour Association, 2002). The National Tour Association (2002) also identified continuing trends of Baby Boomers such as their interest in adventure and intergenerational travel, simplification and use of internet or online package deals. Finally, new trends in travel experiences of Baby Boomers included an increase in experiential and travel to historical military destinations. The report identified Baby Boomers as caregivers to their aging parents, which led to adjustments in Baby Boomer travel such as traveling with parents or being limited by their caregiving responsibilities.

Elderhostel, another tour company serving seniors, has also considered the upcoming needs associated with Baby Boomer travel behaviors. In their report of educational travel shifts for Baby Boomers (2007), researchers identified issues such as the need for more experiential or behind the scenes tours, smaller groups, more free time built into the schedule, active opportunities and shorter trips. Finally, the U.S. Travel Association identified older Americans as valuing the benefits of travel during the holidays more than other age segments. The survey

reported the creation of memories and connection with family as benefits for the 55 and older population.

Benefits of Travel

In addition to research within the tourism industry, researchers have studied the benefits of travel realized by the senior segment in general (not exclusively Baby Boomers) such as higher life satisfaction (Neal et al., 1999), life enrichment (Teaff & Turpin, 1996), and healthy lifestyles (Van Harssel, 1995). Pennington-Gray and Kersetter (2001) determined that university-educated women seek rest/relaxation, action and family benefits in their travel.

Benefits identified by American travelers to Hawaii included a unique experience, an opportunity for learning, and participation in adventurous activities (Woodside & Jacobs, 1985).

A qualitative study of older adult tourism discovered themes such as new perspectives on things known, a changed sense of self, disruption of assumptions because of new experiences and a deepened sense of understanding (Roberson, 1999). In a study based on the hierarchy of life satisfaction model, researchers suggested that overall life satisfaction results from travel experiences (Neal, et al., 1999).

Shoemaker (2000) suggested that it may be more useful to consider past travel behaviors of older adults rather than travel motives to determine what tourists' desire in their future travel. This was suggested because it may be more accurate to determine what benefits were *realized* as opposed to what is thought to be desired. The researcher (Shoemaker, 2000) classified older travelers into three segments according to the benefits they sought: escape and learn, retirees, and active storytellers. Shoemaker then related these findings to the benefits each group sought compared to an earlier study (1989) which identified benefits realized through travel including getaway/family travelers, adventurous/educational travelers, and gamblers/fun oriented

suggesting that the mature market remained similar over time. Another study using mixed methods researched the leisure travel patterns and the meaning of leisure travel in later life identified a theme among respondents as being a busy traveler during retirement (Gibson, 2002). According to Lehto et al. (2008), members of both the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers sought rest/relaxation/recuperation, visiting friends/relatives and quality time with family away from home in their travels. The Baby Boomers differed from the older generation in interest in intimacy/romance and adventure/excitement while traveling. In a study of the psychological well-being of senior travelers, Milman (1998) suggested that travel itself may not be a factor in traveler happiness, but rather participation in destination activities.

Destination Activities of Older Travelers

Similar to research on benefits of travel, there is limited research on the destination activities of aging Baby Boomers. Therefore, an understanding of previous older adults' participation in destination activities and Baby Boomers' participation choices throughout their lifespan is included in this section. Oppermann (1995) suggested that even though one cohort visited a destination it does not imply that the next cohort will visit that location because they have a different past travel experience. According to Pennington-Gray, Fridgen and Stynes (2003), "different cohorts may be attracted to different activities at different times" (p. 358) which supports the notion of continued cohort research. The findings also indicated Baby Boomers interests in visiting national and provincial parks, shopping and visiting museums and galleries during their pleasure travel. A study by AARP identified factors influencing leisure travel among Baby Boomers identified the following: "a beautiful, scenic destination that promotes relaxation has good weather, and presents no pressure of schedules to meet" (AARP, 2005, p. 1).

Conclusion

The number of Americans reaching later life in the coming years is significant (US Census, 2007). This aging market is not only different from the previous generation, but also heterogeneous. Today's mid-life population is healthier, wealthier, more independent, more educated and has fewer obligations than previous generations (Zimmer & Brayley, 1995). Baby Boomers are different than other seniors because they have previous travel experience related to work as well as traveling for pleasure (Hayslip, Hicks-Patrick, & Panek, 2007). The travel industry must prepare fulfilling experiences for this generation as they reach later life.

According to the Travel Industry Association, "to reach this important market in the coming years, marketing messages will likely shift from a youth-oriented focus to a greater concern for the needs, problems, and dreams of middle-aged and older adults" (TIA, 2000, p. 1).

Understanding benefits realized through international travel particularly related to innovation and destination activities for Baby Boomers will be essential of travel professionals and future research.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the role that innovation plays in travelers' participation in destination activities and benefits gained from international travel. This study relied on Innovation Theory (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007) as its foundation. It replicated and expanded upon a recent Israeli study of retiree travel behavior (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010) with Baby Boomers currently living in North Carolina. As such, analysis examined outcomes of travel identified by men and women ages 45 to 63 years old and determined if the tenets of Innovation Theory are useful for the market segmentation of North Carolina Baby Boomer travelers. Findings pinpointed benefits that Baby Boomers say they gain during international travel, which may assist travel agents and destination marketing organizations in their development of opportunities for this emerging market.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was North Carolina residents born between 1946 and 1964 who traveled internationally within the three years prior to February 2010. According to the July 1, 2008 census projections, most Baby Boomers resided in the southern region of the United States. North Carolina is home to approximately 2,594,871 individuals born between the years 1946 and 1964 (US Census, 2007). As of 2008, 25.6% of the North Carolina population was Baby Boomers with a nearly even divide between males and females. The majority of Baby Boomers residing in North Carolina in 2008 were married, with at least a high school education and a median household income of \$52,852. In 2007, most North Carolina Baby Boomers were still in the labor force. Over 100,000 North Carolina Baby Boomers were born outside of the United States (American Community Survey, 2005-2007).

The researcher utilized two sampling methods simultaneously. For one sampling method, the researcher purchased a mailing list of 1,000 North Carolina AARP members from a marketing service (Macromark, Inc.) and collected data using a modified Dillman's (2000) mail survey method. The marketing service delimited participants by location to only include North Carolina residents but were not stratified to represent the various regions (West, Piedmont and East) of the state. The list was further delimited to North Carolina AARP members born between 1946 and 1964. Finally, the marketing service identified only those AARP subscribers who had indicated an interest in travel.

In addition to the purchased mailing list, data were collected using snowball sampling with an electronic questionnaire. The electronic questionnaire was identical to the paper questionnaire. The researcher identified initial points of contact serving North Carolina Baby Boomer travelers through telephone and email. These outlets included university alumni travel programs, senior centers and a Baby Boomer publication. The instrument included instructions for participants to complete only one questionnaire to avoid potential duplicate responses from the two sampling methods.

Study Design

The design of this study was cross-sectional and non-representative. This study utilized a non-probability mail survey method and snowball sampling to identify participants. In order to be included in the research, participants had to meet the following criteria: (a) be born between the years 1946 and 1964, (b) be residents of North Carolina, and (c) have traveled internationally within the last three years. The researcher chose the study design and sampling methods since no finite list existed of North Carolina Baby Boomers who have traveled abroad within the last three years.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher mailed the questionnaires (Appendix B) with postage-paid reply envelopes directly to 1,000 potential participants identified by the mailing list (North Carolina AARP Travelers) followed by a reminder post card eight days later. Eighteen days after the initial mailing, the researcher sent a second invitation to participate including a second questionnaire. Each questionnaire was numbered (1-1,000) which corresponded to a spreadsheet of 1,000 potential participants. When a participant returned a questionnaire, the researcher identified the participant on the spreadsheet from the number indicated on the questionnaire and noted it on a spreadsheet to avoid duplication. Participant identities remained confidential. Upon completion of data collection, the spreadsheet identifying the participants was shredded. Finally, the researcher entered data into SPSS software and included a code that indicated a paper questionnaire was used

For the snowball sampling method, the researcher asked participating agencies to share an email call for participation in the study (Appendix C) with any North Carolina residents born between 1946 and 1964 who had traveled internationally within the last three years instructing potential participants to contact the researcher by email. Once participants contacted the researcher by email, she shared a link to the electronic survey and then in accordance with snowball sampling, asked the participant to suggest any other potential participants. The researcher maintained a log including the number of questionnaires distributed according to agency through which the participant was recruited to determine the response rate. As participants completed the electronic survey, data were entered into an SPSS file including a code to indicate that person completed the electronic questionnaire. The researcher combined the two SPSS documents for analysis.

Instrumentation

Since this study is an adaptation of a previous study but used a unique study population, it was important to use the same questionnaire instrument used in previous research (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). For use in this study, Ruth Dobres, the Librarian Assistant at the Laura and Alvin Siegal College of Judaic Studies, translated the questionnaire from Hebrew into English and then the original researcher (Dr. Galit Nimrod) validated it. The questionnaire (Appendix B) included open-ended and close-ended questions to measure participants' most recent international travel experience, the destination activities they participated in, the benefits they gained from the overall tourism experience, new experiences during travel and demographic characteristics. Demographic questions included gender, age, foreign born, retirement status, travel history, education, marital status, children/grandchildren, health status, and income. Each question and section had been pilot tested for validity, readability and has established high levels of internal reliability (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). Variables had a high level of reliability (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010) with correlations between the first and second responses higher than 0.7.

The instrument began with six questions related to the participant's last trip abroad. Four open-ended questions included country/countries visited, length of stay, purpose and format of travel as well as two questions related to travel companions (number and description of relationship). At the end of the questionnaire, there were also three open-ended questions asking respondents about their past travel (number of trips within North Carolina, within the United States outside of North Carolina and abroad during the last year).

Another section of the instrument (beginning with question seven, see Appendix B) included activities adopted from a study by You and O'Leary (2000) that assessed participants' engagement in destination activities (e.g., sightseeing in big cities, shopping, visiting local

festivals) during their last travel abroad. Twenty-six questions used a five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) scale ranging from one to five where one indicated “not at all” and five represented “very often”. Three opportunities were provided for participants to indicate other activities not listed and then respond to their other responses with the five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) scale. The items were slightly modified following pilot testing by Nimrod and Rotem (2010).

The next portion of the survey (questions 34-53) asked participants to indicate their agreement or disagreement with statements about the benefits they gained from their last travel experience. These 20 statements were based on Kelly’s scale of leisure benefits (1978). Each question included a six-point quasi-interval scale with one representing “strongly disagree”, five as “strongly agree” and nine as “not applicable”. Example statements included “I liked the trip”, “It felt relaxed”, “I grew as a person” and “I enjoyed planning it”.

The questionnaire then included a section related to new experiences (questions 54-63) respondents participated in during their last travel experience based on the scale created by Nimrod and Rotem (2010). Ten five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) items asked participants about topics such as meeting new people, gaining new knowledge and trying new foods. Response options were in a five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) scale ranging from one to five with one indicating “not at all” and 5 representing “very often”.

The final section (questions 64-76) asked participants for demographic information. Open-ended questions were used to identify respondents’ age and number of children/grandchildren. Close-ended questions were used to identify participants’ gender, education, marital status, retirement status, health status and income. Additionally, the researcher included two region specific questions to assess respondents’ county of residence in North Carolina and racial/ethnic background.

Study Hypotheses and Analysis Plan

With the data described above, the following three alternative hypotheses were tested:

H1: The international tourism market for North Carolina Baby Boomers can effectively be segmented into three categories of innovators (absolute innovators, non-innovators, and external innovators).

Independent Variable: New experiences (determined by an exploratory factor analysis of the new experiences subscale, which included questionnaire items 54-63). Internal experiences and External experiences were expected as outcome variables from the confirmatory factor analysis.

Dependent Variable: Type of innovation (determined by *k*-means cluster analysis of questionnaire items 54-63. Absolute innovators, Non-innovators, and External innovators were expected as outcome variables from the *k*-means cluster analysis.)

Analyses: Analyses were descriptive and inferential. First, new experiences were reduced to internal or external subscales using an exploratory factor analysis. Then, hypothesis one was tested using *k*-means cluster analysis. Three categories of innovators (absolute innovator, non-innovator or external innovator) were expected. Also, the demographic (income, education and travel history) characteristics of each cluster (aka market segment) were described with measures of central tendency and crosstabs. Other study variables were used to describe respondents assigned to each classification (age, gender, countries visited, length of trip, format of trip, purpose of travel, number of trips, health status, marital and retirement status).

H2: There will be a significant difference between the benefits of travel according to the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

Independent Variable: Type of innovator (determined using *k*-means cluster analysis in

H1)

Dependent Variable: Benefits of travel (determined using questionnaire items 34-53).

Analysis: An analysis of variance with LSD post-hoc test identified the type of innovation experienced according to benefits of travel.

H3: There will be a significant difference between the frequency of participation in destination activities and the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

Independent Variable: Type of innovator (determined using *k*-means cluster analysis in

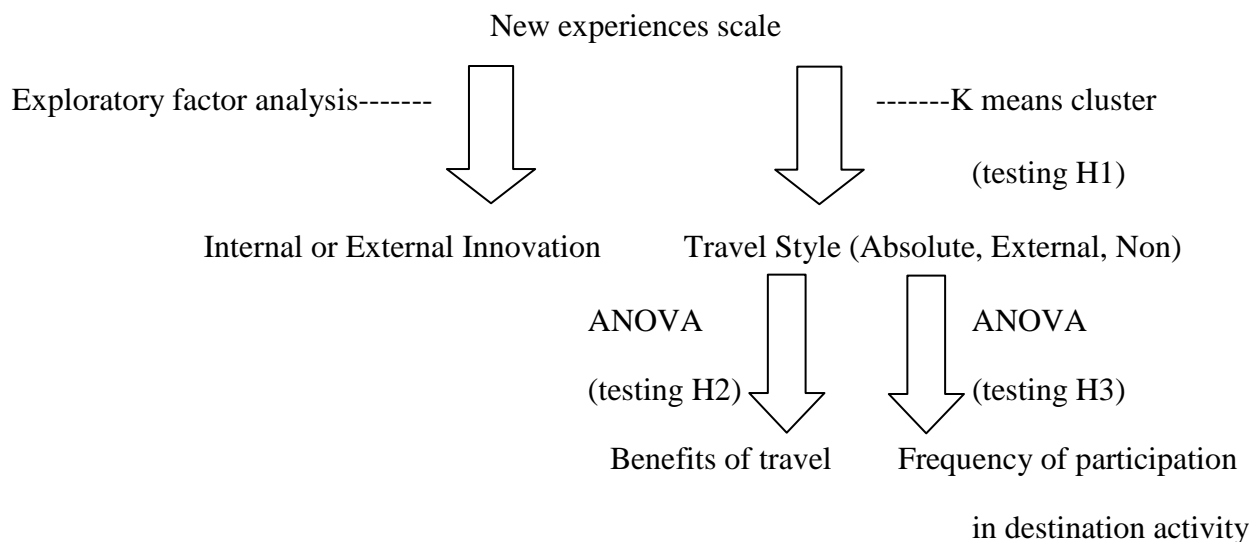
H1)

Dependent Variable: Frequency of participation in destination activity (determined using questionnaire items 7-33).

Analysis: An analysis of variance with LSD post-hoc test identified whether frequency of participation in destination activity was related to the type of innovator (absolute innovator, non-innovator or external innovator) to evaluate hypothesis three.

Figure 1

Statistical Analysis



CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived benefits of North Carolina Baby Boomers related to innovation during international travel. The current study hypothesized that travel style could be clustered according to innovation through international travel experiences. Other hypotheses included relationships between innovation style and benefits gained during international travel as well as participation in destination activities.

Response Rate

Data were collected using two survey methodologies: Dillman's modified mail surveys and snowball sampling with an electronic survey. Due to a lack of significant difference in participant demographics from chi square analyses with expected counts less than five, respondents from the two survey methodologies were combined. The mail survey methodology included sending, 1,000 surveys to North Carolina Baby Boomers identified by a mailing list purchased from Macromark, Inc. Twenty-two addresses were invalid resulting in 978 possible participants. One hundred and eighty one participants returned the survey resulting in a 19% response rate. In addition to mailing questionnaires, 150 surveys were distributed in an electronic format. Organizations serving the North Carolina Baby Boomer population shared a call for participation with members asking potential participants to contact the researcher through email to request the survey link. The researcher maintained a log of the number of requested survey links from potential participants. Of the 150 potential participants, 142 participated for a 95% response rate. In total, 1,128 surveys were distributed and 323 were returned (33%). Of the 323 surveys, 150 were considered usable for this study due to participants' fulfillment of the following research criteria: year of birth between 1946 and 1964, residency in North Carolina, and one or more international travel experiences in the last three years. Most of the unusable questionnaires were due to respondents having traveled domestically rather than internationally.

Characteristics

The majority of participants were female (n=102, 68.0%), married (n=113, 75.8%) and born between 1946 and 1955 (n=107, 71.3%). More participants were not retired (n=95, 63.3%) than retired (n=54, 36.0%) and had a spouse or partner who was also working (n=79, 52.7%). The majority of participants reported having a college degree (n=63, 42.0%) or advanced degree (n=49, 32.7%). Only 6.7 percent (n=10) were born outside of the United States. The median household income of North Carolina Baby Boomers is \$52,852, and participants reported having slightly above (n=43, 28.9%) and a lot above (n=63, 42.3%) this income. The majority of participants' self-reported their health as either very good (n=60, 40.3%) or excellent (n=48, 32.2%). The researcher did not stratify survey distribution by region of the state, but a distribution was achieved with 23.1% of participants residing in western counties, 46.9% in the piedmont and 29.9% in eastern counties.

Table 1:

General Description of North Carolina Baby Boomer Participants

	Respondents	
	N	Percentage
Gender		
Male	47	31.30
Female	102	68.00
Age		
1946-1955	107	71.30
1956-1964	43	28.60
Marital Status		
Single	14	9.40
Married/partner	113	75.80
Widowed	4	2.70
Divorced/separated	18	12.10
Retired		
Yes	54	36.00
No	95	63.30
Retired Partner/Spouse		
Yes	45	30.00
No	79	52.70
Highest Level of Education		
< High School	2	1.30
High School	10	6.70
Some college	26	17.30
College degree	63	42.00
Advanced degree	49	32.70

Table 2(Cont):

General Description of North Carolina Baby Boomer Participants

Foreign Born		
Yes	10	6.70
No	140	93.30
Median Household Income		
Much less	9	6.00
Less	12	8.10
Similar	16	10.70
Slightly above	43	28.90
A lot above	63	42.30
Health		
Poor	1	0.70
Fair	4	2.70
Good	34	22.80
Very Good	60	40.30
Excellent	48	32.20

Participants responded to four open-ended and two close-ended questions relating to their last trip outside of the United States. Participants wrote how many days they were abroad and the researcher grouped responses into three categories; 1-7 days, 8-14 days and 15 or more days. To indicate destinations, the questionnaire included an opportunity to list up to ten countries visited during their last trip abroad. The researcher placed responses into categories according to region (See Table 2). Then, the researcher grouped participant responses of the purpose of travel into eight categories such as vacation, visiting friends/relatives and business. Finally, the format of travel resulted in six groups including on my own, group and package. Descriptive statistics of North Carolina Baby Boomer participants' last travel abroad are depicted in Table 2. The mean number of days spent abroad on participants' last international trip was 12.1 days. Nearly half of the participants (n=70, 47.0%) visited European countries and 31.5% (n=47) traveled to the Caribbean and Central America. The majority of participants identified vacation (n=97, 64.7%) as the purpose of their travel and indicated that their travel format was an independent trip (n=76, 50.7%). Half (n=76, 50.7%) of the participants traveled alone or with one other

person. Spouse or partner was the most frequently identified companion and was reported by 58.7% of participants as their travel companion.

Table 3

Last Travel Abroad Patterns of North Carolina Baby Boomer Participants

	n=	Percentage
Days abroad		
1-7	64	42.70
8-14	50	33.30
15+	34	22.70
Country/Region visited		
Europe	70	47.00
Caribbean/Central America	47	31.50
Canada	9	6.00
South America	6	4.00
Oceania	6	4.00
Africa	5	3.40
Asia	4	2.70
Middle East	1	0.70
Russia	1	0.70
Purpose of travel		
Vacation	100	66.70
Visiting Friends/Relatives	21	14.00
Business	15	10.00
Educational	6	4.00
Gift/Prize	3	2.00
Volunteer	2	1.30
Cruise	2	1.30
Religious Pilgrimage	1	0.70
Format of travel		
On my own	76	50.70
Group	40	26.70
Package	7	4.70
Cruise	13	8.70
Family group	5	3.30
Other	9	6.00
Number of travel companions		
0	25	16.90
1	51	34.50
2	16	10.80
3	22	14.90
4	10	6.80
5	4	2.70
6	5	3.40
7	2	1.40
8	4	2.70
9+	9	6.10
Relationship of travel companions*		
Spouse/partner	88	58.70
Friend/friends	33	22.00
Other family members	31	20.70
Sons/daughters	26	17.30
People in group tour	9	6.00
Other	7	4.70
Grandsons/granddaughters	4	2.70

*Values do not equal 100% since respondents could indicate no answer or multiple answers.

Key Variables

Benefits of International Travel

The first key variable was benefits of international travel to North Carolina Baby Boomers. Participants were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with statements about the benefits they gained from their last travel experience. These 20 statements were based on Kelly's scale of leisure benefits (1978). Each question consisted of a six-point quasi-interval scale with 1 representing "strongly disagree", 5 as "strongly agree" and 9 as "not applicable". Not applicable responses were recoded as system missing for analysis. Results of benefits of international travel of North Carolina Baby Boomers are depicted in Table 3. Participants did not have mean scores that indicated strong disagreement or strong agreement with any of the twenty benefits of travel items. The majority of participants was neutral or agreed with the benefits of travel questions. Participants indicated that they "agreed" with twelve items including the three highest items, "I liked the trip" (M=4.73, SD =0.48), "I enjoyed the companions" (M=4.80, SD 0.63) and "I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return" (M=4.51, SD =0.77). Six items had mean scores of "neutral" including the three highest means of "It was good for my health" (M=3.99, SD=1.01), "I liked developing a skill" (M=3.94, SD =1.49), and "It was restful" (M=3.73, SD =1.06). Two items had mean scores of "disagree"; "I was expected to go by my friends" (M= 2.99, SD =2.04) and "It was my duty" (M=2.82, SD =1.98).

Table 3

Benefits of International Travel

Benefits of travel	% of the sample that reported each degree						<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5	N/A 6		
I enjoyed the companions (n=145)	0.00	0.70	3.40	17.20	72.40	6.20	4.80	0.63
I liked the trip (n=148)	0.00	0.00	1.40	24.30	74.30	0.00	4.73	0.48
I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return (n=146)	0.70	0.70	6.80	34.20	53.40	4.10	4.51	0.77
It strengthened relationships (n=145)	0.70	0.00	13.10	31.70	51.70	2.80	4.42	0.81
It was exciting (n=145)	2.10	1.40	6.90	32.40	56.60	0.70	4.42	0.86
I enjoyed anticipating it (n=144)	1.40	0.00	11.10	36.10	45.80	5.60	4.42	0.87
I felt relaxed (n=147)	0.00	3.40	7.50	36.70	52.40	0.00	4.38	0.77
It was active (n=145)	0.70	0.70	7.60	46.20	40.70	4.10	4.38	0.77
I grew as a person (n=147)	0.70	1.40	22.40	34.70	39.50	1.40	4.15	0.88
I liked being of help to others (n=145)	2.80	4.10	25.50	29.00	22.10	16.60	4.13	1.24
I enjoyed planning it (n=146)	1.40	3.40	22.60	35.60	30.80	6.20	4.10	1.02
I belonged (n=145)	2.10	2.10	28.30	35.90	23.40	8.30	4.01	1.06
It was good for my health (n=147)	2.00	3.40	25.90	34.70	30.60	3.40	3.99	1.01
I liked developing a skill (n=145)	3.40	11.00	35.20	13.80	11.70	24.80	3.94	1.49
It was restful (n=147)	2.00	11.60	25.90	33.30	26.50	0.70	3.73	1.06
It had an opportunity for self expression (n=145)	4.10	11.00	29.00	30.30	22.80	2.80	3.65	1.15
I liked the competition (n=144)	26.40	9.70	18.10	4.90	1.40	39.60	3.64	2.11
I was expected to go by my family (n=141)	29.80	13.50	13.50	11.30	12.10	19.90	3.22	1.92
I was expected to go by my friends (n=141)	39.00	12.80	12.10	7.80	3.50	24.80	2.99	2.04
It was my duty (n=145)	40.70	13.80	14.50	5.50	4.80	20.70	2.82	1.98

Participation in Destination Activities

The next key variable considered in this study was the frequency of respondents' participation in destination activities. The scale included activities adopted from a study by You and O'Leary (2000) to assess participants' engagement in destination activities (sightseeing in big cities, shopping, visiting local festivals) during their last travel abroad. Twenty-six questions used a five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 represented "not

at all” and 5 represented “very often”. Table 4 illustrates the frequency of participation in destination activities among this sample of North Carolina Baby Boomers. None of the questions resulted in a mean score of “very often”. The only destination activity resulting in a mean score of “often” was taking pictures or filming (M= 4.15, SD =1.09). Eight destination activities had mean scores of “sometimes” including the three highest rated items which included dining in restaurants (M=3.84, SD =1.11), visiting small towns and villages (M=3.55, SD =1.19), and visiting historical sites or archeological sites (M=3.47, SD =1.31).

Participants identified eight destination activities that they “rarely” participated. These included the three highest means scores of “sitting in coffee shops” (M=2.53, SD =1.18), “walking or riding bicycles on nature trails” (M=2.31, SD =1.33) and “visiting national parks or forests” (M=2.26, SD =1.25). Nine destination activities had mean scores that indicated that on average, participants “never” participated in activities with the three lowest means of “visiting amusement or theme parks” (M=1.34, SD =0.77), “table games such as cards, chess or bridge” (M=1.35, SD =0.83) and “attending spectacular sporting events” (M=1.37, SD =0.82).

Table 4
Participation in Destination Activities

Destination activities	% of the sample that reported each degree					M	SD
	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Very Often 5		
Taking pictures or filming (n= 144)	3.50	4.90	16.70	22.90	52.10	4.15	1.09
Dining in restaurants (n= 148)	4.70	8.10	17.60	37.80	31.80	3.84	1.11
Visiting small towns and villages (n= 141)	9.90	3.50	31.90	30.50	24.10	3.55	1.19
Visiting historical sites or archeological sites (n= 146)	13.00	7.50	26.00	26.70	26.70	3.47	1.31
Sightseeing in big cities (n= 145)	10.30	9.70	30.30	22.10	27.60	3.47	1.28
Shopping (n= 147)	2.70	17.70	38.10	25.90	15.60	3.34	1.03
Getting to know local people (n= 142)	12.00	13.40	37.30	24.60	12.70	3.13	1.17
Reading books , magazines, etc, (n= 145)	11.00	22.10	26.20	27.60	13.10	3.10	1.21

Table 4 (cont)

Participation in Destination Activities

Destination activities	% of the sample that reported each degree					<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often		
	1	2	3	4	5		
Visiting museums/galleries (n= 144)	20.80	11.10	25.70	27.80	14.60	3.04	1.35
Sitting in coffee shops (n= 145)	25.50	20.00	37.20	10.30	6.90	2.53	1.18
Walking or riding bicycles on nature trails (n= 143)	39.90	18.20	22.40	10.50	9.10	2.31	1.33
Visiting national parks or forests (n= 142)	42.30	12.00	26.80	15.50	3.50	2.26	1.25
Sunbathing or other beach activities (n= 145)	51.00	11.70	14.50	7.60	15.20	2.24	1.51
Taking cruises (n= 145)	54.50	9.00	15.20	9.00	12.40	2.16	1.47
Watching television (n= 144)	36.80	28.50	20.80	10.40	3.50	2.15	1.14
Visiting friends or relatives (n= 147)	59.90	4.10	12.90	8.20	15.00	2.14	1.55
Attending local festivals (n= 145)	48.30	12.40	27.60	9.00	2.80	2.06	1.17
Seeing plays or concerts (n= 144)	50.70	19.40	16.70	8.30	4.90	1.97	1.21
Physical activities (exercising, gyms, or ball games) (n= 146)	57.50	13.70	13.00	11.00	4.80	1.92	1.26
Religious/Spiritual activities (n= 144)	51.40	27.10	16.00	3.50	2.10	1.78	0.98
Visiting night clubs (n= 144)	67.40	18.80	7.60	4.20	2.10	1.55	0.95
Casino/Other gambling (n= 143)	76.20	7.70	9.10	1.40	5.60	1.52	1.09
Visiting health spas (n= 146)	76.70	6.80	9.60	3.40	3.40	1.50	1.03
Attending spectacular sporting events (n= 145)	78.60	11.70	5.50	2.80	1.40	1.37	0.82
Table games such as cards, chess, bridge (n= 141)	80.90	9.20	5.70	2.80	1.40	1.35	0.83
Visiting amusement park or theme park (n= 146)	79.50	10.30	7.50	2.10	0.70	1.34	0.77

New Experiences

The final descriptive study variable measured older adults' frequency of participation in new activities during participants' last travel abroad. The scale asked respondents about new experiences and was based on the scale created by Nimrod and Rotem (2009). Thus, this scale included ten five-point quasi-interval (Likert-type) questions ranging from 1 to 5 with one as "not at all" and 5 representing "very often". Descriptive results are shown in Table 5. None of the items resulted in a mean score of "never" or "very often". Four items had mean scores of "often" including "visiting places never visited before" ($M=4.38$, $SD=1.00$), "gaining new knowledge or information" ($M=4.18$, $SD=0.92$), "meeting new people" ($M=4.03$, $SD=0.96$), and

“being introduced to unfamiliar culture” (M=4.00, SD =1.10). Mean scores indicated that five items were identified as “sometimes” experienced by participants. The three highest mean scores for sometimes included: “trying new food” (M=3.88, SD =1.06), “learning something new about life in general” (M=3.45, SD =1.11) and “participating in an activity never taken before” (M=3.43, SD =1.25). “Gaining a new ability or skill” was the only question with a mean score of “rarely” (M=2.75, SD=1.30).

Table 5
Frequency of New Experiences during Last Travel Abroad

Experience	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Very often 5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Visiting places never visited before (n=146)	3.40	2.70	8.90	22.60	62.30	4.38	1.00
Gaining new knowledge or information (n=146)	2.10	2.10	16.40	34.20	45.20	4.18	0.92
Meeting new people (n= 148)	0.70	6.80	19.60	34.50	38.50	4.03	0.96
Being introduced to unfamiliar culture (n=147)	4.10	5.40	19.70	27.90	42.90	4.00	1.10
Trying new food (n= 148)	4.10	5.40	21.60	36.50	32.40	3.88	1.06
Learning something new about life in general (n= 146)	3.40	17.10	31.50	26.70	21.20	3.45	1.11
Participating in an activity never taken before (n= 145)	9.00	11.00	35.20	17.90	26.90	3.43	1.25
Learning something new about yourself (n= 147)	6.10	20.40	41.50	16.30	15.60	3.15	1.11
Learning something new about relationships in your life (n= 146)	6.20	20.50	40.40	18.50	14.40	3.14	1.10
Gaining a new ability or skill (n= 146)	20.50	24.70	28.10	13.00	13.70	2.75	1.30

Exploratory Factor Analysis of New Experiences

Innovative experiences in participants’ last travel abroad were explored through factor analysis, which determined what, if any, underlying structure existed for measuring the new experiences scale. Following the same protocol that was adopted by Nimrod and Rotem (2010), procedures utilized principal components extraction and Varimax rotation with Kaiser

normalization. To control the number of factors extracted from the data, a two-factor solution was specified in an attempt to replicate the previous study (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). The criteria used to determine the appropriate number of components included shared conceptual meaning, simple factor structure, eigenvalues greater than one, and Cronbach alpha's reliability greater than 0.60.

In the first factor analysis iteration, three of the ten items had notable cross-loading and seven items single-loaded with acceptable values (coefficient $<.60$). Although three items cross-loaded to some degree, "trying new foods" loaded similarly on both factors (.52 and .50) and it was removed from the analysis. When "trying new foods" was removed in the second factor analysis iteration, nine items remained and loaded on two distinct factors with acceptable values. See Table 6 for the factor structure of new experiences.

The variance explained by both factors was then considered. The variance explained by each factor would not be improved with the addition or exclusion of questionnaire items. Thus, the two-factor structure was accepted. The first component accounted for 30.47 percent of the variance while the second component accounted for 34.21 percent of the variance. The two factors mirrored those of the previous study and were labeled external innovation and internal innovation in accordance with the previous study (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). The Cronbach's alpha value for external innovation was 0.89 and internal innovation was 0.88.

In accordance with the previous study, the first factor, *external innovation*, consisted the following items and factor loadings: (a) "visiting new places never visited before" (0.88), (b) "being introduced to unfamiliar culture" (0.85), (c) "gaining new knowledge or information" (0.77), (d) "meeting new people" (0.71) and (e) "participating in an activity never taken before" (0.68). The second factor, *internal innovation*, included (a) "learning something new about

relationships in your life” (0.88), (b) “learning something new about yourself” (0.86), (c) “gaining new ability or skill” (0.76) and (d) “learning something new about life in general” (0.73). This factor analysis confirmed the findings of Nimrod and Rotem (2010) with the first factor representing external innovation and the second component representing internal innovation.

Table 6

Factor Structure of New Experiences

Experience	Mean	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
External Innovation			59.11	38.47	0.89
Visiting places never visited before	4.38	0.88			
Being introduced to unfamiliar culture	4.00	0.85			
Gaining new knowledge or information	4.18	0.77			
Meeting new people	4.03	0.71			
Participation in an activity never taken before	3.43	0.68			
Internal Innovation			13.57	34.21	0.88
Learning something new about relationships in your life	3.14	0.88			
Learning something new about yourself	3.20	0.86			
Gaining new ability or skill	2.75	0.76			
Learning something new about life in general	3.45	0.73			

Responses varied from 1-5 with 1 meaning never and five meaning very often

Item not included: Trying new foods

Notes: Only loadings of at least 0.3 were tabulated

These two factors explained 72.67% of variance.

Hypothesis Testing

With the factor analysis complete, it was then possible to test the three study hypotheses.

H1: The international tourism market for North Carolina Baby Boomers can effectively be segmented into three categories of innovators (absolute innovators, non-innovators, and external innovators).

To test this hypothesis, a *k*-means cluster analysis was undertaken. Three categories of innovators (absolute innovator, non-innovator or external innovator) were expected and confirmed. Also, the demographic (income, education and travel history) characteristics of each cluster (aka market segment) were described with measures of central tendency and crosstabs. Other study variables used to describe respondents assigned to each classification included age, gender, countries visited, length of trip, format of trip, purpose of travel, number of trips, health status, marital and retirement status.

In order to assess participants' innovation, the researcher conducted a cluster analysis to sort individuals into groups. Cluster analysis is a statistical procedure used to classify participants based on variables of choice. A *k*-means analysis requires researchers to input a desired number of clusters for a solution. Then, the software package identifies distinct cases for each cluster that have the most significant distance between groups. Since there is no "correct" cluster solution deemed acceptable, this study entered the number three for consistency with the previous study (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). Researchers considered clusters of two, four and five solutions but the clusters the centroid distance was greatest for the three cluster solution. This indicates that when grouped into three categories, respondents were most distinct. The clusters also support Innovation Theory by indicating participation in new experiences by participants. Through three distinct clusters, participants may also support the differences between *self-preservation* and *self-reinvention*. The three clusters are described in Table 7 according to the cluster means for the two factors.

Table 7

Three Clusters of North Carolina Baby Boomer International Travelers

Factor	Cluster		
	Absolute Innovators	Non Innovators	External Innovators
	<i>Cluster centroid</i>		
External Innovation	0.09	-2.04	0.33
Internal Innovation	1.28	-0.60	-0.44
Cluster size	40	17	93
Percentage of sample	26.67	11.33	62.00

Based on the cluster means, each of the three clusters may be described individually and in contrast to the other two clusters. Since the data indicated the same pattern of respondents as the prior study, the three clusters were labeled the same names to maintain consistency (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010). The characteristics of the three clusters of innovators are shown in Table 8.

(1) *Absolute Innovators*: (n=40; 26.67%)

According to the cluster analysis, absolute innovators indicated both external and internal innovation on the new experiences scale. The majority of absolute innovators were female (74.4%), married (61.5%) and born between 1946 and 1955 (70.0%). More cluster members were not retired (64.0%) and one-half had a spouse or partner who was working (50.0%). The majority of absolute innovators reported having a college or advanced degree (60.0%). Only five percent indicated being born outside of the United States. The median household income of North Carolina Baby Boomers is \$52,852; absolute innovators indicated having slightly above (28.2%) and a lot above (35.9%) this income. The self-reported their health of absolute innovators was higher than the overall sample with 36.8 percent indicating excellent health.

(2) *Non Innovators* (n=17; 11.33%)

The *k*-means cluster analysis resulted in non innovators having negative cluster centroid scores indicating the least participation in both external and internal innovation. The non-innovators' group was the smallest of the three clusters with only 17 participants. The majority of non innovators were female (64.7%), married (76.5%), and born between 1946 and 1955 (70.6%). There were more non-innovators who were not retired (76.5%) than retired (23.5%) and indicated a spouse or partner who was working (76.5%). The majority of non innovators reported having a college degree (41.2%) or advanced degree (23.5%). This cluster had the most participants who indicated being born outside of the United States (23.5%). Non innovators indicated having household incomes of slightly above (23.5%) and a lot above (47.1%) the median income of \$52, 852 of North Carolina Baby Boomers. The self-reported their health of non-innovators included 47.1 percent indicating excellent health and 23.5 percent reporting very good health.

(3) *External Innovators* (n=93; 62.00%)

The third and final cluster included participants who indicated positive external innovation centroid scores and negative internal innovation centroid scores. Similar to the previous study (Nimrod & Rotem, 2010), the largest cluster was external innovators with 93 participants. The majority of participants were female (66.7%), married (81.7%) and born between 1946 and 1955 (72.0%). More participants were not retired (61.3%) compared to the percentage retired and most cluster members had a spouse or partner who was also working (53.3%). The majority of participants reported having a college degree (43.0%) or advanced degree (39.8%). This cluster had 4.3 percent who indicated that they were born outside of the United States. The median household income of North Carolina Baby Boomers is \$52,852. External innovators reported

having slightly above (30.1%) and a lot above (35.9%) this income. Approximately 40% of both absolute and external innovators indicated their health was very good whereas about 40% of non-innovators reported good health.

Table 8

Respondent Characteristics of Types of Innovators

	% of group			% of Sample N=150
	Absolute Innovators (n=40)	Non Innovators (n=17)	External Innovators (n=93)	
Gender				
Male	25.60	35.30	33.30	31.30
Female	74.40	64.70	66.70	68.00
Age				
1946-1955	70.00	70.60	72.00	71.30
1956-1964	30.00	29.40	28.00	28.60
Marital Status				
Single	12.80	11.80	7.50	9.40
Married/partner	61.50	76.50	81.70	75.80
Widowed	7.70	5.90	0.00	2.70
Divorced/separated	17.90	5.90	10.80	12.10
Retired				
Yes	35.90	23.50	38.70	36.00
No	64.10	76.50	61.30	63.30
Partner/Spouse Retired				
Yes	20.00	23.50	35.90	30.00
No	50.00	58.80	53.30	52.70
N/A	30.00	17.60	10.90	16.70
Highest Education				
Less than HS	0.00	5.90	1.10	1.30
High School	10.00	17.60	3.20	6.70
Some college	30.00	11.80	12.90	17.30
College degree	40.00	41.20	43.00	42.00
Advanced degree	20.00	23.50	39.80	32.70
Foreign Born				
Yes	5.00	23.50	4.30	6.70
No	95.00	76.50	95.70	93.30
Median Household Income				
Much less	5.10	17.60	4.30	6.00
Less	15.40	5.90	5.40	8.10
Similar	12.80	5.90	10.80	10.70
Slightly above	28.20	23.50	30.10	28.90
A lot above	35.90	47.10	35.90	47.10
Health				
Poor	0.00	0.00	1.10	0.70
Fair	2.60	0.00	3.30	2.70
Good	33.30	41.20	15.40	22.80
Very Good	43.60	23.50	42.90	40.30
Excellent	20.50	35.30	37.40	32.20

Travel Patterns of the Three Clusters

The six questions relating to last trip abroad including number of days abroad, countries visited, purpose and format of trip as well as number of and relationship to travel companions are depicted by cluster in Table 9. Generally, the logistics of travel appear similar across all three clusters. Trips out of the country lasting seven or fewer days was the most common trip length for members of all three clusters (absolute 43.6%, non 68.8%, external 38.7%). Europe was the most frequently visited area by external innovators (52.7%) while the Caribbean/Central America was visited the most by absolute (40.0%) and non-innovators (43.8%). More than half of participants within each cluster reported vacation as the purpose of their travel (absolute 65.0%, non 58.8%, external 68.8%). The majority of absolute innovators (57.5%) and external innovators (51.6%) indicated the format of travel as “on their own” whereas the format was distributed for non-innovators. One travel companion was the most common response for number of travel companions for the three clusters (absolute 28.2%, non 35.3%, and external 37.0%). Spouse/partner was the most frequent relationship of travel companion in all three innovator clusters (absolute 47.5%, non 58.8% and external 63.4%).

Table 9

Travel Patterns by Cluster

	% of group			% of sample n=150
	Absolute Innovators	Non Innovators	External Innovators	
Days abroad				
1-7	43.60	68.80	38.70	43.20
8-14	28.20	18.80	38.70	33.80
15+	28.20	12.50	22.60	23.00
Countries/Regions visited				
Europe	37.50	37.50	52.70	47.00
Caribbean/Central America	40.00	43.80	25.80	31.50
Canada	2.50	12.50	6.50	6.00
South America	2.50	0.00	5.40	4.00
Africa	5.00	0.00	3.20	3.40
Oceania	7.50	0.00	3.20	4.00
Asia	2.50	6.30	2.20	2.70
Middle East	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.70
Russia	0.00	0.00	1.10	0.70
Purpose of travel				
Vacation	65.00	58.80	68.80	66.70
Visiting Friends/Relatives	7.50	23.50	15.10	14.00
Business	15.00	11.80	7.50	10.00
Educational	7.50	0.00	3.20	4.00
Gift/Prize	0.00	0.00	3.20	2.00
Volunteer	0.00	0.00	2.20	1.30
Cruise	0.70	5.90	0.00	1.30
Religious Pilgrimage	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.70
Format of travel				
On my own	57.50	29.40	51.60	50.70
Group	30.00	23.50	25.80	26.70
Package	7.50	11.80	2.20	4.70
Cruise	2.50	0.00	12.90	8.70
Family group	2.50	11.80	2.20	3.30
Other	0.00	23.50	5.40	6.00
Number of travel companions				
0	20.50	17.60	15.20	16.90
1	28.20	35.30	37.00	34.50
2	7.70	5.90	13.00	10.80
3	15.40	23.50	13.00	14.90
4	7.70	11.80	5.40	6.80
5	7.70	0.00	1.10	2.70
6	5.10	5.90	2.20	3.40
7	0.00	0.00	2.20	1.40
8+	7.70	0.00	10.90	8.80
Relationship of travel companions*				
Spouse/partner	47.50	58.80	63.40	58.70
Friend/friends	20.00	11.80	24.70	22.00
Other family members	20.00	11.80	22.60	20.70
Sons/daughters	17.50	23.50	16.10	17.30
People in group tour	10.00	5.90	4.30	6.00
Grandsons/ granddaughters	2.50	17.60	0.00	2.70
Other	7.50	0.00	4.30	4.70
Mean year of birth	1953.73	1952.47	1952.55	1952.85
Mean number of travels abroad in the past year	1.32	3.41	1.17	1.47

*Values do not equal 100% since respondents could indicate no answer or multiple answers.

In the next portion of the analysis, the second hypothesis was tested:

H2: There will be a significant difference between the benefits of travel according to the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

Through an analysis of variance with LSD post-hot testing, the mean scores of benefits of international travel were compared. Findings were compared according to cluster of innovation and are shown in Table 10. Twelve of the twenty indicators of benefits of travel had significant differences ($p < .05$) between innovator clusters. Ten indicators were statistically different between absolute and non innovators while seven questions were statistically different for respondents classified as non innovators and external innovators. Of the ten items with significant differences between absolute innovators and non innovators, differences were observed for “I enjoyed planning it”, “I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return” and “I had an opportunity for self expression”. Items identified as significant between non innovators and external innovators included “I enjoyed anticipating it”, “It was exciting” and “I enjoyed the companions”. There were no statistical relationships between absolute innovators and external innovators. Eight questions were not significantly different between clusters of innovators and benefits of travel.

Table 10

Mean Scores of Benefits of International Travel by Innovation Clusters

	Absolute Innovators (n=40)	Non Innovators (n=17)	External Innovators (n=93)	Overall Sample	F	P
I enjoyed the companions (n=145)	4.65 _{a,b}	4.06 _b	4.74 _a	4.80	3.05	.05
I liked the trip (n=148)	4.75	4.29	4.70	4.73	2.69	.07

Responses varied from 1-5 with 1 meaning strongly disagree and five meaning strongly agree
 Note: Items in the same row with different subscripts are significantly different from one another.

Table 10 (cont)

Mean Scores of Benefits of International Travel by Innovation Clusters

	Absolute Innovators (n=40)	Non Innovators (n=17)	External Innovators (n=93)	Overall Sample	F	P
I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return (n=146)	4.55 _a	3.53 _b	4.48 _a	4.51	7.01	<.01
It strengthened relationships (n=145)	4.68 _a	3.24 _b	4.29 _a	4.42	11.18	<.01
It was exciting (n=145)	4.55 _a	3.47 _b	4.30 _a	4.42	5.58	.01
I enjoyed anticipating it (n=144)	4.25 _a	3.35 _b	4.40 _a	4.42	5.67	<.01
I felt relaxed (n=147)	4.47 _a	3.76 _b	4.31 _{a,b}	4.38	3.27	.04
It was active (n=145)	4.38	3.88	4.24	4.38	1.21	.30
I grew as a person (n=147)	4.35 _a	3.41 _b	4.06 _{a,b}	4.15	5.05	.01
I liked being of help to others (n=145)	4.32	3.47	3.95	4.13	2.30	1.04
I enjoyed planning it (n=146)	4.30 _a	2.94 _b	4.04 _a	4.10	8.68	<.01
I belonged (n=145)	4.17	3.53	3.82	4.01	1.87	1.58
It was good for my health (n=147)	4.20 _a	3.35 _b	3.88 _{a,b}	3.99	3.41	.04
I liked developing a skill (n=145)	4.40 _a	2.88 _b	3.72 _{a,b}	3.94	5.88	<.01
It was restful (n=147)	3.97	3.18	3.60	3.73	3.07	.05
I had an opportunity for self expression (n=145)	4.02 _a	2.65 _b	3.47 _a	3.65	7.40	<.01
I liked the competition (n=144)	3.25	2.82	3.72	3.64	1.56	.21
I was expected to go by my family (n=141)	2.90	2.82	3.12	3.22	.26	.77
I was expected to go by my friends (n=141)	2.70	2.41	2.92	2.99	.49	.61
It was my duty (n=145)	2.70	2.82	2.72	2.82	.02	.98

Responses varied from 1-5 with 1 meaning strongly disagree and five meaning strongly agree
 Note: Items in the same row with different subscripts are significantly different from one another.

Finally, a similar analysis was conducted to understand differences in the frequency of participation in destination activities according to each cluster of innovators.

H3: There will be a significant difference between the frequency of participation in destination activities and the type of innovator (absolute, non-innovator and external innovator).

Through an analysis of variance with LSD post-hoc testing, differences in the mean scores of frequency of participation in destination activity by the three clusters of innovation were tested. Results are shown in Table 11. Of the 26 items, fifteen of the destination activities

had significant differences ($p < .05$) between one or two innovator clusters. Twelve indicators had statistically significant differences between absolute and non innovators while eight questions were answered significantly differently for non innovators and external innovators. Of the twelve items with significant differences between absolute innovators and non innovators, significant items included “Sightseeing in big cities”, “Visiting historical sites or archeological sites” and “Visiting museums/galleries”. Items identified as significantly different between non innovators and external innovators included “Taking pictures or filming”, “Dining in restaurants” and “Watching television”. There were no statistically significant differences in destination activity frequency between absolute innovators and external innovators. Eleven questions did not have significant differences between clusters of innovators and frequency of participation in destination activities.

Table 11

Frequency of Participation in Destination Activities by Innovation Clusters

	Absolute Innovators (n=40)	Non Innovators (n=17)	External Innovators (n=93)	Overall Sample	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Taking pictures or filming (n=144)	4.08 _a	2.29 _b	4.26 _a	4.15	19.36	<.01
Dining in restaurants (n=148)	4.05 _a	2.82 _b	3.85 _a	3.84	7.31	<.01
Visiting small towns and villages (n=141)	3.70 _a	2.59 _b	3.32 _{a,b}	3.55	3.77	.03
Visiting historical sites or archeological sites (n=146)	3.50 _a	2.12 _b	3.55 _a	3.47	8.35	<.01
Sightseeing in big cities (n=145)	3.53 _a	1.94 _b	3.54 _a	3.47	11.06	<.01
Shopping (n=147)	3.62	2.94	3.18	3.34	3.09	.05
Getting to know local people (n=142)	3.38 _a	2.24 _b	2.91 _{a,b}	3.13	4.71	.01
Reading books, magazines (n=145)	3.20	2.41	3.01	3.10	2.21	.11
Visiting museums/galleries (n=144)	3.12 _a	1.53 _b	3.09 _a	3.04	9.89	<.01

Responses varied from 1-5 with 1 meaning never and five meaning very often

Note: Items in the same row with different subscripts are significantly different from one another

Table 11 (cont)

Frequency of Participation in Destination Activities by Innovation Clusters

	Absolute Innovators (n=40)	Non Innovators (n=17)	External Innovators (n=93)	Overall Sample	F	P
Sitting in coffee shops (n=145)	2.90 _a	1.65 _b	2.40 _{a,b}	2.53	6.70	<.01
Walking or riding bicycles on nature trails (n=143)	2.63 _a	1.53 _b	2.14 _{a,b}	2.31	4.10	.02
Visiting national parks or forests (n=142)	2.33 _a	1.35 _b	2.20 _a	2.26	3.64	.03
Sunbathing or other beach activities (n=145)	2.63	1.59	2.08	2.24	3.23	.04
Taking cruises (n=145)	2.22	1.71	2.10	2.16	.72	.49
Watching television (n=144)	2.50 _a	1.65 _b	1.96 _a	2.15	4.28	.03
Visiting friends or relatives (n=147)	2.30	2.47	1.95	2.14	1.26	.27
Attending local festivals (n=145)	2.22	1.53	1.97	2.06	2.03	.14
Seeing plays or concerts (n=144)	2.03	1.59	1.89	1.97	.73	.48
Physical activities (n=146)	2.25	1.65	1.74	1.92	2.55	.08
Religious/spiritual activities (n=144)	1.92	1.53	1.65	1.78	1.35	.26
Visiting night clubs (n=144)	1.77 _a	1.06 _b	1.44 _{a,b}	1.55	3.56	.03
Casino/gambling (n=143)	1.78	1.24	1.35	1.52	2.40	.10
Visiting health spas (n=146)	1.67	1.41	1.38	1.50	1.16	.32
Attending spectacular sporting events (n=145)	1.50 _a	0.82 _b	1.33 _{a,b}	1.37	4.00	.02
Table games (n=141)	1.37	1.06	1.26	1.35	.81	.45
Visiting amusement park or theme park (n=146)	1.48	1.06	1.28	1.34	1.84	.16
Physical activities (n=146)	2.25	1.65	1.74	1.92	2.55	.08
Religious/spiritual activities (n=144)	1.92	1.53	1.65	1.78	1.35	.26
Visiting night clubs (n=144)	1.77 _a	1.06 _b	1.44 _{a,b}	1.55	3.56	.03
Casino/gambling (n=143)	1.78	1.24	1.35	1.52	2.40	.10
Visiting health spas (n=146)	1.67	1.41	1.38	1.50	1.16	.32
Attending spectacular sporting events (n=145)	1.50 _a	0.82 _b	1.33 _{a,b}	1.37	4.00	.02
Table games (n=141)	1.37	1.06	1.26	1.35	.81	.45
Visiting amusement park or theme park (n=146)	1.48	1.06	1.28	1.34	1.84	.16

Responses varied from 1-5 with 1 meaning never and five meaning very often

Note: Items in the same row with different subscripts are significantly different from one another

New Experiences by Clusters

The factor analysis allowed the researcher to understand how the items of the new experiences scale could be grouped while the *k*-means cluster analysis grouped the participants by their responses to the new experiences scale. Table 12 depicts the mean scores of the

innovation clusters by innovation type. When comparing the innovator clusters (absolute, non and external) by type of innovation (internal and external) absolute innovators had the highest mean scores in both types of innovation (internal and external). Non-innovators had the lowest mean scores in both types of innovation while external innovators most often fell between absolute and non-innovators. The highest mean score within the innovator clusters was 4.65 for absolute innovators who indicated that they gained new knowledge during their last trip abroad. The lowest mean score within the innovator clusters was 1.69 for participation by non-innovators on the questionnaire item “to what extent were you involved in participating in an activity never participated in before”. Only one item on the scale “visiting places never visited before” resulted in external innovators having the highest mean score (4.63) of the three clusters. This was expected as external innovators had a positive external innovation cluster centroid score and negative internal cluster centroid score.

Table 12

Innovator Clusters by Innovation Factors

	Absolute Innovators	Non-Innovators	External Innovators	Overall Mean
Question: To what extent were you involved in the following experiences during your last trip abroad?				
External Innovation				
Visiting places	4.50	2.15	4.63	4.38
Being introduced	4.48	1.79	4.13	4.00
Gaining new knowledge	4.65	2.71	4.21	4.18
Meeting new people	4.58	2.80	4.00	4.03
Participation in Activity	4.08	1.69	3.40	3.43
Internal Innovation				
Learning something new about relationships	4.38	2.29	2.74	3.14
Learning something new about yourself	4.50	1.93	2.75	3.15
Gaining new ability or skill	4.00	1.85	2.33	2.75
Learning something new about life in general	4.55	2.07	3.18	3.45

Responses varied from 1-5 with one meaning never and five meaning very often

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter draws conclusions from data presented in the previous chapter. A discussion related to findings including comparison to the previous study is presented. Finally, potential implications for future research and the tourism industry are also included in this chapter.

Summary of Key Findings

This study examined Innovation Theory and identified the benefits aging adults said they gained from international travel. Findings replicated a previous study of Israeli retiree travel behavior with North Carolina Baby Boomers. In general, findings supported the utility and reliability of Innovation Theory. A scale included in both studies, the new experiences scale, resulted in two distinct factors (external and internal innovation). The factors in the current study were almost identical to the factors observed in the previous study. More than 90 percent of respondents indicated participation in nine of the ten new experiences, which suggests that tourism is an opportunity for new experiences within this sample of North Carolina Baby Boomers. This result mirrors that of the previous study, as well. The current study also confirmed the existence of three clusters of participants with regard to travelers' desire for new experiences during travel. In addition, there were similarities between the three types of innovators cross-nationally in the psychological outcomes (e.g. benefits gained) and the tourism behaviors (e.g. travel patterns and participation in destination activities). Finally, findings supported Innovation Theory (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007), which was the guiding theory in both studies through validation of the new experiences scale used in both studies. The two factors resulting from the new experiences scale were reflective of the tenets of innovation theory (self-reinvention and self-preservation).

Discussion

Study Sample Compared to North Carolina Population

It should be noted that the population sampled had a higher level of education, income and self-reported health than the overall Baby Boomer population of North Carolina. This difference is assumed to be associated with participants' desire and means to travel internationally. Next, it is important to note that a higher response rate was achieved from participants who were recruited through snowball sampling with e-mail when compared to the AARP mail survey respondents. Participants may have been more interested in completing the survey when it came recommended from a trusted organization or friend. Whereas participants receiving the paper survey may have been less inclined to complete it because it was not directly affiliated with AARP or anyone participants' knew personally. With participants emailing the researcher for the survey link, it also allowed for personal contact that may have assisted in achieving a higher response rate. The high response rate through email may also be a result of a higher level of interest in innovation as well as international travel among Baby Boomers who are connected to each other through email. It may have reflected a lack of precision in the purchased mailing list of North Carolina AARP subscribers who indicated interest in travel. Potential participants on the list may have been interested in travel, but not traveled or traveled domestically rather than internationally. This criterion made them ineligible to complete the survey and recipients may have therefore discarded the paper survey. This suggests that future research of Baby Boomers could have more success with electronic surveys opposed to the traditional Dillman's mail survey methodology.

Discussion of Factor Analysis and Descriptive Findings

The first statistical analysis needed to interpret the data was a factor analysis of the new experience scale to determine if there were two types of innovation in accordance with the

previous study. The factor analysis resulted in nine of the ten new experiences single loading on one of the two types of innovation (internal or external).

The only new experience that cross-loaded was *trying new foods*. Three possible explanations for the observed cross-loading may be the abundance of international cuisine in the United States, respondents' destinations of travel, and the relative accessibility of familiar foods abroad. First, international cuisine is readily available across North Carolina. Therefore, participants may have already tried the foods of their destination before traveling and not considered them new foods. Next, it is important to remember that 47% of participants traveled to Europe and 31.5% of respondents visited the Caribbean and Central America. European and Caribbean/Central American foods are widely available and popular in the United States (e.g. Olive Garden, On the Border, Chipotle Mexican Grill, and Au Bon Pain). Thus, the foods in these regions may be common to participants and may not have been perceived as new or innovative experiences. Finally, it is also possible that the often described Americanization of international destinations (DeBres, 2005, Schroter, 2008) has contributed to foods and restaurants such as McDonald's being accessible outside of the United States. Since "trying new foods" cross-loaded on internal and external innovation, the act of eating may be dependent upon the views of the participants. For some participants, the external experience relates to the atmosphere of the meal while others may consider it a more personal experience of tasting the meal resulting in the cross loading.

Discussion of *k*-means Cluster Analysis

Once the questionnaire items of the new or "innovative" experiences scale were factored, the participants were clustered related to their frequency of participation in the new or "innovative" experiences. Participants were labeled absolute, external or non-innovators related to their cluster centroid scores. All three innovator clusters tended to participate more often in

independent travel during their last international trip than with a group, which may relate to the changing trend of the older traveler (Elderhostel, 2005). The three innovator clusters all identified “vacation” as the most common purpose of their last travel abroad, which may relate to snowball sampling and willingness to complete the survey from the organizations that assisted in participant recruitment.

Travel Patterns by Cluster

Absolute Innovators

The innovators with the highest external and internal innovation cluster centroid scores, labeled absolute innovators, generally reported the highest mean scores of agreement to benefits of travel questions as well as the most frequent participation in destination activities. Although independent travel was indicated most often, absolute innovators identified group tours more often than the other two clusters. Absolute innovators also indicated a greater frequency of business and educational travel as the purpose of their travel. With regard to travel destinations, the greatest proportion of absolute innovators (40%) traveled to the Caribbean/Central America, which supports trends identified in the literature (National Tour Association, 2002). This suggests that distance and ease of travel may influence destination choices by innovators of this cohort with non-innovators and absolute innovators preferring closer destinations than external innovators.

External Innovators

Participants with a positive external innovation cluster centroid score and negative internal innovation centroid score generally indicated the second highest agreement with benefits related to international travel and frequency of participation in destination activities. Of the three clusters, the external innovators reported the most independent travel (68.8%) and the majority of external innovators (52.7%) traveled to Europe, which supports the findings of the National

Tour Association (2002). External innovation relates to the external environment and this cluster of external innovators may have a higher level of interest in the environment and sites of Europe for new experiences than the Caribbean/Central America.

Non-Innovators

Finally, the cluster with a negative cluster centroid scores for both internal and external innovation (non innovators), represented the cluster of participants who indicated the least agreement with benefits associated with international travel and least participation in destination activities. Interestingly, the non-innovator cluster had the highest mean number of international trips within the last year of the three clusters as well as highest participation in package tours and family groups. Related to traveling in a family group, non-innovators were also more likely to indicate that they visited friends and relatives during their last international travel compared to the other two clusters. Findings indicated that non-innovators travel with families and visit friends and relatives the most, which may mean that time with family is not considered a new or innovative experience, but rather obligatory. With regard to travel destinations, the greatest proportion of non-innovators (43.8%) traveled to the Caribbean/Central America, which may relate to geographic location being closer to home as well as considered less exotic and more common than other locations.

Discussion of Travel Benefits between Clusters

Participants responded with universally high scores to the two key variables (benefits of international travel and frequency of participation in destination activities). This is common in leisure research (Aslan, 2009; Lee, Graefe & Burns, 2007; Spiers & Walker, 2009) and is thought to reflect participants' perceived freedom of choice in leisure behaviors. In this instance, respondents chose to engage in international travel. This indicates that North Carolina Baby Boomers consider traveling internationally to be beneficial as well as demonstrated their high

levels of participation in destination activities. Although the mean scores were high, there was a difference between innovation clusters for the three key variables tested. The absolute innovators consistently gave higher mean scores and non-innovators responded with the lowest mean scores of the three clusters, which was inherent to the description of the three clusters of innovators. This suggests that North Carolina Baby Boomers are innovating during international travel, but there is a difference in degree between the absolute and non-innovators.

Perhaps the degree of innovation is not as relevant as whether Baby Boomers innovate or do not innovate during international travel. Although there *were* significant differences by cluster in 12 of the 20 benefits gained through international travel, they were limited to differences between absolute and non innovators. This may suggest that benefits are viewed similarly by absolute and external innovators. Another plausible factor is the amount of previous international experiences as evidenced by non-innovators who indicated a greater volume of international trips within the last year compared to individuals within the other two clusters. Perhaps the non-innovators' view that international travel was less beneficial than the other two clusters indicated may relate to lack of novelty. When one is familiar with international travel or perhaps specific destinations due to previous experiences, the experiences associated with travel may lose their novelty as indicated by non-innovators.

Overall, participants reported experiencing benefits of international travel in their last trip abroad that included interactions with others (i.e. "I enjoyed the companions", "I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return" and "It strengthened relationship"). This may indicate the importance of social context to this entire cohort (irrespective of innovation) in choosing international travel.

Benefits of international travel were significantly different between absolute and external innovators: “it was exciting”, “I enjoyed anticipating it”, “I felt relaxed”, and “I grew as a person”. In each instance, absolute and external innovators indicated agreement with each benefit statement and non-innovators indicated neutral sentiments. This suggests that absolute and external innovators consider excitement and relaxation as a benefit more than non-innovators. Perhaps, if one does not seek new experiences they are therefore less inclined to seek excitement and in turn prefer a calmer travel style. Another possibility is that absolute and external innovators’ desire for relaxation from their non-travel lifestyles that may be busier than non-innovators non-travel lives. Absolute and external innovators may seek reprieve from their innovator lifestyles outside of travel, which might be more exhausting than non-innovators daily lives.

Other benefits indicated positively by absolute and external innovators and not by non-innovators were planning and anticipating an international trip. This may reflect a more involved and eager traveler who wants to be “hands on” during the planning process compared to the non-innovators who disagreed with this benefit and may desire a hassle free, “hands off” approach to international travel. Finally, absolute innovators indicated “developing a skill” and “having an opportunity for self-expression” as benefits of international travel whereas non-innovators disagreed. This continues to support the evidence of absolute innovators seeking more opportunities both internal and external innovation during international travel compared to the non-innovators who travel more often but visit friends and family more often during their travels. Therefore, absolute innovators may view international travel as an opportunity to learn more about themselves through developing skills and expressing themselves whereas non-innovators view family travel not as an opportunity for innovation.

Discussion of the Frequency of Participation in Destination Activities by Cluster

North Carolina Baby Boomers indicated participation in many destination activities during their last travel abroad. The scale did not include many adventure or active travel activities to compare to the literature, but future studies may consider innovation style and level of activity. The overall sample mean indicated that taking pictures or filming was the activity participated in the most often by North Carolina Baby Boomers regardless of innovation style, which may be a result of heightened technology use through digital cameras, videos and blogs.

Specific to type of innovator for participation in destination activities, the same pattern emerged of absolute innovators with the highest level of participation and non-innovators with the least participation. Absolute and external innovators participated significantly more often in destination activities than non-innovators which may represent an interest in external innovation opportunities for both clusters of innovators such as sightseeing in big cities, visiting national parks or forests as well as dining in restaurants.

The only destination activity with higher non-innovator participation was visiting friends or family. Interestingly, the benefit item “I was expected to go by family” had the lowest mean score for non-innovators yet visiting friends and family was the destination activity participated in most by non-innovators. This may relate to non-innovators traveling internationally the most often of the three clusters. Perhaps family obligations contribute to more international travel of non-innovators and new experiences are not associated with one’s family.

The comparison of types of innovation and innovation clusters suggested that the experience of visiting a new destination would be the most important factor for external innovators whereas there are a variety of other new experiences both internal and external that absolute innovators value. Non-innovators have indicated that they rarely or never participate in the nine new experiences listed in the scale. This suggests that tourism operators offering

services to Baby Boomers traveling internationally may consider the level of interest in new experiences during international travel. As results indicate, the majority of participants (n=93) were considered external innovators and therefore were more involved in visiting places never visited before specifically within Europe compared to the other two innovator clusters.

Comparison to the Previous Study

Overall, the current study provided considerable support for the findings of the previous study with replication of factors and clusters in divergent populations of seniors. Although the current study considered Baby Boomers who had a younger mean age than the retirees in Israel, clusters determined by the new experiences scale were similar. Israeli participants traveled abroad more often in the previous year than North Carolina Baby Boomers which may be a result of geographic location and ease of accessing other countries from Israel. There were similarities between travel patterns of the three clusters of innovators such as non-innovators traveling the most of the three clusters and most often with families to visit friends and relatives.

When considering the benefits of international travel, participants from both Israel and North Carolina responded similarly. Although North Carolina Baby Boomers tended to indicate higher levels of agreement, both studies' participants indicated agreement with "I liked the trip" and disagreement with the "It was my duty" and "I was expected to go by my friends". Participants from both studies also indicated that they felt neutral towards "I was expected to go by family." This may be related to an emotional bond with family that leads participants to avoid giving a positive or negative opinion in both cultures. There may be cross-national difference in openness to agree with statements as North Carolina residents demonstrated by the higher mean scores from North Carolina participants. Although scores are generally high for

leisure related research, there may be cultural differences outside of the scope of this study that explain the differences in mean scores between studies.

The final portion of both studies included participation in destination activities, which also had similarities. North Carolina Baby Boomers reported “taking pictures or filming” often during their international travels whereas older adults in Israel indicated only rare participation in this activity. This may be related to the two year period of time between studies and the advancement of digital photography and ease of taking pictures or filming. It may not be surprising then that North Carolina Baby Boomers indicated agreement of the benefit of sharing stories upon return whereas Israeli participants did not share this view and therefore may not have enjoyed taking as many pictures while traveling. Another destination activity reported more often by North Carolina Baby Boomers than older adults in Israel was “getting to know local people”. Perhaps retirees in Israel had previous exposure to other cultures and more experiences traveling internationally as there are a wider variety of foreign countries closer to Israel than to the United States.

Findings from both studies suggested participation to some degree in four new experiences including “visiting new places”, “gaining new knowledge”, “meeting new people” and “being introduced to unfamiliar cultures”. Again, North Carolina Baby Boomers had higher overall participation percentages and mean scores compared to Israeli older adults. Only 12-23% reported not having experienced those four experiences at all among participants in Israel compared to only 0.70-4.10% of participants in North Carolina. This may be related to the difference in mean age between the two studies. Only 77-88% reported these experiences at least to some extent in Israel compared to 95.9 to 99.4% in North Carolina, which suggests more innovative experiences by North Carolina Baby Boomers. Participants in both studies indicated

“gaining a new ability or skill” as the most uncommon new experience during international travel. Perhaps participants in both studies do not view tourism as the environment for gaining new abilities or skills.

The similarities between North Carolina and Israel older travelers suggest tourists with similar involvement in new experiences may share participation in destination activities. The higher involvement in visiting friends and relatives by non-innovators may suggest that aging travelers do not engage in new experiences either in the external environment (i.e. external innovation) or learn something new about themselves (i.e. internal innovation) when visiting friends and relatives. This may also relate to the overall North Carolina sample’s neutral response to “I was expected to go by family” because family obligations are not viewed as opportunities for growth. This may suggest that older Israelis are continuing to participate in the activities as they age and so might North Carolina Baby Boomers. Another potential reason is that the benefits may decline while the frequency of participation continues, which implies that people may continue to travel as they age because it is what they have enjoyed earlier in life, but age dilutes the benefits.

Support for Innovation Theory

The current study provided considerable support for the new theory in gerontological literature, Innovation Theory (Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007). The current study repeated the assessment of international travel activities as a potential *growth mechanism* for self-preservation or self-reinvention later in life. Findings from the factor analysis of the new experiences in both studies indicated that the scale of ten new experiences might be divided into internal and external innovation, mirroring self-preservation and self-reinvention.

In addition to Innovation Theory, findings from this study may also support continuity theory, which identifies internal and external continuity. Since Innovation Theory expands on continuity theory with the addition of new experiences, the current study supports both theories. The factor analysis results of internal and external innovation mirror internal and external continuity with the addition of new experiences suggested by Innovation Theory. The *k*-means cluster further supports Innovation Theory by indicating participation in both internal and external innovation experiences. Future studies would benefit from incorporating a baseline measure to understand if the participants were regular travelers or if their last trip abroad was truly a new travel experience to expand on the differences between self-preservation and self-reinvention.

Although the mean age was the youngest for absolute innovators in the Israeli study, it was the oldest among the North Carolina Baby Boomers. Due to the differing age criteria for the two studies, North Carolina absolute innovators were younger than Israeli absolute innovators. This may suggest that an optimal age for the absolute innovator would be older than 54 and younger than 63.

Limitations

As a non-representative study, findings of this study may not be generalized to North Carolina Baby Boomers or Americans of this cohort. Although Innovation Theory was supported through this study and the clusters of innovators were the same as the previous study, there may be cultural differences outside the scope of this study. In order to be more representative, more time for data collection would allow for a larger data set for analysis. With a higher response rate through the electronic survey format, there may have been a bias towards participants with a higher tendency of innovation as evidenced through their computer literacy.

Approximately 71% of participants were born between 1946 and 1955, which indicates they are part of the older half of the Baby Boomer generation. Future research may want to seek a more even balance between older and younger baby boomers.

Concerning the adaption of the previous study, there were differences between the study methodologies. The previous study included international travel within the last year whereas this study attempted to take into consideration factors such as the economic crises and distance for international travel from the United States, which may have influenced possible participants' travel abroad. Thus, the researcher adjusted the criteria for participation to international travel during the last three years. Including the travel time extension, there were 55.3% of sample who traveled abroad within the last year. The previous study may have had a better response rate due to the methodology of telephoning potential participants and obtaining verbal confirmation of participation before sending paper surveys. This study could not repeat that methodology due to time and money constraints, which may have contributed to different participation rates.

The survey instrument remained as similar as possible to the previous study. However, due to the challenge of translating the instrument from Hebrew to American English, some questions were minimally adjusted. For example, the questions investigating the purpose and format of travel were changed to open coding rather than closed coding used in the previous study. The open-ended questions led to certain responses being unclear such as "cruise" appearing in both format and purpose of travel. It should also be noted that the scale assessing the benefits of international travel utilized items that were primarily positively worded and close-ended questions that did not allow respondents include other possible benefits in addition the items were self-defined and self-actualized by each respondent potentially creating varying responses. This may have created a bias towards a perception of positive benefits among

respondents. It may be argued that there are also negative outcomes to international travel, which were outside the scope of this study. Although there was an opportunity for participants to indicate open-ended responses, few took the opportunity. Finally, the dual data collection methodology created a potential for duplicate responses even though the questionnaire requested that participants complete only one questionnaire.

Implications for Future Research

This study supported the findings of the previous study as well as the use of Innovation Theory, which contributes to the growing research related to this new gerontological theory. There are still many more research questions to consider related to aging adults and new experiences during travel. Future studies may seek to consider varying the geographic scope, methodology and survey instrument to broaden findings from the current study. In response to the previous study, the current explored innovation outside of Israel. It would be beneficial to continue with this research focus to determine if two factors of innovation and three clusters of innovators continue to be supported outside of North Carolina. Research focusing on regions of the United States or the country as a whole would assist in broader conclusions. Although the current study altered the methodology from the previous study, the success of snowball sampling through email addresses using an electronic survey compared to the mail survey methodology suggests future research with this cohort may have similar success due to the ease of electronic surveys and communication through email. As stated in the limitations, this may exclude non-email savvy participants, but may also contribute to a higher response rate. Finally, this study relied on mostly closed-ended quantitative items and future research may benefit from qualitative research to expand on the understanding of motivation for new experiences related to self-reinvention and self-preservation. Certain questions such as if participants were born outside of

the United States may not be applicable in future research considering Baby Boomers as the cohort is specific to people born in the United States between 1946 and 1964. It is also suggested that future research consider establishing an anchor for the participant's current level of overall innovation to gain a better understanding of innovation during travel.

In addition to methodology, future studies should address other research questions. Innovation Theory related to travel is not limited to international trips; therefore, future research should examine domestic travel of aging adults as cost and distance associated with international travel may limit participation. Results of the current study indicated that "taking pictures or filming" was the most the destination activity participated in most often by participants. Another possible research question to explore in future studies is the role of technology during travel such as the use of travel blogs and use of social media in planning travel as well as during travel experiences for this cohort compared to younger cohorts.

This study focused on the Baby Boomer cohort whereas the previous study considered Israeli retirees. Future studies may consider both chronological age and retirement status, but with a potential shift in Baby Boomers working longer, another alternative for determining age is cognitive age. Barrak and Schiffman, (1987) suggest the age one feels rather than one's year since birth as an alternative age indicator. Considerations outside of the Baby Boomer cohort could include new experiences of the Silent Generation related to travel, as well as a longitudinal study of Millennials as they age to expand the literature on Innovation Theory and travel throughout the lifespan.

According to Nimrod, Janke and Kleiber (2009) in a cross-national study of retirees and leisure, U.S. respondents continued to innovate after retirement in leisure activities whereas Israeli respondents did not. If Americans are more inclined to continue innovating after

retirement (following pre-retirement patterns), then the current study may suggest that participation in new experiences may continue as Baby Boomers age. Therefore, findings from this study and Innovation Theory related to Continuity Theory (Atchley, 1989) suggest that North Carolina Baby Boomers may continue to innovate through travel as they age. This suggests future studies should explore how Baby Boomers, with previous travel experiences, continue to seek new leisure related travel experiences.

In addition to statistical significance, contribution to the gerontology literature and suggestions for future research, there is also immediate practical applicability to the tourism industry.

Application to Tourism

Providers of international tourism experiences may benefit from the findings of the current study. Previous researchers (Lehto et al, 2008; Prideaux & Glover, 2008) suggest that Baby Boomers' travel behaviors are different from the previous cohort and current tourism products and services will not be applicable for this emerging segment of the tourism market, which findings from the current study support. Although the conclusions from this study may not be generalized, it provides additional support that Baby Boomers are eager for new experiences as they age. Tourism professionals who are seeking to provide travel opportunities to this cohort may benefit by understanding that new experiences are sought by this cohort as they age.

Tourism providers must understand that although Baby Boomers indicated innovation in international travels that they do not all innovate to the same degree as evidenced in this study by three styles of innovation. The largest of the three innovator styles, external innovators, were seeking new environments and tend to travel to Europe whereas the smallest innovator style,

non-innovators, traveled with family and did not participate in as many new experiences as the other two groups. Assuming Baby Boomers desire new experiences, a marketing strategy that includes new experiences shared with family and friends may increase innovation among non-innovators. Absolute innovators potentially have the easiest travel style to market because they seek both internal and external innovation in their international travel, which include new environments as well as opportunities for self-discovery. Therefore, international travel with a focus on visiting friends and family may attract more non-innovators and opportunities to explore exotic destinations might be appealing to external innovators. International trips that allow for both internal and external innovation would allow absolute innovators to become involved as they are inclined.

The tourism industry can learn from the overall findings of this study related to benefits sought and participation in destination activities by this cohort. In particular, some of the benefits sought by Baby Boomer participants during their last trip abroad included taking pictures or filming as well as getting to know local people, which could relate to tourism experiences provided in the tourism industry. According to this study, the Baby Boomer cohort of travelers surveyed were more inclined to visit historical sites and visiting museums/galleries than visiting health spas, seeing plays/concerts or spectacular sporting events which would assist in informing tourism providers of which markets to focus their efforts.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify the benefits North Carolina Baby Boomers gain from new experiences during international travel. Using Innovation Theory as its foundation, the current study of North Carolina Baby Boomers supported findings of the previous study of retirees living in Israel. The new experiences scale, included in both studies, resulted in two

distinct types of innovation (external and internal) while participants of both studies were effectively clustered into three types of innovation (absolute, external and non). In addition, there were similarities between the three types of innovators cross-nationally in the benefits gained as well as the frequency of participation in destination activities. With more than 90 percent of North Carolina Baby Boomers reporting new experiences during their last international trip, results indicate that tourism is a potential opportunity for new experiences later in life. Although the degrees of innovation may not be as pertinent as the desire for new experiences later in life, tourism providers may consider results in providing innovative experiences for this cohort as they age.

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APPENDIX A: IRB Approval



University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board
East Carolina University • Brody School of Medicine
600 Moye Boulevard • Old Health Sciences Library, Room 1L-09 • Greenville, NC 27834
Office 252-744-2914 • Fax 252-744-2284 • www.ecu.edu/irb
Chair and Director of Biomedical IRB: L. Wiley Nifong, MD
Chair and Director of Behavioral and Social Science IRB: Susan L. McCammon, PhD

TO: Jill Naar, BA, BS, Dept of Recreation & Leisure Studies, Carol Belk Building, Rm. 2404 Curry Court
FROM: UMCIRB *LN*
DATE: October 21, 2009
RE: Human Research Activities Determined to Meet Exempt Criteria
TITLE: "International Tourism Later in Life: Innovation Theory Related to Benefits Gained"

UMCIRB #09-0729

This research study has undergone IRB review on 10.15.09. It is the determination of the IRB Chairperson (or designee) that these activities meet the criteria set forth in the federal regulations for exemption from 45 CFR 46 Subpart A. This human research activity meets the criteria for an exempt status because it is a research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects and any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this **unfunded** study **no more than minimal risk**. This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any changes must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review prior to implementation to allow determination that proposed changes do not impact the activities eligibility for exempt status. Should it found that a proposed change does require more substantive review, you will be notified in writing within five business days.

The following items were reviewed in determination exempt certification:

- Internal Processing Form Exempt Application (dated 10.6.09)
- Survey inclusive of informed consent

It was furthermore determined that the reviewer does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

The UMCIRB applies 45 CFR 46, Subparts A-D, to all research reviewed by the UMCIRB regardless of the funding source. 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56 are applied to all research studies that fall under the purview of Food and Drug Administration regulations. The UMCIRB follows applicable International Conference on Harmonisation Good Clinical Practice guidelines.

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research. The purpose of this study is to understand the influence of new experiences on North Carolina Baby Boomers' international travels. Your responses will remain **confidential**, which means we will not be sharing your personal answers with anyone. Your participation in this study is **voluntary** therefore you may choose not to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable and you may stop at any time. However, we would appreciate it if you could complete the questionnaire as much as possible. Please answer as **honestly** as possible-there is no right or wrong answer. If at any time you have questions, please contact Jill Naar at 252-737-1498, by email jjn1016@ecu.edu or Dr. Kindal Shores at 252-328-5649. Please only complete this questionnaire once. Thank you again for your interest.

Have you traveled internationally in the last three years?

No Yes Date of most recent travel abroad Month_____

Year_____

If yes, continue to part 1

If no, continue to part 5.

Part 1

Which country/countries did you visit on **your last trip** abroad?

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

On your last international trip, how many **days** did you stay abroad? _____

What was the **purpose** of your last trip abroad (vacation, visiting friends/relatives, etc.)?

How would you describe the **format** (on your own, with a group, package deal, etc.) of your last trip abroad?

Did you have travel companions?

(Not including people in an organized group or people you met on the trip)

- a. Did not have any companions
- b. Had one companion
- c. Had _____ companions

Who were your companions? (You can mark more than one choice)

- a. Spouse/partner
 - b. Sons/daughters
 - c. Grandsons/granddaughters
 - d. Other family member(s)
 - e. Friend/Friends
 - f. People in the group tour
 - g. Other (please specify)
-

Part 2

In your last trip abroad, how often were you engaged in the following activities?

Please circle your responses 1-Never 2-Rarely 3-Sometimes 4-Often 5-Very often.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Sightseeing in big cities	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting small towns and villages	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting national parks or forests	1	2	3	4	5
Sunbathing or other beach activities	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting historical sites or archeological sites	1	2	3	4	5
Walking or riding bicycles on nature trails	1	2	3	4	5
Attending local festivals	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting health spas	1	2	3	4	5
Physical activities (exercising, gyms or ball games)	1	2	3	4	5
Getting to know local people	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting friends or relatives	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping	1	2	3	4	5
Sitting in coffee shops	1	2	3	4	5

Dining in restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting museums/galleries	1	2	3	4	5
Seeing plays or concerts	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting night clubs	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting amusement park or theme park	1	2	3	4	5
Attending spectacular sporting events	1	2	3	4	5
Taking cruises	1	2	3	4	5
Casino/other gambling	1	2	3	4	5
Table games such as cards, chess or bridge	1	2	3	4	5
Taking pictures or filming	1	2	3	4	5
Reading books, magazines, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
Watching television	1	2	3	4	5
Religious/spiritual activities	1	2	3	4	5
Did you participate in any other activities not listed? If yes, please specify and list to what degree you participated 5 being the most participation					
	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

Part 3

The following list includes various statements expressed by people following their travels. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that each statement reflects how **you felt** about your last travel abroad.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I liked the trip	1	2	3	4	5	9
I enjoyed the companions	1	2	3	4	5	9
I felt relaxed	1	2	3	4	5	9

It strengthened relationships	1	2	3	4	5	9
I grew as a person	1	2	3	4	5	9
It was restful	1	2	3	4	5	9
It was exciting	1	2	3	4	5	9
I had an opportunity for self expression	1	2	3	4	5	9
It was good for my health	1	2	3	4	5	9
I enjoyed planning it	1	2	3	4	5	9
It was active	1	2	3	4	5	9
I liked developing a skill	1	2	3	4	5	9
I belonged	1	2	3	4	5	9
I liked being of help to others	1	2	3	4	5	9
I enjoyed anticipating it	1	2	3	4	5	9
I was expected to go by my family	1	2	3	4	5	9
It was my duty	1	2	3	4	5	9
I liked the competition	1	2	3	4	5	9
I was expected to go by my friends	1	2	3	4	5	9
I enjoyed sharing my stories with others upon return	1	2	3	4	5	9

Part 4

To what extent were you involved in the following experiences during your last trip abroad?

(1 being not at all and 5 being very often)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Visiting places never visited before	1	2	3	4	5
Participating in an activity never taken before	1	2	3	4	5

Being introduced to unfamiliar culture	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting new people	1	2	3	4	5
Gaining new knowledge or information	1	2	3	4	5
Gaining new ability or skill	1	2	3	4	5
Trying new food	1	2	3	4	5
Learning something new about yourself	1	2	3	4	5
Learning something new about relationships in your life	1	2	3	4	5
Learning something new about life in general	1	2	3	4	5
Please list any other new experience					
	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

When considering the activities you participated in or any new experiences you had during your international travels, is there anything else that you would consider a benefit? Please explain.

Part 5

Now we have a few background questions. Please circle or fill in where appropriate.

Are you: Male Female

Year of Birth _____

Are you retired? Yes No

Does your spouse/partner work? Yes No N/A

Were you born outside of the United States? Yes No

 If yes, where? _____

In which county of North Carolina do you currently reside? _____

How many times did you travel **within North Carolina** during the last year? ____

How many times did you travel **within the United States** (not NC) during the last year?

How many times did you **travel abroad** last year including your most recent trip? ____

Which **ONE** do you prefer? NC Travel Domestic Travel International Travel

What is your highest level of education?

Less than HS HS Diploma Some College College degree Advanced Degree

Marital status

Single Married/Partner Widowed

Divorced/separated

Do you have children/grandchildren (if yes how many)?

No children #_____ children No grandchildren #_____ grandchildren

How would you rate your health at the present time?

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

The median household income of North Carolina Baby Boomers is \$52,852. Would you say that your household income including social security, salary, other benefits, is:

Much less Less Similar Slightly above A lot above

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview about your travel interests?

Yes No

If yes, please provide email and/or phone

number_____

Please use the postage paid reply envelope to return completed surveys.

☺ Thank you for your time and participation ☺

APPENDIX C: Call for participants

Jill Naar, a graduate student within the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at East Carolina University, is writing her master's thesis on International Travel of North Carolina Baby Boomers. With the growing interest related to tourism and Baby Boomers, she is considering their innovative experiences during international travel. She is seeking participation of anyone born between 1946 and 1964 who has traveled outside of the United States within the last 3 years to provide valuable information. She has an electronic survey that takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. If interested or if you know of anyone else who may be interested, please email ecuboomertravel@hotmail.com with (Organization Name) as the subject line and Jill Naar will send you the survey link. Thank you for your time and consideration.

