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Motivation of Tourism Participants

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Abstract

The paper deals with tourists' motivation and application of existing theoretical models on motivation in rural tourism. The authors examine why tourists travel and what is the main motivation in choosing their destinations. The primary drivers for travelling are needs to escape from daily routine, workplace, but also social needs such as meeting other people, experiencing something unique or unusual. The Maslow's 5-stage theory on motivation to satisfy five basic human needs, extended by cognitive, aesthetic and self-actualization needs, is applied for the analysis of tourists' needs. The authors also apply other motivation models in tourism, such as Plog's psychographic or Iso Ahola's model of the social psychology of tourism. The paper brings practical examples of motivation using the Iso Ahola's model of the social psychology of tourism.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is the practice of traveling for pleasure, education or business. Tourism is also about tourist's personality, attitudes, values and life style. It incorporates new experience, meeting people, places, traditions, cultures. This is closely linked to psychology, which actually examines motivation for travelling, individual needs and satisfaction. Tourist's motivation and behavior are major factors for competent authorities to define forms of communication with clients or for business support. Without profound knowledge and understanding of tourists it is impossible to mitigate or prevent damages in destinations. In fact, uncontrolled tourism can lead to social conflicts (e.g. Deery, Jago and Fredline, 2011; Haley, Snaith and Miller, 2005). Research of tourist's motivation has a long history. Some early works include Plog (1974), Dann (1977), Crompton (1979), Iso Ahola (1982), Beard and Ragheb (1980, 1983), Viridi and Traini (1990), Baloglu and Uysal (1996) etc. Some projects were focused on "push and pull" factors in connection with tourists' motivation, e.g. Dann (1981), Uysal and Jurovski (1994), Baloglu and

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Uysal (1996), Klenosky (2002), Snepenger et al. (2006), Biswas (2008). As well as rural tourism has been a popular topic for many kind of research, e.g. rural tourism impact on local development (Ancuta et al., 2011), sustainable principles of rural tourism development (Šimková, 2013), or segmentation of rural tourists (e.g. Cai and Li, 2009; Pesonen, 2012; Molera and Abaladejo, 2007).

2. Material and methods

The paper deals with tourists' motivation and application of existing theoretical models on motivation in rural tourism. Motivation as an internal drive that guides a person's behavior and decision making has been examined in relation to work, sport, travel and other leisure time activities. Motivational research usually includes Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954) and the Iso Ahola's motivation model (Iso Ahola, 1982). The push-pull theory is another approach that often complements Iso Ahola's model (Crompton, 1979). Crompton and McKay (1997) present: push factors (internal motives) as escaping motives and pull factors (external stimulus) as seeking motives. The main objective of the paper is, on the basis of the Iso Ahola's model, to find out main tourists' motives for traveling. Results of the paper have been prepared upon strategic quantitative research as well as analysis of publicly available literature.

In this analysis the authors apply the Maslow's 5-stage theory on motivation to satisfy five basic human needs. It is extended by cognitive and aesthetic needs. Indispensable needs (so called low category needs) in rural tourism are defined. Additionally, cognitive needs are described, followed by aesthetic needs. The authors characterize also other motivation theories, such as Plog's psychographic. This theory classifies tourists along their personal characteristics, life-style and personal values, to psychocentrics at one extreme to the allocentrics at the other (Plog, 1974). Furthermore, the authors apply the Iso Ahola's model of the social psychology of tourism. This model, which is built on push-pull effect, asserts that personal escape, personal seeking, interpersonal escape, and interpersonal seeking motivate tourism and recreation. These main elements (escape and reward) can combine depending on the particular situation and tourists' goals (Iso Ahola, 1982).

The research has been based on a survey performed at the beginning of 2014. The survey was done by direct questioning of 160 respondents (students from the University of Hradec Králové). In order to determine the motivational factors for participation in tourism the Iso Ahola's model was used. Questionnaire contained 15 questions – except of 3 identification questions the main questions were divided into two dimensions – escaping and seeking and further personal and interpersonal dimensions. Research results are presented in chapter 4.

3. Application of the motivation theories into rural tourism practice

3.1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs in connection with rural tourism

Maslow's hierarchy of needs suggests that people are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other. In this paper the Maslow's 5-stage theory on motivation, extended by cognitive and aesthetic needs (Zelenka and Pásková, 2012), is applied to the condition of rural areas.

Level 1: **Physiological needs**: Every tourism destination must meet two basic needs – physiological needs and safety. In tourism, the physiological needs are connected to gastronomy and accommodation. In rural tourism, the supply side is usually concentrated on food and customs adherent to the particular region or village. It can be represented by products such as fruit, vegetables, home-made bread, cakes, mushroom specialties, herbal tea, milk, potatoes, or organic bio-products with distinctive traits in Czech cuisine, habits and traditions.

Level 2: **Safety needs** – this is a reflection of location's character, social life, risk of undesired pathological characters. Tourists' safety, calm and peace are the main requirements of tourist in rural areas. Calm and peace are prerequisites on physical and mental nursing. Entrepreneurs in rural tourism do not provide just comfortable accommodation or tasteful food. Their business is based on friendly atmosphere, safety, serenity, and family peace, traditions and customs of their region, on responsible relation to natural and human surrounding.

Level 3 and 4: **Social needs** – such as being part of a particular group. These are needs of esteem connected with self-esteem or with esteem of others. In case of rural tourism personality, hospitality, uniqueness and hosts' courtesy are required. Courage and passion, but also responsibility, devotion and discretion belong to any kind of business. For a businessman's personality in rural tourism, typical features include diligence, accuracy, dedication, creativity, persistence, but also managerial and organizing skills, ability to communicate with and treat people.

Dispensable needs (so called high category needs – “metaneeds”): Level 5 and 6: Cognitive and aesthetic needs: Cognitive needs are described such as knowledge and understanding local life-style, heritage and traditions, or aesthetic needs, such as appreciation and search for beauty, balance and form. Level 7: Self actualization needs (or self realization needs) are on the top of the Maslow’s hierarchy. These refer to the need for personal cultivation, needs realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. In terms of rural tourism, the level of self realization is dependent on a particular rural locality, structure and quality of tourism services. No doubt these needs can also have sustainable features of tourism. These are for example “Heritage Trails”, “Moravian Wine Trails”, beer trails or horse trails.

3.2. Plog’s psychographic tourists’ profile

For tourist classification can be used Plog’s psychographic motivation theory. This theory classifies tourists along their personal characteristics, life-style and personal values, to psychocentrics at one extreme to the allocentrics at the other. Psychocentrics are represented by people concerned on their own affairs, i.e. non-adventurous visitors, who often require standard services, while allocentrics are independent tourists seeking for adventure or experience. Between these two extremes are midcentrics. Midcentrics actually represent majority of tourists, and these are people who occupy borders with near psychocentrics and near allocentrics. These are tourists relatively flexible in their needs (Plog, 1974). As already mentioned, tourists in rural areas require authentic pristine rural locality with “romantic” and “traditional” life. On the other hand they are usually easy going people, who value low prices for products, or seek activities outside in beautiful landscapes and nature (e.g. Pesonen, 2012). Study by Cai and Li (2009) presents several similarities for rural tourists: they are motivated by opportunities to explore nature, participate in outdoor activities, search for peace and quiet, family atmosphere.

3.3. Iso Ahola’s model of the social psychology of tourism

Iso Ahola performed research on a two-dimensional leisure motivation theory: escaping (everyday environments, routine, everyday problems, familiar environments, tension, stress and appeal of the new situation), seeking (seeking some rewards). According to Iso Ahola (1982), both these elements have personal and interpersonal components. The model covers 4 aspects of the needs according to these main elements (escaping and seeking): escaping personal environment, escaping interpersonal environment, seeking intrinsic personal rewards, seeking intrinsic interpersonal rewards. Iso Ahola’s model of the social psychology of tourism was applied in our questionnaire survey, results of which are presented in the following chapter.

4. Research and results

The Iso Ahola’s model of the social psychology of tourism was used for the analysis of main motives for travelling and selection of a desired destination. Our questionnaire contained scale items (12 items that characterize the four motivation dimensions), according to Snepenger et al. (2006). Responses were marked according to their weight (5 – highest weight, 1 – least weight) – see Table 1. All answers were then summarized and averaged. Responses were furthermore classified for students from tourism degree programs and social degree programs, and for rural tourism and international tourism (see Table 2 and Figure 1).

From the results we can conclude that motivation dimension of seeking prevails in both rural tourism as well as international form of tourism (in case of international tourism it is even higher). The highest grade was given to “seeking personal rewards”, which actually says that the main motives of UHK students are telling others about their new experience, inspiration, happiness, etc. The second motivational dimension is “escaping personal environments” esp. items “to have a change from my everyday life” or “to get away from normal environment”. It corresponds with the result of Snepenger et al. (2006). In rural tourism the second motivation dimension is “seeking interpersonal rewards” – esp. motivational factors as meeting new people and friends. These are then followed by escaping (escaping personal or interpersonal environments).

Table 1. Sample of scale items used in the questionnaire

		1	2	3	4	5
Escaping personal environments (EPE)						
EPE 1	To get away from normal environment					
EPE 2	To have a change from everyday life					
EPE 3	To overcome a bad mood					
Escaping interpersonal environments (EIE)						
EIE 1	To avoid people who annoy me					
EIE 2	To get away from a stressful environment					
EIE 3	To avoid interactions with others					
Seeking personal rewards (SPR)						
SPR 1	To tell others about my experiences					
SPR 2	To feel good about myself					
SPR 3	To experience new things by myself					
Seeking interpersonal rewards (SIR)						
SIR 1	To be with people of similar interests					
SIR 2	To bring friends					
SIR 3	To meet new people					

Source: Modified according to Snepenger et al. (2006)

Table 2. Students' motivational dimensions for rural and international tourism (according to the study programmes)

	Rural tourism	International tourism	Average
Escaping personal environments (EPE)			
Students of tourism degree programmes	3,33	3,63	3,48
Students of social degree programmes	3,44	4,16	3,80
Average EPE	3,39	3,90	3,65
Escaping interpersonal environments (EIE)			
Students of tourism degree programmes	2,58	2,80	2,69
Students of social degree programmes	2,87	3,00	2,94
Average EIE	2,73	2,91	2,82
Seeking personal rewards (SPR)			
Students of tourism degree programmes	3,96	3,98	3,97
Students of social degree programmes	3,59	4,60	4,10
Average SPR	3,78	4,29	4,04
Seeking interpersonal rewards (SIR)			
Students of tourism degree programmes	3,42	3,84	3,63
Students of social degree programmes	3,41	3,65	3,53
Average SIR	3,42	3,75	3,59

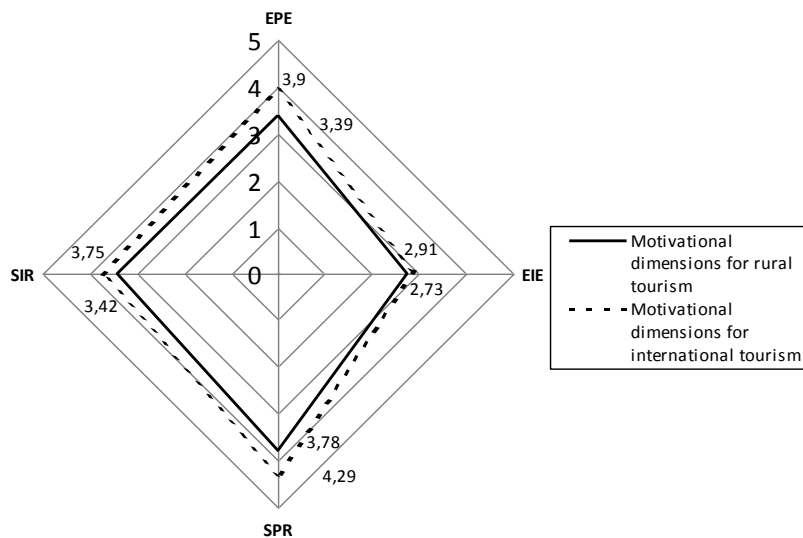


Fig. 1. Students' motivational dimensions for rural and international tourism (average values)

Scale items “seeking” connected with pull factors that attract tourists to travel. Tourists seek some rewards, some reinforcement. In rural tourism it can be this motivation dimension: *seeking rewards* (fresh air, freedom, calm, unspoiled nature, traditional rural life, authentic experience, adventure, enjoyment, relaxation etc). Escaping in connection with rural tourism means: *escaping from* reality (from technological environments, computer games, social nets, urbanized environment, noise etc.).

5. Conclusion

In general, psychology and psychology research should have its place in tourism practice. But in case of rural tourism, most of them are small or medium size businesses (mostly small farms or family businesses). Their management, however, is focused on running their daily business (in changing business environment and legislation), rather than on the application psychology in practice. Authors conclude that despite of huge benefits of psychological and sociological models in tourism as general, in rural tourism practice it often fail. This is primarily due to the following reasons: analyses are based on a population mean, respondents are viewed as unique individuals, selected by researches, there are differences between thoughts and reality, i.e. what individuals dream of and what they would do in real life (desired demand v. realized demand), motivation of tourists often conflict with other barriers (economical, stress, lack of free time, etc.). In spite of these shortcomings it's important to know the motives of tourists because they drive for tourist behavior. Furthermore, motivation factors may serve for segmenting of the tourists.

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