

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS: EVALUATING A MEASUREMENT SCALE

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ABSTRACT

Behaviour is the result of motivation. Different types of travel motivations will result in different behaviors which in turn will impact travel decisions. These decisions are of great importance to the travel industry. Therefore it's important to have good measures of travel motivations. We evaluated the scale to measure 'seeking' and 'escape' motivation developed in U.S.A and found that it did not give satisfactory results in the Indian setting. We tested different models and an abridged version was developed which gave satisfactory results. There is a need to develop a better scale to measure 'seeking' and 'escape' motivation, one that can be used, across different cultural settings.

KEYWORDS: *Escape Motivation, Seeking Motivation, Individualistic Cultures, Collectivistic Cultures*

INTRODUCTION

Travel Motivations

On one hand, we have the touristic drives which make us move away from the current situation and on the other side, we have the nativistic motivations, which makes us come back home. 'A man travels the world in search of what he needs and returns home to find it.' The quote by the Irish author George Moore sums up the world of travel.

Every behavior is the result of motivation (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981). Unfulfilled desires, build within a person, a state of tension, which beyond a point, forces him to act, in order to relieve the tension. Unfulfilled needs and desires are responsible for tourist motivation (Crompton, 1997).

Wanderlust is the desire to move away from the known into the unknown while Sunlust is the desire to seek something that's not available at the place of residence Gray (1970). Men have a nativistic motivation, the desire to go back to the usual environment (George, Inbakaran & Poyyamoli, 2010). However, when the routine becomes boring or the usual gets unnerving, the 'Push' of the internal drives forces one to surrender to the 'Pull' of the destination or experience (Crompton, 1979)

"Tourism motivation is conceptualized as a dynamic process of internal psychological factors (needs & wants) that generate a state of tension or disequilibrium within individuals." Compton & Mckay (1997)

Boksberger (2009) has segmented senior travelers on the basis of travel motivations and reported that 35.3 % were motivated by seeking benefits while 35.1 % were motivated by escape from the routine.

Dey & Sarma (2010) have classified tourists along continua, where tourists who have a strong desire to seek specific benefits are at one end and those who wish to escape their normal environment at the other end with another cluster in between.

Three of the major contributors to Tourist motivations look at motivation as follows.

Table 1

| Crompton (1979) | |
|--|--|
| Push | Pull |
| Internal drives that energize a person to travel | Forces that drive an individual to select a specific tourist destination |
| Dann (1981) | |
| Anomie | Ego-enhancement |
| Inherent need to escape the daily routine | The need for recognition and status |
| Iso-ahola (1982) | |
| Escape | Seeking |
| Escape from his/her daily life | Seeking psychological rewards |

The push-pull continuum is similar to Escape-Seeking. The difference is that in the push-pull continuum, the pull is related to destination/features while in the Escape-Seeking Continuum, the seeking is related more to Socio-Psychological needs. (Crompton, 1997)

(Marques, 2006) explains that 'Escape' to reduce OSL- optimum stimulation level is associated with

- Getting rid of stress
- Getting away from routine
- Escape from demanding life

And 'Seeking' (Increase OSL- optimum stimulation level) is associated with

- Going to places with new culture
- Having fun
- Knowing the world better

Impact of Motivation

Since motivation is the cause of behavior, different tourist profiles lead to different motivations which in turn lead to different behaviors. Those who are higher in 'sensation seeking' travel to more risky travel destinations (Lepp & Gibson, 2003). The senior travelers seek education in travel (Sangpikul, 2008). Motivation impacts the level of involvement which in turn impacts tourists' experience value (Prebensen, Woo, Chen & Uysal, 2012). A study of motivations in parks revealed pushes and pulls motivations which impacted the choice of private parks (Phau, Lee & Quintal, 2013). Those who wish to 'escape' want to move away from their current life while those who 'seek' want to

absorb something new into their life. This different motivation will result in different behaviors. We need an instrument to measure these differences so that the impact of these different motivations on other factors can be studied.

The dimensions of the Escape – Seeking motivation theory, can be measured using items generated by (Snepenger, D., King, J., Marshall, E., & Uysal, M., 2006).

Personal Escape

- To get away from my normal environment (PE1)
- To have a change in pace from my everyday life (PE2)
- To overcome a bad mood (PE3)

Interpersonal Escape

- To avoid people who annoy me (IPE1)
- To get away from a stressful social environment (IPE2)
- To avoid interactions with others (IPE3)

Personal Seeking

- To tell others about my experiences (PS1)
- To feel good about myself (PS2)
- To experience new things by myself (PS3)

Interpersonal Seeking

- To be with people of similar interests (IPS1)
- To bring friends/family closer (IPS2)
- To meet new people (IPS3)

It was decided to evaluate this scale in the Indian conditions.

SURVEY & PARTICIPANTS

The survey was started in Dec 2016 and continued till June 2017. It was administered using Google form to an Indian population. A total of 519 responded to the questionnaire. Since the survey could not proceed if a response was left blank, all 519 responses were complete.

Male Female distribution was 302: 217. Of the 519 respondents, 331 were married, 173 were single and the balance was divorced/widowed. The age profile of respondents was as below.

Table 2

| Below 25 | 25-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | Above 65 |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| 109 | 141 | 132 | 101 | 30 | 6 |

EVALUATING MODELS

The model as per the scale developed by Snepenger et al (2006) was evaluated. AMOS 22 was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis.

Model A

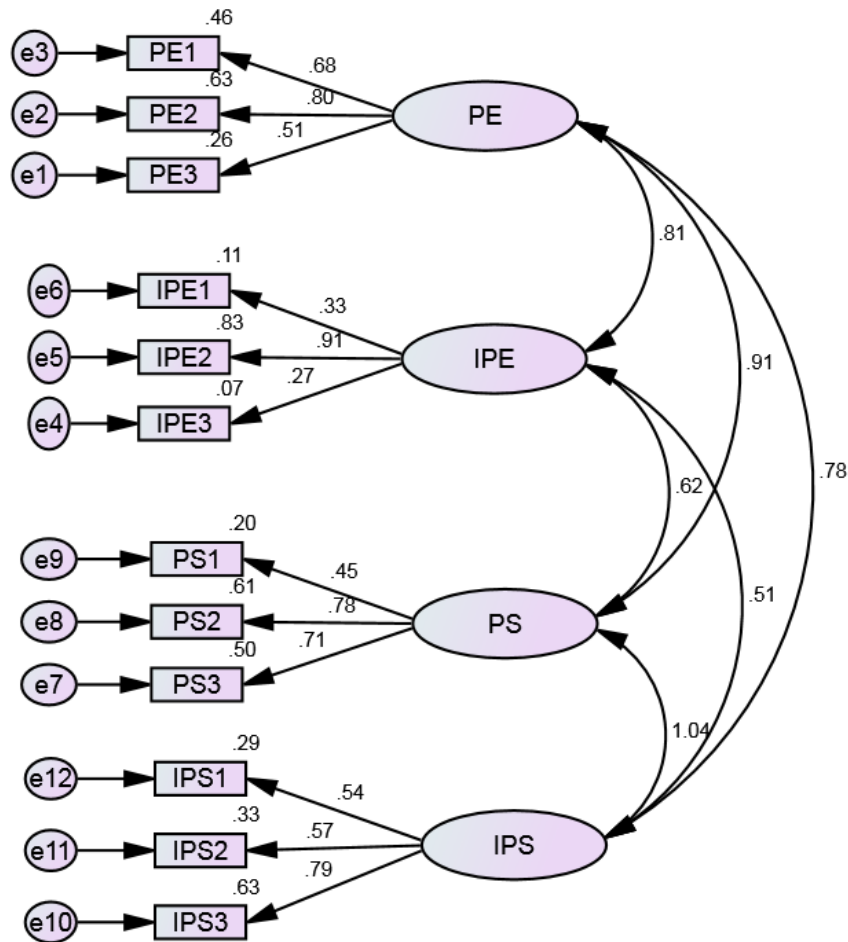


Figure 1

The model fit indices were not acceptable.

Table 3

| Measure | Estimate | Threshold | Interpretation |
|---------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| CMIN | 614.378 | -- | -- |
| DF | 48 | -- | -- |
| CMIN/DF | 12.800 | Between 1 and 3 | Terrible |
| CFI | 0.770 | >0.95 | Need More DF |
| SRMR | 0.115 | <0.08 | Terrible |
| RMSEA | 0.151 | <0.06 | Terrible |
| PClose | 0.000 | >0.05 | Terrible |

Model B

A second order model to measure escape & seeking motivation was evaluated.

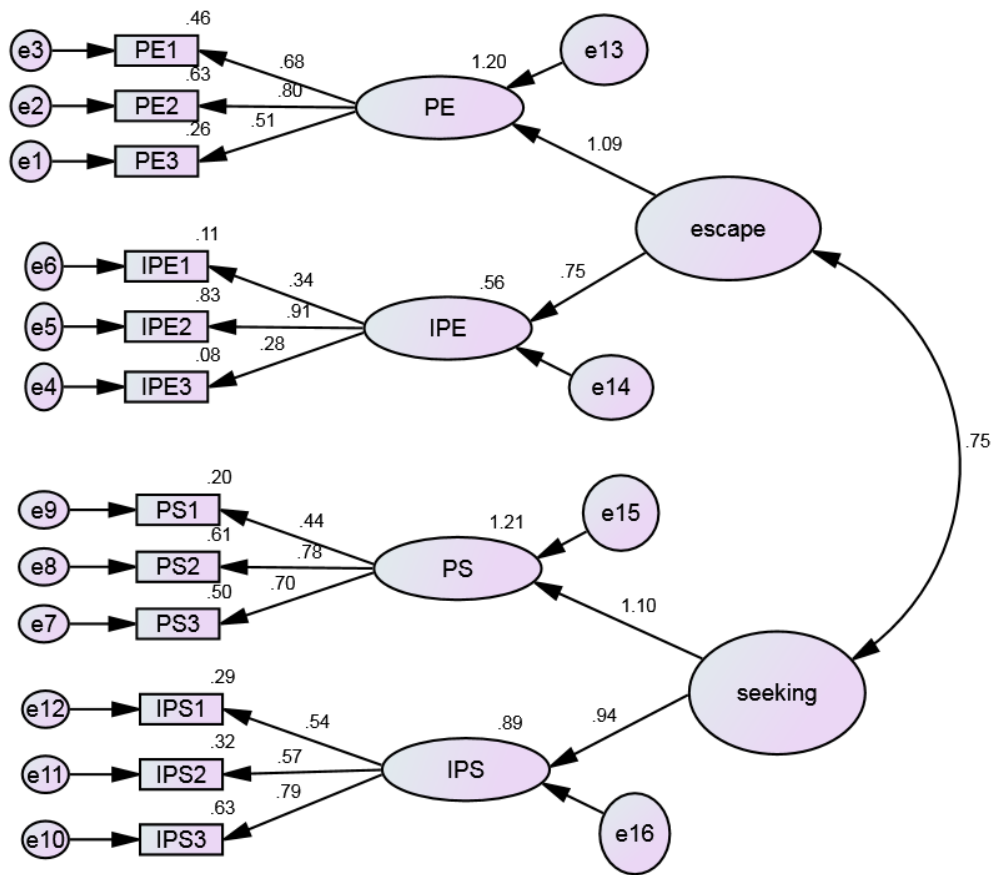


Figure 2

The model fit indices were not acceptable.

Table 4

| Measure | Estimate | Threshold | Interpretation |
|---------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| CMIN | 615.261 | -- | -- |
| DF | 49 | -- | -- |
| CMIN/DF | 12.556 | Between 1 and 3 | Terrible |
| CFI | 0.770 | >0.95 | Need More DF |
| SRMR | 0.116 | <0.08 | Terrible |
| RMSEA | 0.149 | <0.06 | Terrible |
| PClose | 0.000 | >0.05 | Terrible |

Model C

This model measured only two constructs, of escape motivation and seeking motivation.

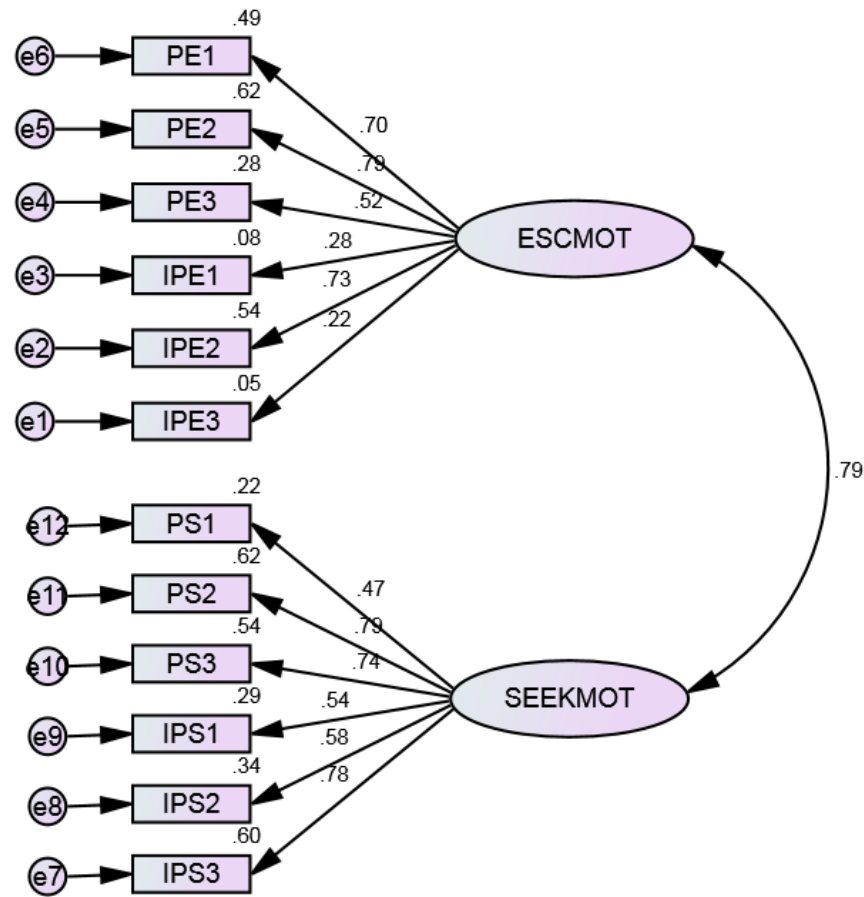


Figure 3

The model fit indices were not acceptable.

Table 5

| Measure | Estimate | Threshold | Interpretation |
|---------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| CMIN | 675.040 | -- | -- |
| DF | 53 | -- | -- |
| CMIN/DF | 12.737 | Between 1 and 3 | Terrible |
| CFI | 0.747 | >0.95 | Need More DF |
| SRMR | 0.119 | <0.08 | Terrible |
| RMSEA | 0.151 | <0.06 | Terrible |
| PClose | 0.000 | >0.05 | Terrible |

Model D

We are interested in measuring escape & seeking motivation. Since the model fit indices of model C, were poor, the model needed to be improved. As suggested in Hair et al. (2005), a model can be improved by,

- Dropping items with lower loadings
- Looking at the 'standardizes residual covariances' and dropping items with high covariance
- Co-varying the residuals, based on modification indices.

Based on the above, we dropped certain items.

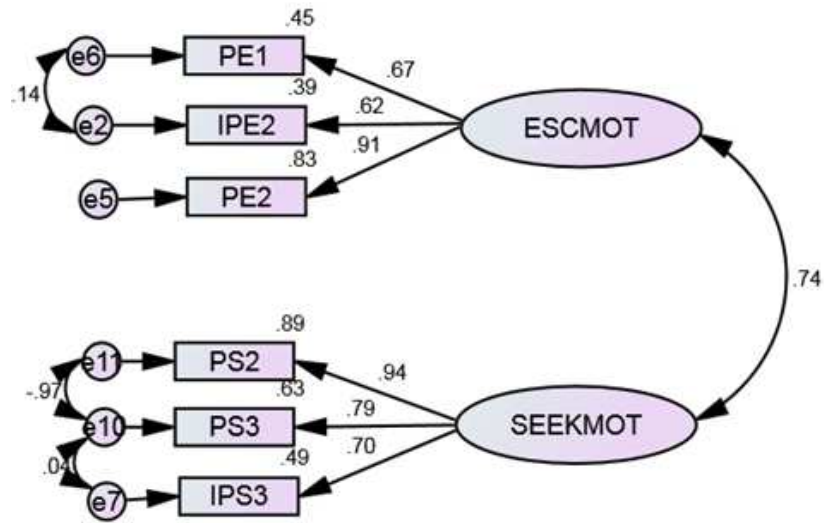


Figure 4

The model fit for Model D, is acceptable as per thresholds from Hu and Bentler (1999) and Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen (2008).

Table 6

| Measure | Estimate | Threshold | Interpretation |
|---------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| CMIN | 21.431 | -- | -- |
| DF | 5 | -- | -- |
| CMIN/DF | 4.286 | Between 1 and 3 | Terrible |
| CFI | 0.988 | >0.95 | Need More DF |
| SRMR | 0.028 | <0.08 | Terrible |
| RMSEA | 0.080 | <0.06 | Terrible |
| PClose | 0.066 | >0.05 | Terrible |

Gaskin & Lim (2016), "Model Fit", AMOS Plugin was used for the above calculation.

Table 7

| | CR | AVE | ESCMOT |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| ESCMOT | 0.785 | 0.556 | 0.746 |
| SEEKMOT | 0.857 | 0.669 | 0.736*** |

Gaskin & Lim (2016), "Master Validity Tool", AMOS Plugin was used for the above calculation.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is a measure of internal consistency of a scale where the within-scale consistency of the responses to the construct is evaluated. Hair et al. (2005) have suggested thresholds of 0.7 for composite reliability. The composite reliability (CR) for ESCMOT was 0.785 and for SEEKMOT was 0.857. Since the values are higher than 0.7, the scale has composite reliability.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the degree to which two variables that are supposed to measure a construct, that theoretically should be related, are in fact related. Hair et al. (2005) have suggested that the average variance extracted should be > 0.5 . The AVE for both the constructs is greater than 0.5 thus ensuring convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity tests whether measurements that are supposed to be unrelated are, in fact, unrelated. As per Hair et al. (2005) and (Bertea & Zait, 2011), the square root of the average variance extracted, should be greater than inter-factor correlation. So the modified scale has discriminant validity.

CONCLUSIONS

The original scale developed by Spenger et al (2006) did not give good results in the Indian context. The scale abridged from, the original scale had acceptable model fit indices, reliability and validity measures.

Some of the items that were dropped were 'To avoid people who annoy me', 'To avoid interactions with others'. The original scale was developed in America whose culture is individualistic as compared to India whose culture is collectivist. Collectivist cultures promote social cohesion and interdependence (Chadda & Deb, 2013). So one wonders whether in a society that is comfortable with high people interaction, one would escape avoid people. Similarly, item like 'To bring friends/family closer' in a society where already the family is close, might not make sense.

As such need is felt for a better measure of 'escape' and 'seeking' motivations, one that can be used across different cultural settings.

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