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Applying the Consumption Emotions Set to sport tourism

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ABSTRACT

Research has highlighted the natural relationship between tourism and the concepts of hedonic experiences and experiential consumption. Understanding the emotional response to an experience can help marketers highlight important aspects of the satisfaction judgment. The purpose of this paper was to test the Consumption Emotions Set developed by Richins to verify its applicability in a sport tourism context. Results from confirmatory factor analysis indicate that while the scale has promise, it is important to adjust the scale to the context. Not all experiences evoke the full range of consumption emotions as presented by Richins.

Keywords: *consumption emotions, sport tourism, experiential consumption, satisfaction, confirmatory factor analysis*

Research has highlighted the natural relationship between tourism and the concepts of hedonic experiences and experiential consumption (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Understanding the emotional response to an experience can help marketers highlight important aspects of the satisfaction judgment (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Westbrook, 1987; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991) which can lead to repurchase/revisitation behavior (Fornell, 1992; Han & Back, 2007). Research investigating the relationship between emotional responses and tourism experiences has been very limited, but it does include a look at emotions towards lodging (Han & Back, 2007), feelings about a destination (Hosany, 2011; Hosany & Gilbert, 2010) and as a segmentation tool (Bigne & Andreu, 2004).

One promising line of consumption research includes multiple discrete emotions. Richins (1997) used a 6 study process to develop a list of “emotion words” that were examined and refined into a scale of 13 discrete emotions that then made up the Consumption Emotion Set (CES). Subsequent research into consumption emotions have used this list as a base to research various contexts, however it has not been applied in an active sport tourism setting. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to test the CES to verify its applicability in a sport tourism context.

METHODOLOGY

Similar to the process used by Hosany (2011), this study started with the list of emotion items as presented by Richins (1997). The CES includes 43 “emotional words” that reduce to a set of 13 emotional categories; anger, discontent, worry, sadness, fear, shame, envy, loneliness, romantic love, love, peacefulness, contentment, and optimism. This paper addresses the first step

which was to pilot test the list to examine the appropriateness of the items and related discrete emotions to the context of active sport tourism. Potential respondents were recruited at three golf courses in a major golf destination immediately following their round of golf. This is an important departure from previous studies that have relied on reflective recall of a tourism experience that took place a considerable time in the past (e.g. Hosany, 2011; Hosany & Gilbert, 2010). Those that agreed to take part in the study were asked to rate how intensely they felt each of the emotion adjectives on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The initial data collection resulted in 109 completed surveys. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify items with insignificant factor loadings with the proposed emotion and significant cross-loadings with other emotions. To further validate and understand the findings, 23 informal interviews were conducted.

RESULTS

Using CFA to identify items that had non-significant factor loadings, the scale was reduced 25 “emotional word” items that load into 12 discrete emotions. The emotion factor and associated emotional words are presented in Table 1 along with means and standard deviations. One emotion factor was omitted, “romantic love,” due to non-significant correlations to the other emotion factors.

Table 1 – Emotion factors and related emotional word items

Factor	Emotional Word Item	Mean (1-7 scale)	Standard Deviation	Factor	Emotional Word Item	Mean (1-7 scale)	Standard Deviation
Peaceful	peaceful	4.07	1.65	Discontent	angry	2.48	1.73
	fulfilled	4.24	1.64		irritated	2.45	1.78
Calm	calm	4.21	1.71	Worried	discontent	2.12	1.51
	contented	4.38	1.64		nervous	2.19	1.41
Optimistic	optimistic	4.39	1.44	Sadness	worried	1.86	1.36
	encouraged	4.22	1.52		depressed	1.96	1.46
Pleased	happy	5.07	1.47	Fear	sad	1.76	1.29
	pleased	4.66	1.54		afraid	3.59	1.73
Excitement	joyful	4.41	1.56	Shame	panicky	1.67	1.18
	enthusiastic	4.53	1.50		embarrassed	2.33	1.70
					ashamed	1.86	1.43
			Envy	envious	2.34	1.68	
				jealous	1.74	1.29	
			Loneliness	ashamed	1.86	1.43	
				lonely	1.61	1.36	

IMPLICATIONS

Research into the consumer side of tourism has highlighted the usefulness in researching emotions to better understand consumer behavior (Han & Back, 2007; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Hosany & Gilbert, 2010). Richins’ CES has been used to better understand the emotions experienced during a consumption experience. However, this study highlights the importance of adjusting the scale to the study context. For example, this study found the emotion of “romantic

love” as inappropriate to research in golf tourism. Follow up interviews showed that most participants in this context engage in the sport with same-gendered friends. However, if the CES was applied in a sport tourism context where couples participate, romantic love could be experienced at a significant level. Additionally, the results of this study could be different due to the immediate response to the emotion scale. Future studies should further investigate this potential as well as test scales of discrete emotions in other contexts.

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