

# Towards a QOL Theory of Leisure Travel Satisfaction



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## Background

Much research has focused on **tourism satisfaction**

- ❑ Situational theories
  - **service facet** (e.g., Bartlett/Einert 1992; Geva/Goldman 1991; Leiss 1979; Mercer 1971; Neal/Gursoy 2008; Vaske/Donnelly/Williamson 1991; Wakefield/Smith/Racine-Poon 1994)
- ❑ Dispositional theories
  - **type of traveler** (e.g., Simpson/Siguaw 2008)
- ❑ Interactive theories
  - **expectancy confirmation** (e.g., Franken/Van Raaij 1981)
  - **norms** (e.g., Chon 1989; Yoon/Uysal 2005)
  - **equity** (e.g., Heskett/Sasser/Schlesinger 1997)
  - **self-congruity** (e.g., Sirgy/Su 2000)

## Background

- ❑ Studies linking tourism satisfaction with life satisfaction (e.g., Neal/Sirgy/Uysal 1999; Neal/Uysal/Sirgy 2007) based on bottom-up theory of QOL
- ❑ Need additional QOL theories to guide research in tourism satisfaction

## Towards a QOL Theory of Leisure Travel Satisfaction Based on Goal Theory as Embedded in Bottom-up Spillover Theory

1. The goal valence principle
2. The goal expectancy principle
3. The goal implementation principle
4. The goal attainment principle

## The Goal Theoretic Aspects of the Proposed QOL Theory

1. The goal valence principle
2. The goal expectancy principle
3. The goal implementation principle
4. The goal attainment principle

## The Goal Valence Principle

- Leisure travel satisfaction is enhanced by selecting to pursue leisure travel goals that have high positive valence. Attainment of leisure travel goals high in positive valence induces high levels of positive affect in major life domains such as social life, leisure life, love life, cultural life, spiritual life, family life, and work life. Doing so contributes significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Diener, 1984; Diener et al, 1999).

## Goal Valence

- Goal meaningfulness**
- Intrinsic versus extrinsic goals**
- High- versus low-level goals**
- Goals related to basic versus growth needs**
- Approach of desired states versus avoidance of undesired states**
- Goals related to cultural norms**
- Goals related to deprived needs**
- Goals producing flow/skillful winning**
- Autonomous goals**

## Goal Meaningfulness

- Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting meaningful leisure travel goals. The attainment of these leisure travel goals induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Lepper, 1996).**

## Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Goals

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting intrinsic rather than extrinsic leisure travel goals. The attainment of intrinsic leisure travel goals induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than extrinsic goals) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Kasser & Ryan, 1993, 1996, 1998; Kasser, 1997; Kasser et al., 1995).

## High- versus Low-level Goals

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting abstract (high level) rather than concrete (low level) leisure travel goals. The attainment of abstract (high level) leisure travel goals induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than concrete goals) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1982; 1990).

## Goals Related to Basic versus Growth Needs

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure goals related to growth needs than basic needs. The attainment of goals related to growth needs induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than goals related to basic needs) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Baker et al., 1992; Costa & McCrae, 1980; DeLongis et al., 1982; DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988; Diener, Horwitz, & Emmons, 1985; Diener & Lucas, 1999; Headey & Wearing, 1989; Watson & Pennebaker, 1989).

## Approach of Desired States versus Avoidance of Undesired States

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure goals related to approach (approaching desirable state of affairs) than avoidance goals (avoiding undesirable state of affairs). The attainment of goals related to approach induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than goals related to avoidance) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Cantor & Sanderson, 1999; Emmons, Shepard, & Kaiser, 1994; Gollwitzer, 1993; Higgins, et al., 1994; Simpson, 1990).

## Goals Related to Deprived Needs

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure goals more related to deprived than non-deprived needs. The attainment of goals related to deprived needs induces significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than goals related to non-deprived needs) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Abramson & Inglehart, 1995; Ahuvia & Friedman, 1998; Inglehart, 1977, 1990).

## Goals Producing Flow

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure goals more likely to induce flow than goals less likely to induce flow. The attainment of goals inducing flow generates significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than goals inducing less flow) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1982; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Kubey, 1981; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi, & Carli, 1987; Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi, Delle Fave, 1988).

## Autonomous Goals

- ❑ **Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure goals autonomously than non-autonomously. The attainment of goals selected autonomously generates significantly more positive affect in salient life domains (than goals selected non-autonomously) contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Cantor & Sanderson, 2002).**

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## The Goal Expectancy Principle

- Leisure travel satisfaction is enhanced not only by selecting to pursue leisure travel goals that are high on positive valence but also selecting goals very likely to be attained. Doing so contributes significantly to subjective well-being.**

## Goal Expectancy

- Goal-motive congruence**
- Goal-cultural value congruence**
- Goal-resources congruence**
- Goal conflict**

## Goal-Motive Congruence

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals consistent with strong needs. Goals that are congruent with tourists' strong needs are more likely to be attained than incongruent goals, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Malatesta, et al., 1986; Oishi, et al., 1999).

## Goal-Cultural Value Congruence

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals consistent with cultural values of the host community (and/or other tourist-related communities). Goals that are congruent with cultural values of the host community (and/or other tourist-related communities) are more likely to be attained than incongruent goals, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Malatesta, et al., 1986; Oishi, et al., 1999).

## Goal-Resources Congruence

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals consistent with one's resources. Goals that are congruent with one's resources are more likely to be attained than incongruent goals, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Canter & Sanderson, 1999; Diener & Fujita, 1995).

## Goal Conflict

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals that do not conflict with other important goals. Goals that do not conflict with other important goals are more likely to be attained than goals that conflict, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Emmons, 1986; Emmons & King, 1988; Sheldon & Kasser, 1995; Wilson, Henry, & Peterson, 1997).

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## The Goal Implementation Principle

- Leisure travel satisfaction is enhanced by not only selecting leisure travel goals with high positive valence and expectancy but also through taking action to implement these goals. Doing so contributes significantly to subjective well-being.

## Goal Implementation

- Goal concreteness**
- Goal commitment**

## Goal Concreteness

- Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by translating abstract leisure travel goals into a set of concrete goals. Doing so facilitates goal implementation leading to goal attainment, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Lindeman & Verkasalo, 1996).**

## Goal Commitment

- ❑ **Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) through goal commitment (i.e., persistent effort in light of failure). Doing so facilitates goal implementation leading to goal attainment, thus contributing significantly to subjective well-being (e.g., Henry & Lovelace, 1995; Turner, 1994).**

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## The Goal Attainment Principle

- Leisure travel satisfaction is enhanced by not only selecting leisure travel goals with high positive valence and expectancy plus taking action to implement these goals but also by experiencing the attainment of these goals. In the final analysis, it is the attainment of these goals that induces high-level positive affect that contributes significantly to subjective well-being.**

## Goal Attainment

- Recognition of goal attainment**
- Intensity versus frequency of positive feedback**

## Recognition of Goal Attainment

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) through the explicit recognition of attainment of leisure travel goals (i.e., repeated efforts at remembering the actual events that reflect the realization of leisure travel goals). Doing so facilitates the experience of goal attainment, thus contributing to subjective well-being (e.g., Thurman, 1981).

## Intensity versus Frequency of Positive Feedback

- ❑ Life satisfaction can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) through experiencing more frequent/less intense attainment of leisure travel goals than less frequent/more intense goals. Doing so facilitates the experience of goal attainment, thus contributing to subjective well-being (e.g., Diener et al, 1991; Diener & Larsen, 1984; Diener et al., 1985).

## **Towards a QOL Theory of Leisure Travel Satisfaction Based on Goal Theory**

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## **Thank You**

**If any would like a copy of this presentation, do not hesitate to contact me ([sirgy@vt.edu](mailto:sirgy@vt.edu)), and I'll be more than happy to e-mail you the slides.**