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Kacie R. Lorensen

Concordia University, St. Paul, lorensok@csp.edu

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Traveling Abroad: Motivations and Factors

Kacie Lorenson

Concordia University, St. Paul

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Kim Flottesmesch

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ABSTRACT

This study examines motivations, factors and influences for individuals either traveling alone, with others they know, or with a group travel company. The method used was a self-administered survey that had a total of 17 questions. There were 141 individuals who completed the survey. Once the data was gathered a chi-squared test was used to understand if there is a difference in factors to be included in a tour, in motivations desired for individuals traveling and in influences that affected individual's decisions in traveling. Once the test statistic was performed and analyzed, the study was able to conclude if there was a difference in factors, motivations, and influences and their ranking.

INTRODUCTION

Traveling is becoming more and more relevant as the young, middle aged and elders are participating in travel. People are traveling more than in the past. People are starting to travel with nobody they know or even completely by themselves. Individuals still enjoy traveling with people they know but if the schedules don't match up, it won't stop individuals from traveling.

Group travel seems to be the new way of traveling. Individuals can either go by themselves or with friends. When travelers end up booking a trip through a company they are usually traveling with others around their same age. This has become very trendy over the past few years as people can book these trips with friends or go without knowing anyone and make new friends.

When people book these trips, the company plans the entire trip for them. The company books the flights, an itinerary that has tours and different activities, and often times they have a tour consultant and tour guide. When the company makes the itinerary they set time aside for

people to explore on their own. This is because they know individuals want some down time to do what they want.

This trend is significant because there seems to be new outside forces, such as motivations or factors, that are influencing individuals to book a trip with a travel company especially if they are going without knowing anyone. This research looks at what factors and motivations influence travel behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are a number of reasons why individuals travel domestically and internationally. In some instances, the opportunity to study abroad and fully immerse in a different culture is enticing. For others, traveling to learn a language, develop intercultural awareness and skills, on to travel to simply explore the beauty of the world is the goal. There has been current research that has explored the various aspects to travel in depth.

Motivations for Travel

Motivations for traveling can vary and depends on the person. People have different backgrounds and experiences than one another which gives them different motivations. Five distinct motivations throughout the studies are experience, socialization, self-esteem, relaxation and escape.

The first and most important motivation is experience. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found that women are motivated to experience a variety of things. An example of the different experiences that Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found are experiencing different cultures and ways of life, to help understand how others live across the world, to be able to experience or see things that individuals don't normally see, to satisfy a dream of visiting a place that one has

always wanted to see, to attend cultural events and finally to just experience travel itself. People, especially women want to experience something different that allows them to get outside of their comfort zone. In Chiang and Jogaratnam's study, the mean of the motivation ranking for experience was 3.75 out of 5 which was the highest of any other category motivation within the study (2006). By traveling, individuals are able to experience a myriad of opportunities that otherwise they would not be able to had they not traveled.

The next most important motivation for women that Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found was the motivation of socialization. Individual women want to travel because it allows them to have stories to tell when they come back, to be able to meet new people with similar interests, to find a romantic partner, and to have fun or do things that are exciting. One primary finding is individuals are not really wanting to travel but to come back to be able to tell others about their personal traveling stories. However, there still are some motivations such as to actually meet people with similar interests during the trip instead of just telling stories afterwards. Jang and Wu (2006) also found that socialization was a motivation for travelers, however Jang and Wu (2006) were not looking at women but Taiwanese seniors. His study found, within the motivation of socialization, seniors wanted to visit places where their family is from, to meet new people and to just be able to socialize with friends and family. The biggest difference between the two studies is that Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found that individual women were wanting to socialize more after the trip than with people on the trip. Jang and Wu (2006) found that the seniors were solely wanting to socialize with other people while traveling. Lastly, Wong, Law and Zhao (2017) also found socialization to be a motivation for travel but the study was on outbound travelers of Hong Kong residents. Despite the variety of backgrounds and experiences one can conclude that socialization is a motivation for most individuals wanting to travel.

Another motivation for traveling is self-esteem or ego-enhancement. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006), Jang and Wu (2006), and Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996) found self-esteem to be a motivation for traveling. However, when looking at self-esteem Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) have a different idea of self-esteem than both Jang and Wu (2006) and Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996) who had surveyed Australians. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found the motivation of self-esteem boosts when women have luxury accommodations from having all their needs taken care of, to the food and the comfort of where they are staying. Conversely, both Jang and Wu (2006) and Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996) studies found it is more related to telling others stories after the trip and in becoming the story teller, it helps with gaining their self-esteem. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) grouped this idea of storytelling after the trip in the motivation of socialization instead of self-esteem or ego-enhancement.

Relaxation was another motivation multiple studies found that individuals seek when traveling. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) found relaxing was an important motivation as individuals enjoy to not have to meet deadlines for a time period, to be stress free and to be able to do absolutely nothing. Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996) found relaxation to also be a motivation. Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996) came to the conclusion that individuals want to be able to do nothing and have the luxury to be able to relax. Wong, Law and Zhao (2017), reached a similar conclusion that the motivation of relaxation was present as individuals are busy and need time away to relax and reenergize themselves. Lastly, Jang and Wu (2006) found that the Taiwanese seniors want to do nothing and slow life down. All four of these studies discussing motivations believe that relaxation is a motive to travel, thus one can generalize that relaxation is such a motivation for most individuals.

Finally, the last motivation found to be important was escape. Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006), found escape was the least important motivation but was still important because women want to be able to get out alone and to be able to get away from pressures and responsibilities for some time. Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang, and Oleary (1996), found escape is a motivation because individuals want to be able to get away from the demands at home and the busy work life. The last study that found escape an important motivation was Wong, Law, and Zhao (2017). The study found that Hong Kong residents want to be able to get away for some time and not worry about anything. These studies, all indicate escape as a motivation, it may not be the most important, but still a valid motivation. It would seem beneficial to conclude escape as a motivation for most travelers because within these studies there are a variety of backgrounds that yielded similar results.

All of these studies related to traveler's motivations have indicated that there are specific reasons for individuals wanting to travel. Some motivations are more important than others but at least a few are needed to encourage individuals to travel. If no such motivations exist, travel would be unlikely.

Learning Intercultural Skills Through Travel

Developing intercultural skills when traveling may not be a direct motivation but most often travelers learn much more than they anticipate (Roberson, 2016). Whether an individual is traveling just for fun, to study abroad, in a group, or for work there is so much more learning done during travel than the individual expects. Roberson (2016) found when individuals travel they learn how to travel, about themselves which is more about self-discovery, the world, their home and trust. Roberson (2016) argues that individuals who travel internationally are more

likely to be successful in a professional career as the individual would have more experience and knowledge that one can't get by reading a textbook.

Mody, Gordon, Lehto, and Alder (2017) found there are multiple intercultural benefits from being abroad. For example, immersing an individual into a different culture allows the individual to learn about the culture and traditions. It would also help the individual be more cultural sensitive. Individuals usually do not understand a different culture from the one they grew up in. It is very challenging to learn, even when studying out of a textbook. Immersing oneself into a different culture than the one they have known all their life will help individuals understand an alternate culture and will learn more than anticipated. Similarly, Doyle, Gendall, Meyer, Hoek, Tait, McKenzie, and Looiparg (2009) found studying abroad exposes one to a new culture and possibly a new language which helps the person to become more culturally sensitive.

Gmelch (1997) looked at study abroad students and found that students are more likely to be interested in learning about cultures if the students initiate the travel. One thing that Gmelch (1997) concluded is universities and schools should be encouraging independent travel because organized group travel does not have the same impacts. Students or individuals who travel alone to a foreign country learn so much more intercultural skills that allows for greater personal development and growth. When students travel together or go in groups they tend to conform with each other and not individually doing what they truly wish to do therefore, are not learning as much.

Intercultural competence is an important skill to have and individuals need to develop these sets of skills at some point or another. The studies done have displayed traveling and immersing an individual in another culture, either by traveling or studying abroad is a good way to learn intercultural competence.

Senior Citizens Traveling

As individuals get older, they retire and have more time. Some senior citizens really enjoy traveling and discovering the world. Researchers have studied why senior citizens decide to travel and if such travel has an impact on their happiness or well-being.

Jang and Wu (2006) discovered that senior citizens have different kinds of motivations or influences based on the individual. One of the top ranked motivations was curiosity. Senior citizens are curious about the world. For example, seniors want to see things that are out of the ordinary, or want to understand how other parts of the world live. Seniors believe these things to be very interesting and are curious about them. Jang and Wu (2006) found that other motivations that senior citizens have when traveling are knowledge seeking, ego-enhancement, relaxation, socialization, and self-esteem. Knowledge seeking is the most important motivation to senior citizens and curiosity would fall right under that category. However, though these are important motivations, not all seniors like to travel far. Zimmer, Brayley and Searle (1995) discovered that some senior citizens like to limit travel. In fact, some will only travel to go see their families or relatives. This may be due to financial conditions, their personal health, age and perhaps, even their educational background decision.

Sometimes senior citizens who travel seem to have a better physical well-being than those who do not. Milman (1998) studied this and surprisingly found there was no direct impact of traveling and senior citizens' well-being. However, Milman (1998) concluded this could be for other reasons such as the individual's lifestyle or what they have going on around them at the time. There are many different variables that could impact the individual. The travelers for the most part seem to be very satisfied and are likely to travel again within the next three years.

Travel Behavior

Pizam, Jeong, Reichel, Boemmel, Lusson, Steynberg,...Montmany (2004) found that an individual's travel behavior is influenced by the psychological characteristics of their risk-taking and sensation seeking (RSS) behavior. Those who resulted in a high RSS index score enjoyed more outdoor high energy activities and are much more spontaneous. Those who scored low enjoyed more indoor leisure activities. Based on the score of the RSS index, individuals will be able to plan trip activities that are best suited for their personality.

Hyde and Lawson (2003) looked at independent travel motivations and decision making in the travel process. They discovered that the individuals who put more research and work into their travel planning tended to be married couples or families while those who didn't were more likely to be going individually. Independent travel behavior is much different than those who travel with others, as Hyde and Lawson (2003) found independent travelers experience an evolving itinerary, are more willing to take risks and have the desire to experience the unplanned. This is very different from those who travel with others because consideration and advance planning is needed to ensure both travelers are on the same page.

Students who are studying abroad have different daily routines than they normally would have if they were back at home. Gmelch (1997) discovered, usually when students are traveling abroad they are touring in groups, traveling frequently to different locations, not staying in one spot more than two days, have spur of the moment decisions on where to go next and usually don't have much contact with locals. Through the students' travels, one gains personal development and understanding of another culture and sometimes another language. As the program went on the students needed less as their needs were being fulfilled with what they had learned through their earlier travel experiences.

In conclusion, traveling is becoming a bigger and bigger industry in the world. According to Chiang and Jogaratnam (2006) international tourism reached an all-time record of 760 million in 2004. It is also estimated that about 25% of United States travelers have taken vacations by themselves and 47% of them are female (2006). There are also travel companies that organize an entire trip and all the individual has to do is pay for the trip. The company will take care of their flights, accommodations, the itinerary, and more. Travelers can go by themselves without knowing anyone and travel with the group or they can book the trip with friends to join. This is becoming more attractive to people because individuals at all ages are wanting to travel for different reasons.

JUSTIFICATION

When deciding to travel individuals and groups have many factors, motivations and other items that influence the decision. The literature review shows several motivations or factors that have an influence. While traveling people may go for certain reasons but may come back learning much more than anticipated. People at all ages travel, from young children with their families, to college students to senior citizens. Traveling individuals have motivations, some of these motivations may be similar with different age groups but others may be different.

RQ1: What factors are considered by individuals in choosing to book a trip with a group travel company?

RQ2: What are the internal motivations that drive individuals to choose to travel?

METHODOLOGY

This was a cross sectional study and individuals completed a survey. It was a convenience sample that included both females and males along with other demographics that formed the survey. The research focused on college students. However, it wasn't limited to just this age group.

The survey was sent out by email to undergraduates at a faith based institution in the Midwest. It was also posted to Facebook therefore, reaching friends and family. Thus, the survey was able to reach others that go to different schools or live in different locations. The survey was online and self-administered.

The survey mainly consisted of closed ended questions and had an option for other and neutral if applicable. When there was an option for neutral, or other, there was a spot for the individual to explain why they may have chosen that as their answer to help get a better understanding. The survey mostly consisted of likert questions but also included some semantic questions. The survey started with an introduction on how long it should take and some background information on why the research is being conducted. It then continued by asking questions about demographics such as age, gender, and ethnic backgrounds. After those questions, it had some broad questions about traveling and travel experience and then went into more specific questions about the research including questions about travel motivations, factors and influences. The survey was in a funnel format. At the end of the survey, the survey thanked the participant for their time in participating in the study.

After the survey was administered a quantitative analysis was performed. Since the results were categorical a one tailed chi-squared test was used. Once the statistical analysis was performed, the research aim was to determine if there is a difference in motivations and factors

when individuals travel. The study also was able to determine if there were motivations and factors that had no influence. Based on the analysis, the research is presented in data format with display tables, graphs and statistical analysis.

For the statistical analysis, the null hypothesis for RQ1 is that there is no difference in factors desired to be included in a group travel company. The alternative hypothesis for RQ1 is that there is a difference in the factors to be included for an individual to book a tour with a group travel company. The null hypothesis for RQ2 is that there is no difference in motivations for individuals who travel, the alternative hypothesis for RQ2 is there is a difference in motivations for individual who travel.

RESULTS

In this research, the focus was looking at factors, motivations, and influences of individuals traveling both in general and through a group travel company. The survey was sent to undergraduate students at a faith based institution in the Midwest by email. The survey was also posted on the researcher's personal Facebook page. The total number of participants that completed the survey was 141. Of the 141 participants, 117 completed the survey by email and 24 participants completed the survey by the posting on Facebook. Those who responded to the survey were 73% female, 85% white, and 73% college aged students.

The survey participants were asked "Have you traveled before?", "Have you traveled internationally?", "How likely are you to travel in the future" and "What is the ideal place you would like to travel to?". Within the survey, travel wasn't defined by having to be on a plane, going internationally, going out of state and more. Therefore, the participant defined travel however they felt it applied. Almost all participants have traveled before, 73% said they have

traveled internationally and almost 83% said they would like to travel in the future with a strong preference to travel to Europe. About 58% of the participants would consider traveling solo and the remaining were neutral or would prefer to travel with others. Just under 8% of the participants indicated they would absolutely not travel solo. Approximately 36% of the participants have traveled through a group travel company. About 66% of the participants would consider traveling with others that they don't know. Below are charts one, two, and three that are the focus of this study.

Figure one (below) is about the desired factors to be included in a tour if an individual were to book a tour with a group travel company. It seems the more important factors tend to be flights, free time, itinerary, and accommodations. The measures of spread are the average which is about 67.71 and the median is 70. This means the average or the middle amount in which individuals select each factor. The measures of spread are the range which is 118, and standard deviation is about 31.86. The measures of spread are based on how far apart the data is or how close they are to each other. Participants were welcome to select all that they felt applied to them.

In order to do a test statistic a one-sided chi-squared test was selected. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in factors desired to be included in a tour through a travel company. The alternative hypothesis is that there is a difference in the factors in what would be included in a tour through a travel company. After performing the test statistic, the p value came to 6.28455×10^{-42} . This is indicating there is sufficient evidence to say there is a difference in factors desired to be included in a tour through a travel company.

As mentioned before, the most important factors to be included in the tour would be flights, an itinerary, free time and accommodations. Looking at both gender and ethnic

background one may wonder if the results would come out the same or if they would be different between these two variables. First, looking at ethnic backgrounds, the majority of the participants despite their background stated free time, flights and itinerary were top factors to be included. However, there were a few minor differences. Participants who were Hispanics, Latinos and other Spanish origins wanted a tour director and the participants who were Asian or Pacific Islander wanted airports transfers. Participants of these two backgrounds also wanted metro passes and meals whereas looking at the overall results, those elements were not a top priority. In looking at gender there really wasn't much difference. They both had a priority of wanting free time and flights. Accommodations and an itinerary were flipped around for males and females. The females third priority was accommodations and their fourth choice was itinerary. For males, the third priority was an itinerary and the fourth choice was accommodations. There really wasn't much difference for gender to be significant.

Figure 1: factors of individuals (below)

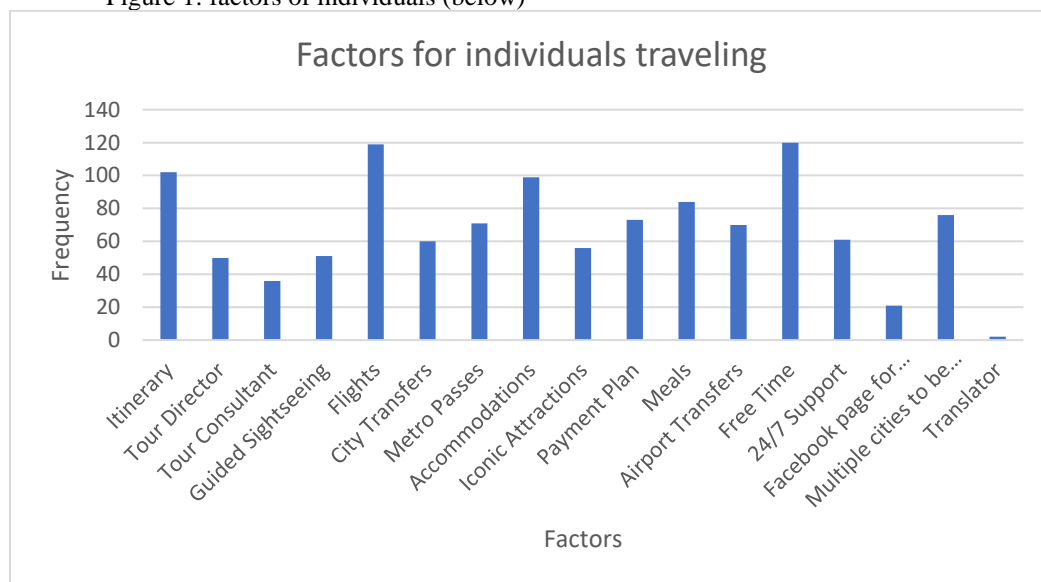


Figure two (below) looks at what motivations individuals have when traveling or why they want to travel. The participants rated the following as the top motivations when traveling: explore, have fun, experience travel and to relax. The motivations that the participants found to

be less important were ego-enhancement, finding a significant other, and self-esteem. The measures of center are the average which is 47.5 and the median is 44. The measures of center are explaining what the average frequency individuals selected each motivation. The measures of spread are the range which is 113 and a standard deviation of 38.23. The measures of spread explain how far apart the data is or how close. The participants were welcome to select all that applied to them.

In order to perform a test statistic a one-sided chi-squared test was selected. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in motivations for individuals wanting to travel and the alternative hypothesis is that there is a difference in the motivations desired for individuals wanting to travel. After performing the test statistic, the p value came to 3.0508×10^{-116} . Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to say that there is a difference in motivations for individuals wanting to travel.

As mentioned earlier the motivations that individuals want to have overall when traveling are to explore, have fun, experience travel and relaxation. These results are were also analyzed by comparing this result with ethnic background and gender. Starting with ethnic backgrounds it seems in general that all groups have the same type of motivations. The only differences were the participants who identified as African Americans want to escape reality, those who were Hispanic, Latinos and other Spanish origin are curious about the world and the Asian and Pacific Islander participants just want to experience travel. However, these do not appear significant as other groups also included the motivations of to explore, have fun, experience travel and to relax. After looking at gender it does not appear gender had any difference as nothing really stood out. Both females and males have the same motivations to explore, have fun, experience travel and relax.

Figure 2: Motivations of individuals (below)



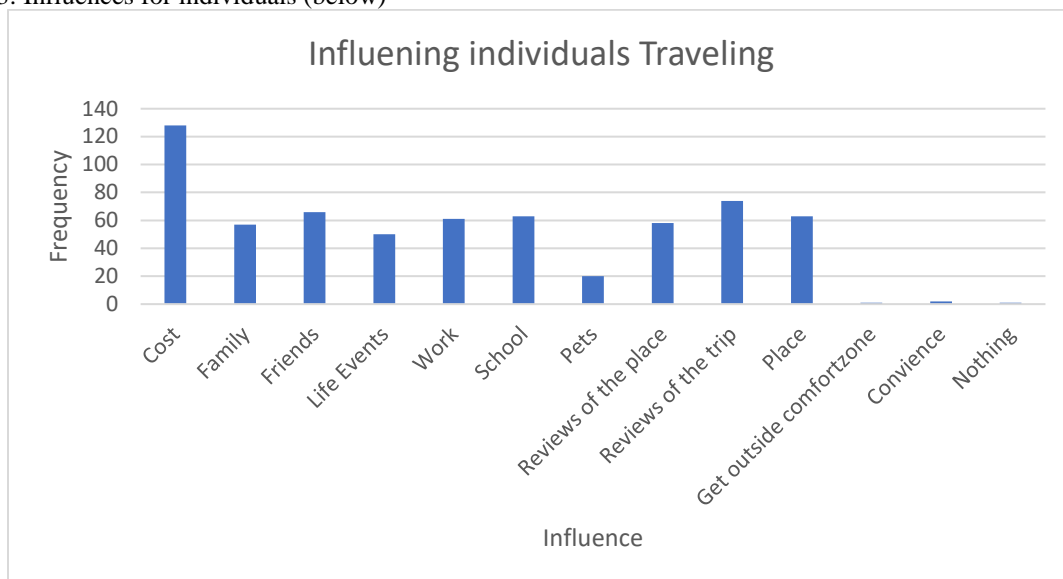
Figure three (below), looks at what may influence an individual's decision to travel.

About 90% of the total participants said that cost will influence them in travel decisions. Aside from cost, it was fairly even across multiple other influences. The measures of center are the average of individuals selecting an influence is about 49.54 and the is median is 58. The measures of center are saying that this is the average or middle number of individuals selecting each influence. The measures of spread are the range which is 127 and a standard deviation of approximately 162.58. The measures of spread explain how far apart or how close together they are. The participants were welcome to select all they felt applied to them.

In order to do a test statistic a one-sided chi-squared test was selected. The null hypothesis was there is no difference in items that will influence individuals to travel and the alternative hypothesis is there is a difference in the items that will influence individuals to travel. After performing the one-sided chi-squared test, it resulted with a p value of 1.00239×10^{-59} . Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to say there is a difference in what will influence individuals to travel.

As mentioned earlier the primary influence of individuals traveling is the cost of the trip as figure 3, graphically depicts. Comparing influences to both ethnic background and gender in regard to cost, there could be a difference from the overall results. Starting with ethnic backgrounds there isn't much difference. In regard to gender there doesn't appear to be differences either. The overall survey determined that cost is the main influence and after cost it goes to reviews of the trip and friends. It seems there is no significant difference between gender or ethnic background compared to the overall results.

Figure 3: Influences for individuals (below)



DISCUSSION

Both the Uncertainty Reduction Theory and the Expectancy Theory will be used in the analysis of the results. People want to reduce uncertainty when traveling as well as have an expectancy on what the outcome will be.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory

According to Griffin, Ledbetter, and Sparks, Berger's (2011) the Uncertainty Reduction Theory predicts people need and want to reduce the amount of uncertainty through self-

disclosure. As humans, we like knowing the people we are around, especially if we are going to be around them for a long period of time. For example, if someone is at a conference and is spending the day without knowing anyone, the individual would most likely start self-disclosing. They would introduce themselves and start asking questions. Once this is done, the anxiety and nervousness levels should come down.

Traveling can leave one not knowing what is going to happen. Especially when an individual doesn't know the place, who they are traveling with, what it's going to be like and more. When traveling, individuals have to deal with uncertainty all the time. This is when the Uncertainty Reduction Theory comes into play.

One of the questions that was asked in the survey was "Would you ever consider traveling with others around your age who you don't know?". Out of the 141 participants only 26 participants said they would absolutely and 68 would possibly consider, therefore 66% at least would consider doing this. The remaining participants, 17 were unsure, 25 would probably not and 5 people would absolutely not travel under these circumstances. There could be a lot of anxiety and nervousness beforehand because those who make the decision to go don't really know if they are going to get along with the other travelers. Reid and Hogg (2005) indicate that people strive to reduce uncertainty and self-categorization is one way to negate the fear of unknown. This is because it is governed by a prototype which describes who one is, how they should behave, and what they should expect from others. This is significant in that there are so many what if's. For example, an individual could choose to travel with nobody they know but once they meet the people they are traveling with and realize they are completely different from themselves it could be hard to form friendships because of what they do or their personality. This would make the traveling experience for that individual not enjoyable. However, this would most

likely be a rare situation as there are so many different personalities. Being nervous when traveling alone is bound to happen as nervousness and anxiety will come with any uncertain situation and will there be uncertainty when traveling alone.

As stated earlier, individuals have motivations while traveling. These often times will help reduce the uncertainty and are significant for one to have the desire to travel. According to Kramer (1999) sometimes individuals have multiple or even contradicting goals or motives when they have uncertainty. People have to try to balance these to figure out what is best. Cost is very influential. As the survey indicated over 90% of the participants indicated cost would impact one's travel plans. Individuals need to figure out how much they would be willing to pay for a trip. Once they do this, it should reduce the uncertainty as the individual will know how much they can afford, based on their budget. These can be conflicting motivations as the participants have the motivations to travel but may have a conflict in which they can't afford.

The survey also indicated 58% of the participants would consider traveling solo. The remaining participants were either neutral or wouldn't really consider it. This result is rather intriguing because according to the Uncertainty Reduction Theory, normally people would prefer to go through things together and not experience things alone, especially if one isn't sure what may happen. Individuals who will travel alone, somewhat contradicts the Uncertainty Reduction Theory. According to Westerman (2008), the Uncertainty Reduction Theory says people like to be around people similar to themselves to minimize the uncertainty. The theory also indicates according to Westerman (2008) verbal and nonverbal communication will reduce the uncertainty one feels, which can then cause an increase in communication. For individuals traveling solo, increased socialization will help reduce the uncertainty in traveling through disclosure about

themselves to others they interact with. This will promote discussion with other parties which ultimately, will lead to a reduction in uncertainty for the solo traveler.

Expectancy Theory

The Expectancy Theory is the idea that an individual's effort will result in a wanted goal or outcome. According to Anndereck, Mcgehee, Lee, and Clemmons, this theory has a few components to it. The first is valance which is the satisfaction of an outcome. Secondly is instrumentality which is the idea that an individual will receive an award if one meets the performance expectations. Lastly is expectancy which is the likelihood that an action will lead to an outcome (2011). People therefore decide what to do based on what we expect as to the reward or the planned outcome.

When traveling, individuals expect that they will get good experiences and to see the world when they pay for a tour or trip. Individuals may travel because they feel that once they do so and gain these experiences it may change their outlook and develop a more global perspective or just learn about another culture in a different geographic area.

Almost 60% of the participants who took the survey said that they would like to travel to Europe versus other alternatives. The second choice was Australia but at a distinct 13%. Clearly individuals must expect something more out of Europe which may be for several reasons. Europe is easier to travel around versus countries. It can be more cost effective. It tends to have more iconic landmarks that people want to experience. The Expectancy Theory in this situation says that people continuously monitor their outcomes of their actions which will lead to positive results (Li, 2010). People want to make sure their vacations and tours are good. They want to travel to Europe because there are so many exciting places to see. Individuals are expecting to have an outcome of a good trip or tour by having everything included in the trip that they paid

for and more. If in Europe and something is closed or gets cancelled it may impact the outcome as individuals were expecting to participate in that activity. However, in Europe there are more options in case of a cancellation that the tour group could insert. This would help the individuals be more satisfied with the outcome as they still gained experiences for the time and money spent that had been planned for the canceled activity.

The Expectancy Theory allows for individuals to make choices and complete a task (Friedman, Cox, & Maher, 2007). When traveling there are many decisions that need to be made. Some examples include where to travel, what tours to do, what hotels to book, how the transportation is going to work and more. When trying to make these decisions there are certain items that people want included if they book a trip through a travel company. As found from the results of the survey, the most important items to be included when traveling with a group travel company are flights, free time, an itinerary and accommodations. Although there are others, these are the main items that people expect to be included when traveling through a group travel company. Individuals don't want to have to stress about figuring out their flights, accommodations or what they are going to do. However, people still want some flexibility to do what they want with their free time so having free time incorporated within the itinerary is important.

Overall, this research has both aspects of the Uncertainty Reduction Theory and the Expectancy Theory that are applicable. The Uncertainty Reduction Theory in summary says individuals will do something such as start a conversation to get to know the people around them. Therefore, they start to understand and get know them better and therefore will ultimately reduce the uncertainty. The Expectancy Theory in summary says that individuals will decide on an action or what to do based on what they believe the outcome will be. When traveling alone,

with a group, or through a travel company both of these theories, Uncertainty Reduction Theory and Expectancy Theory are very applicable to the current scenario.

LIMITATIONS

As with any research study, there were some limitations including researcher bias, response rate and time. The first limitation the research had was a researcher bias. As stated earlier, the researcher emailed the survey to undergraduates at a faith based institution in the Midwest and posted the survey to their personal Facebook page. Even though the survey did reach a number of people, the survey results easily could have come from participants who know the researcher. This could be individuals from work, school, friends, friends of friends or just acquaintances, especially because the survey was posted to the researcher's personal Facebook page. When this happens, the individual doing the survey could possibly be influenced to answer a certain way they believe the researcher would want even though the survey was completely anonymous. Another limitation that occurred in the study was the response rate or sample size. It is hard to get a good sample size and response rate as people are busy and forget to do things especially, if it doesn't matter to them. Two last limitations are not having enough time and people may respond differently during good and bad economic conditions. The study was performed over three semesters but in the large scale of things, it really wasn't that long. The survey did provide a good base point for this research. If there was more time, the study would be able to go more in-depth and investigate other factors that may have an impact on individuals.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The results that came out of this study were significant in that it confirmed there are differences in motivations, factors and influences when traveling. However, there is still much to be discovered and further studied in this field.

One suggestion for future research would be to further explore the rankings of motivations, factors and influences for individual travel. For example, future studies could determine by how much if flights, itinerary or free time influence individuals traveling versus other factors. Future studies could also examine and rank if exploration, fun or socialization are more influential in decision making. Lastly, the study could determine how much the cost differential influences other factors.

If such a study were to be performed in greater detail as to specific motivations, factors, and influences the researcher would still use the survey method. One thing that would change is instead of allowing the participants to be able to select all motivations, factors, and influences that apply is to limit it to a single selection. This way the researcher will know exactly which one the individual feels is the most important and perhaps by some measure. It would also be beneficial to do interviews with this research. The interviews could be very worthwhile if the researcher gets participants who have traveled before to get stories and reasons why they traveled, what motivated them, what influenced them and what kind of factors they needed. This would require more time and effort in getting those participants but could be beneficial for the results.

If this research were to be performed, the research questions would be the following:

RQ1: Is there one significant factor to be included in a trip for individuals to choose to book a trip with a group travel company over other factors?

RQ2: Is there one specific motivation that is significant for individuals to decide to travel over other motivations?

RQ3: Is there one specific influence that are significant for individuals to decide to travel over other influences?

Other suggestions for future research could be why does it seem that Europe is the place to travel. Is it just a coincidence? Or are there specific reasons why the participants who took the survey indicated that they wanted to travel to Europe over other places in the world?

CONCLUSION

This study administered a survey with 17 questions that was given out by email and through Facebook. There were 141 respondents and the majority of them were college aged, white, or female. The results found were very significant in that there was a difference in factors and motivations in individuals wanting to travel. The factors individuals selected as most important to be included in a tour booked through a travel company were free time, flights, and an itinerary. The motivations that the participants selected as most important were to explore, have fun and experience travel. Overall, the participants who took the survey want to travel in the future and they don't necessarily mind if they are going by themselves or with a group.

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APPENDIX

The following materials are both my informed consent that appeared at the beginning of my survey as well as the survey itself that was administered.

Informed Consent

Thank you for taking the time and participating in this research looking at both internal motivations and factors for individuals wanting to travel. The research is being conducted as part of a senior capstone project in the Communication Studies department at Concordia University, St. Paul.

The benefits to this research are to gain a better understanding of why individuals decide to travel as well as when individuals book a tour through a group travel company what are the items they are looking for to be included in the tour.

The survey should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes. The survey is anonymous and your identity will not get shared or published. Information used from the survey will not be identifiable. Your participation in this survey is confidential and this research is completely voluntary as you always have the option to not participate.

By completing this survey, you are agreeing to these terms. Thank you again for participating in this research. The following people are contacts that you can reach out to for more information or if you have any questions regarding this research:

CONTACT NAME	CONTACT E-MAIL	CONTACT PHONE
Kacie Lorenson (Researcher)	lorensok@csp.edu	(651)-303-6672
Kim Flottesmesch (Faculty Advisor)	flottesmesch@csp.edu	(612)-615-4579
IRB Office	irb@csp.edu	(651)-641-8723

Survey

1. What is your gender
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Prefer not to answer
2. What race do you identify with?
 - a. White
 - b. African American or Black
 - c. Hispanic, Latino, other Spanish Prgin
 - d. Asian or Pacific Islander
 - e. Native American or American Indian
 - f. Other (please specify)
3. What is your age
 - a. 18-24
 - b. 25-34
 - c. 35-44
 - d. 45-54
 - e. 55-64
 - f. 65-74
 - g. 75 or older
4. Have you traveled before
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Have you traveled internationally?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. How likely are you to travel in the future?
 - a. Never
 - b. Probably not
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Possibly
 - e. Absolutely
7. What is the ideal place you would like to travel to?
 - a. Antarctica
 - b. Africa
 - c. Asia
 - d. Australia
 - e. Europe
 - f. North America
 - g. South America
 - h. Other (please Specify)
8. Would you ever consider traveling solo in the future?
 - a. Never
 - b. Probably not
 - c. Neutral

- d. Possibly
 - e. Absolutely
9. Have you ever traveled with a group travel company where a company organizes an entire trip for you?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
10. Would you ever consider traveling with others around your age who you don't know?
- a. Never
 - b. Probably not
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Possibly
 - e. Absolutely
11. Would you ever consider booking a trip with a group travel company that plans the entire trip for you?
- a. Never
 - b. Probably not
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Possibly
 - e. Absolutely
12. What needs to be included in order for you to book a trip through a group travel company? (select all that apply)
- a. Itinerary
 - b. Tour Director
 - c. Tour Consultant
 - d. Guided Sightseeing
 - e. Flights
 - f. City Transfers
 - g. Metro Passes
 - h. Accommodations
 - i. Iconic Attractions
 - j. Payment plan
 - k. Meals
 - l. Airport Transfers
 - m. Free Time
 - n. 24/7 Support
 - o. Facebook page for travelers
 - p. Multiple Cities to be visited
 - q. Other (please specify)
13. Out of the items you selected in the previous question (question 12), what is the most important item to be included if you were to book a group travel trip through a company?
- a. Open Ended
14. What motivates you to want to travel? Select all that apply.
- a. Socialize
 - b. Escape Reality
 - c. Explore
 - d. Learn a new language

- e. Learn a new culture
 - f. Learn about family history
 - g. Have fun
 - h. Relax
 - i. Make new Friends
 - j. Find a significant other
 - k. Tell Stories
 - l. Experience travel
 - m. Self-Esteem
 - n. Ego-Enhancement
 - o. Self-Discovery
 - p. Curiosity
 - q. Other (please specify)
15. Out of all the motivations you selected in the previous question (question 14), which motivation is the most important?
- a. Open Ended
16. What would influence your decision to travel with a group travel company? Select all that apply.
- a. Cost
 - b. Family
 - c. Friends
 - d. Life Events
 - e. Work
 - f. School
 - g. Pets
 - h. Reviews of the place
 - i. Review of the Tour
 - j. Place
 - k. Other (please specify)
17. Out of your answers to the previous question (question 16), what is the most important influence in your decision to travel with a group travel company?
- a. Open Ended