

The Impact of Motivations and Enduring Involvement in an Adventure Tourism Setting

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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August 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Steve Morse. I thank you for your unwavering support and guidance throughout my tenure at the University of Tennessee. My success here at the University of Tennessee is largely a reflection of you, and I will never forget that. I know that I will be a better professional because of the advice and knowledge you have provided me.

My sincere thanks to Dr. Youn-Kyung Kim. Dr. Kim, I thank you for your patience and time working on the brand experience study and for helping to guide this dissertation in a positive direction. Regarding my research, you have been a terrific mentor to me and have driven me to fulfill my potential and I will always be grateful for that.

A very warm thank you to Dr. Carol Costello for her guidance and support during my job search process, as well as the dissertation phase of my studies. I appreciate all of the time you have spent with me the last few months imparting advice, practicing interviewing, and giving input/suggestions regarding my dissertation.

Special thanks to Dr. Jeanie Lim for her help and feedback when I first began designing the whitewater study. Also, a special thanks goes out to Dr. Ann Fairhurst for her continued support and guidance throughout my studies here at the University of Tennessee. Furthermore, thanks to Dr. Stephanie Bohon, Dr. John Orme, Dr. James Schidthammer, and Dr. Patrick Biddix for your support and guidance throughout my studies and beyond.

I also want to thank my father, Eric L. Beckman, for his unwavering support, love, and being an overall great person and a positive in my life.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the push and pull motivations that lead to an enduring involvement in an adventure tourism activity. The proposed research model will be the first to explore the relationship between motivational needs and enduring involvement in an adventure setting. In understanding the role that motivational needs and enduring involvement play in the success in an adventure setting, marketers can better promote the adventure tourism activity and location. Because this study was designed specifically for adventure tourism, it is expected that the model can be generalized across other adventure activities. In addition to motivational needs, enduring involvement, and place attachment, this study introduced affective response as a mediator between enduring involvement and place attachment. The specific research objectives of this study include: (1) to determine the primary motivations for adventure tourists at a whitewater destination; (2) to determine which motivations lead to each dimension of enduring involvement; (3) to determine which dimensions of enduring involvement lead to an affective response (4) to determine if the affective response leads to a place attachment; and (5) to determine if place attachment leads to positive outcomes such as word-of-mouth and revisit intention.

This study was conducted in one adventure tourism location (Ocoee River in Ocoee, TN) among five different whitewater rafting tour operators. Scale items utilized in the survey were adopted from previous studies. A street intercept survey methodology was employed to gather the data and 690 completed responses were used for the data analyses. All of the constructs had acceptable levels of composite reliability and was valid in terms of convergent and discriminant validity. Structural equation modeling was

used to analyze the data. Results supported the newly conceptualized adventure tourism model featuring four key motivations for adventure tourists and two key factors for enduring involvement. Support was found for the relationship that strong motivational needs lead to an enduring involvement with the adventure activity. The relationship between enduring involvement (enjoyment factor) and place attachment was mediated by an affective response. Research implications, marketing implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research were provided.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Today, adventure tourism is the fastest growing tourism segment in the world (Bentley, Page, & Laird, 2003; Ewart & Jamieson, 2003; Schott, 2007). More and more tourists travel specifically to participate in adventure tourism activities that occur predominantly outdoors. Adventure tourism includes activities such as backpacking, kayaking, sailing, snowshoeing, spelunking, sky diving, rock climbing, rafting, mountaineering, ballooning, zorbing, hang-gliding, diving, and bicycling. These outdoor activities often appear exciting and fun to the adventure tourism consumer (Buckley, 2007).

The desire for adventure travel is emerging as a new phenomenon in the industry of tourism. Prior research in tourism has addressed motivations for travelling to a place or even participating in an activity, but few studies have addressed the motivations for participating in an adventure tourism activity (Schneider & Vogt, 2012). It is important for scholars to learn the different motivations that influence the adventure traveller to make an informed travel decision that leads to a lasting (enduring) involvement. Motivational theory and leisure theory have not been paired before to help explain people's adventure tourism motivations that lead to involvement, part of the value that can be added with this study. In determining the push and pull motivations that lead to an enduring involvement in the activity, we can begin to understand the types of motivations that result in a return to participate in that adventure tourism activity.

Definition of Adventure Tourism

Adventure tourism is a concept that scholars use to define activities that normally occur outdoors and appear exciting to the consumer (Buckley, 2007). Adventure tourism is an agglomeration of travel, outdoor recreation and sport, thus it encompasses multiple disciplines (Beedie & Hudson, 2003). These activities have elements of risk, exploration and danger (Beedie, 2008). The elements of risk attached to some of these activities which contribute to excitement for the consumer (Ewart & Hollenhorst, 1989). Adventure is reflected in the adrenaline rush from risk taking and any knowledge or insight that is gained from the activity (Walle, 1997). Not everything that people can do outside constitutes adventure tourism. There is a distinction between outdoor recreation and adventure tourism. We consider recreational tourism to be activities like fishing, hiking, and boating while adventure tourism consists of the activities listed above.

The Role of Whitewater Rafting in Adventure Tourism

(Soft vs. Hard adventure tourism activities)

Adventure tourism activities can be separated into two distinct groups: hard activities and soft activities (Hill, 1995; Schneider & Vogt, 2012; Schott, 2007). Hard adventure tourism activities require that the participant have a large amount of skill in order to successfully participate in the activity. There may or may not be a guide included in a hard adventure activity. The high amount of real and perceived risk involved in these activities is apparent and participants are often warned beforehand and sign a waiver if they are participating in a guided (hard) adventure activity. An example of a hard activity would be mountain climbing or class IV whitewater rafting/kayaking. Other activities

that constitute hard activities include base jumping or hang gliding (Patterson & Pan, 2007). Those that participate in these hard adventures are willing to travel to remote areas to experience the dangers and risks from their activity of choice. These risks and dangers are real rather than just perceived. Climbing Mt. Everest requires experience and skill, and only slightly more than 1,000 people have completed this ascent because of the difficulty and danger involved. Rafting or kayaking in a class IV rapid (hard activities) is risky, and contains a large element of danger and excitement for the participant.

Soft activities include guided trips in which equipment is provided, and minimal skill may be required to complete the activity. There is risk involved, but the risk is minimized by the presence of skilled guides and safety equipment. The guides are trained to minimize the risks involved and are skilled in navigating the terrain. In activities such as whitewater rafting, guides are often provided by an outfitter (or tour operator), a company which provides a packed tour for the adventure participant. These guides can help to transition some activities from hard to soft by decreasing the amount of risk involved. Guided whitewater rafting down a class II river has very minimal risk even if a passenger were to spill overboard. Tour operators use the natural surroundings to create a natural and exciting experience for the adventure tourism consumer. Even with all the precautions, there is an element of unpredictability which contributes to some of the risk involved.

Motivational Research and Enduring Involvement in Adventure Tourism

Though the adventure tourism market has grown steadily, the discipline has received sparse attention from academic scholars (Buckley, 2006). It has been noted that research on adventure tourism has been modest and any in-depth research is lacking in identifying the motivations of adventure tourists (Schneider & Vogt, 2012; Schott, 2007). Who are adventure tourists? What are the motivational needs of adventure tourists? What do they seek in order to fulfill their motivational needs? What motivational factors lead to a lasting involvement in an adventure tourism activity? A more comprehensive understanding of adventure tourists is important and can provide insights for various stakeholders and allow marketers to more effectively target potential customers (Iso-Ahola, 1989).

Theoretical Background of Research

Opponent-Process Theory

Theoretical support for the contention that increased expertise and experience changes the motivational factors that influence adventure tourists is provided by opponent-process theory. Opponent process theory is a theory developed by Solomon (1980) which states people want to continue to be exposed to positive stimuli over time. Adventure activities are optimally stimulating activities that adventure tourists are attracted to given their hedonic nature. In adventure travel-related literature, Carnicelli-Filho et al. (2010) stated that adventure tourists seek and crave a high level of stimulation. As the adventure tourist becomes more experienced in the activity, the feelings and motivational needs that accompany these activities change. There is a

tendency for the adventure participant to balance out the emotions and motivations when participating in the same activity over time (according to opponent process theory). When these emotions are balanced out they begin to trend towards normalcy.

The affective processes (adventure tourism activities) have a secondary opponent process helping to balance out the emotional highs. When an adventure tourist feels happiness, the opponent process works to lower their happiness and decrease the happy response from occurring as strongly in the same (future) location and activity. Whereas ecstasy, panic and fear may be experienced during the first few times participating in an adventure tourism activity, this may be replaced by mild feelings of excitement and happiness (Iso-Ahola, 1989). This supports the nature of opponent process theory (motivational needs change over time due to increased exposure and experience participating in the activity).

Research on tourism has further mentioned opponent-process theory. Sirgy (2009) has stated that some travellers avoid intense positive experiences because they come at a cost (not speaking of a just a monetary cost). One of the main costs of participating in these intense (adventure) experiences is a lower positive affect of any related future experiences (of the same nature and type) (Sirgy, 2009; Solomon, 1980). One of the ways in which travellers can reduce the effect of this affect reduction is to travel to different locations to participate in their favorite adventure activities. According to Staats & Pierfelice (2003), travellers who travel to a diverse set of destinations rather than habitually travelling to one or two destinations will experience more novelty and uniqueness in their travel and avoid the reduction in affect that will ultimately occur (when repeatedly travelling to one destination).

Push-pull Motivational Theory

Push-pull motivational theory was developed by Dann (1977) specifically to address the motivational needs of tourists (Fluker & Turner, 2000). We can better understand why people travel by looking through the lens of push-pull motivational theory. This theory utilizes “push” motivational factors that influence a person to travel and “pull” factors that attract a tourist to a particular destination. The pull motivational factors are related to the environment (the destination itself) and push motivations are related to adventure tourists’ internal feelings or desires (Crompton, 1979; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Push motivations are akin to the motivational needs of adventure tourists including excitement, risk, socialization, achievement, and physical fitness (Klenosky, 2002). For the purpose of this study, these push motivations were explored more in-depth and quantified in the survey.

Few studies in adventure tourism have used push-pull motivational theory as theoretical support for their study (Fluker & Turner, 2000; Pomfret, 2006). Push-pull motivational theory states that the desire to travel precedes the destination decision (Dann, 1981). In the case of whitewater rafting, Fluker and Turner (2000) use the motivational need for excitement as an example of a push factor (relating to internal desires) while including the motivational need for nature as a pull factor (relating to the destination). The pull motivations of destinations have been largely ignored (Luo & Deng, 2007). In this study, the pull motivation *nature* was included in the model to obtain a better understanding of the motivations of adventure tourists through the lens of push-pull motivational theory. It is important to have both push and pull factors in the model because when adventure consumers satisfy their push and pull motivational needs,

ultimately they will choose to revisit the destination and spread a positive word of mouth about the activity/destination (Smith, Costello, & Muenchen, 2010).

Edgework Theory

The term *edgework* was first introduced in mainstream literature to describe those that voluntarily negotiate the boundary between sanity and insanity, and between life and death (Thompson, 1971). This concept has since morphed into a sociological theory of voluntary risk taking. The initial concept of the term has remained unchanged in theory, edgework is about “negotiating the boundary between chaos and order,” (Lyng, 1990, p.855). This theory was developed as a response to the lack of sociologically-based theory used to describe voluntarily risky behavior. Edgework provides a relationship between relevant psychological factors and the wide-ranging social historical context in which risky behavior transpires (Lyng, 1990). Edgework theory is related to push-pull motivational theory in that people (adventure tourism participants) are *pushed* and *pulled* by different motivational forces to participate in risky activities (Lyng, 2005). One of the motivational push factors is *risk*. This factor represents the notion that people participate in adventure tourism activities because of the inherent risk involved. Edgework has been used in adventure tourism literature to explain why people participate in the adventure tourism activity, base jumping (Allman, Mittelstaedt, Martin, & Goldenberg, 2009). Edgeworkers like to live life on the edge, part of the excitement and enjoyment they receive from adventure tourism activities are from the perceived risks involved. Adventure tourists voluntarily participate in these activities that they perceive to have an

element of danger. These edgeworkers negotiate the edge of their limitations without quite exceeding their skillset or capacity to succeed in the activity.

Leisure Theory: Enduring Involvement

The third theory utilized in this study is leisure theory employing the concept of enduring involvement. Enduring involvement is a concept that was originally designed to measure consumer involvement in making retail purchases (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). Enduring involvement was later adapted by studies in leisure and tourism literature (Gross & Brown, 2008; Hwang, Lee, & Chen, 2005). Enduring involvement may help to further the understanding of tourists' personal meanings at an adventure tourism setting. These personal meanings outline the relevance of the activity in a person's life (Kyle, Bricker, Graefe, & Wickham, 2004). Enduring involvement is defined as "an unobservable state of motivation, arousal or interest toward a recreational activity or associated product. It is evoked by particular stimulus or situation and has drive properties" (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997, p. 246). Enduring involvement exemplifies the magnitude of lasting devotion a person has to a leisure activity. The importance of an adventure tourism product is reflected in one's values and personal beliefs, which are considered enduring (Kyle & Chick, 2004). Determining significant motivations that lead to strong enduring involvement in adventure tourism will help marketers understand why people participate in adventure tourism activities. Once determined, value will be added as marketing managers can target and appeal to these motivations. In understanding the degree of involvement for adventure tourism activities, we will be able to craft a marketing strategy based on the meanings that the activity reflects in the mind

of the consumer. The two factors of involvement measured in this study include enjoyment and self-expression (McIntyre, 1989; Schuett, 1993). Enjoyment is the acknowledged importance of an activity (adventure tourism activity) and the pleasure derived from participation in that activity (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004) while self-expression is the degree to which participants express their individuality through the activity setting (Gross & Brown, 2008). These two factors have been shown to be reliable among studies in recreation (Kyle & Chick, 2004; McIntyre, 1992) and in tourism (Gross & Brown, 2008).

Summary

With the number of adventurous personality types growing amongst the general population, more and more interest is apparent for adventure tourism activities. Given the increased relevance of the adventure tourism segment, it is imperative that we understand people's motivations for participation in an adventure tourism activity, and understand the relationship between their motivation and lasting involvement in the activity. A lasting involvement will ultimately help to predict revisit intention and positive word of mouth toward the activity and the setting in which the activity occurred.

This research contributes to the existing body of research by identifying key motivational factors that are important to adventure tourists while making travel decisions. Identifying a model of adventure tourism is important because a general recreation model cannot be generalized. Activity type is important to distinguish when developing a model for outdoor recreation (Kyle, Absher, Hammitt, & Cavin, 2006). Thus, this study's main focus is adventure recreation.

This research quantified enduring involvement, place attachment, along with positive outcomes related to satisfaction with their visit (word-of-mouth, repeat patronage intention, satisfaction). The study investigates the motivations for adventure tourism as related to enduring involvement, place attachment and positive outcomes such as revisit intention and positive word-of-mouth. As the number of adventure tourists has increased, as well as the amount of available adventure tourism activities, it is important to understand the roles that motivations and involvement play in the success of an adventure tourism destination. Few studies have examined how the motivations of adventure tourists relate to the success of an adventure tourism destination. Due to the dearth of research in this area, the main purpose of this study is to develop an adventure tourism model, outlining the main motivations of adventure tourists which lead to an enduring involvement and place attachment, and ultimately an intent to revisit and speak positively about a destination. Specific objectives for this study include:

Objective 1: To determine the primary motivations for adventure tourists at a whitewater destination.

Objective 2: To determine which motivations lead to each dimension of enduring involvement.

Objective 3: To determine which dimensions of enduring involvement lead to an affective response.

Objective 4: To determine if the affective response leads to a place attachment.

Objective 5: To determine if place attachment leads to positive outcomes such as word-of-mouth and revisit intention.

Operational Definitions

Adventure tourism is defined as activities that normally occur outdoors and appear exciting to the consumer and include an element of risk (Page, Steele, & Connell, 2006).

Adventure tourist is a person who travels 50 miles or more, one way, to participate in outdoor activities that are exciting to the consumer and have an element of risk/danger.

Motivation has been referred to as a psychological or biological need or want, which direct a person's behavior and subsequent activity (Dann, 1981).

Tourism is defined "as the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one year for leisure, business, and other purposes" (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003, p. 7).

Tourist is defined as a person who travels 50 miles or more, one way, to an area visited (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003, p.8).

Travel is defined as activities associated with overnight trips away from home in paid accommodations. This includes day trips to places 50 miles or more, one way, from the traveler's origin (www.state.tn.us).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter provides a literature review relevant to important factors that influence the motivation for participation and lasting involvement in adventure tourism activities. The first section discusses the motivations for adventure tourism. These motivations can be understood using specific motivational factors obtained from the Recreational Experience Preference Scale (REP Scale). The REP scale is discussed as well as the types of motivations relevant to adventure tourists. Motivations for adventure tourists can be further understood through the theoretical lens of push-pull motivational theory. The second part provides an overview of adventure tourism activities and adventure tourism. The third section discusses the sociological theory of edgework and how this theory explains the risk taking motivation of adventure tourists. The fourth section provides a review of enduring involvement for an activity (specifically adventure tourism). The fifth section offers a review of place attachment in adventure tourism and the factors that lead to an attachment to place. The sixth section demonstrates the relationship between enduring involvement and place attachment in the literature. Finally, the seventh section provides an overview of outcome variables (from participating in an adventure tourism activity) and how these positive outcomes occur as a result of enduring involvement and place attachment. These positive outcomes include positive word-of-mouth and intention to revisit (an adventure destination).

Motivations for Adventure Tourism

There is an increasingly apparent need for motivational research in tourism, specifically adventure tourism (Bentley & Page, 2001; Hall, 1992; Williams & Soutar, 2005). Motivation is “the process that accounts for an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal,” (Robbins, 2003, p. 155). Yet another definition describes motivation as an *inner state* that helps to channel and sustain one’s behavior to attain their goals (Pizam, Neumann, & Reichel, 1979). Research on motivation can help us to determine and understand the reasons for participation in adventure tourism (Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991). Very little research has been conducted in the past that explores the reasons why people participate in adventure tourism and thus there is essential to study adventure tourism motivations to gain a better understanding of why people participate in adventure activities (Allman et al., 2009; Bentley & Page, 2001). The majority of studies that have discussed adventure tourism motivations have been qualitative in nature (Mcgillivray & Frew, 2007; Wu & Liang, 2011). In understanding the motivations for people engaging in an adventure activity we can as a result offer insights into human psychology (Buckley, 2012; Holyfield, 1999) and from the perspective of the tourism operators we can help to construct and ultimately market their adventure product (Buckley, 2007; Williams & Soutar, 2009). Much of the research on adventure tourism has not explored the motivations for participation in such activities. Thus it is important that we determine the motivations for such participation in order to augment the literature for academia as well as exemplify a greater understanding for adventure tourism companies to aid in their marketing to potential customers (Cater, 2006; Schneider & Vogt, 2012).

One of the most comprehensive scales used to measure motivations for leisure and recreational activities is called the Recreational Experience Preference Scale (REP). The recreation experience preference scale (REP) was developed by Driver et al. (1996) as a result of the collection of motivational items for leisure and recreation since the early 1970's. These items were intended to capture the psychological outcomes that result from engaging in outdoor recreation. These scales have been tested and retested in many different studies, the majority of these studies encompassing leisure recreation rather than adventure activities. Since these items have been tested and retested in many leisure studies, their reliability and validity have been confirmed. For the motivational items in this research, those motivational needs specifically selected for the adventure model are referred to as *adventure needs*, as motivational items in past leisure studies have been referred to as *leisure needs*, (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). Some of the motivational factors or needs include skill development, social recognition, risk taking, and achievement.

Risk has been known to be a key motivator in adventure tourism (Page, Steele, & Connell, 2006; Schneider & Vogt, 2012). In fact, the element of risk/danger is a unique aspect of adventure tourism activities. While many are discouraged from participation in activities that have risk or danger attached, adventure tourists are motivated by the existence of risk. According to Mittal (1989), risk is an antecedent to an enduring involvement in the adventure activity. Though risk is a main motivator for adventure tourism, it is important that we explore other motives for participating in adventure activities (Gyimóthy & Mykletun, 2004). Buckley (2012) recently outlined some of the motivations of adventure tourists (including risk) after performing a literature review of a number of adventure tourism studies. The majority of adventure tourism studies that were

reviewed were qualitative, but they outlined some key motivations of adventure tourists including: risk, thrill, fear, control, skills, achievement, fitness, nature, art, spirit, friends, image, and escape. Six of these factors from this listing (including risk) have good support in the literature and were further explored in this study. These factors include excitement, achievement, physical fitness, risk taking, nature, and socialization.

In addition to risk, excitement is a key motivator for participants in adventure tourism (Anderson, Anderson, & Young, 2000; Fluker & Turner, 2000; Kouthouris, 2009). As the definition states, adventure tourism activities are activities that appear exciting to the consumer (Arnould & Price, 1993; Bentley & Page, 2001; Buckley, 2007). Thus adventure tourists are motivated to participating in activities that appear exciting in their mind (Allman et al., 2009). Much of the excitement of participating in adventure tourism activities comes from amount of risk involved (Anderson et al., 2000). When adventure tourists experience an adventure activity, the emotional highs they receive contribute to a sense of excitement (Williams & Soutar, 2009). Adventure tourism companies need to communicate the excitement of the activity to appeal to an adventure tourist (Dube & Morgan, 1996). Tourists who seek adventure want the activity to sound thrilling and exciting, and to contain intense and memorable experiences (Fluker & Turner, 2000).

Another key motivator for adventure tourists is the motivation to experience their natural surroundings and to be close to nature (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Scherl, 1989; Williams, Patterson, & Roggenbuck, 1992). Most adventure tourism activities are experienced outdoors, and this adds additional motivation to adventure tourists that wish to experience a natural outdoor setting (Buckley, 2007). An adventure tourism activity

such as whitewater rafting relies on the natural features of the outdoor landscape (Buckley, 2003; Buckley, 2006). The need to experience nature distinguishes adventure tourists from other forms of tourists (Cloke & Perkins, 1998). Of all outdoor tourism activities, adventure tourism is the fastest growing activity for outdoor tourists, thus the number of people who wish to experience excitement in their natural surroundings is growing (Cater, 2006; Williams & Soutar, 2009). Many of the motivations of adventure tourism are related to one another. For instance, adventure tourists expose themselves to the unpredictability of nature in order to experience risk (Walle, 1997).

Another motivation for participation in whitewater rafting is to stay active and physically fit. Many adventure tourism activities challenge the participant physically and thus contribute to the individual's overall physical well-being (given there are no injuries) (Cloke & Perkins, 1998). Physical adventure activities such as whitewater kayaking, rafting, mountain climbing, and skiing would include the physical fitness dimension as a motivator for adventure tourists (Kouthouris, 2009). Many tourists participate in these adventure activities in order to keep physically fit (Todd, Graefe, & Mann, 2001).

Adventure tourists wish their experience to not only be physical, but a social experience as well (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). Adventure tourists wish to participate in adventure activities with friends, family, and other people who prefer similar activities (Kouthouris, 2009). Some people spend large amounts of time with other people who prefer adventure activities, people that have similar likes and dislikes (Anderson et al., 2000; Havitz, Dimanche, & Bogle, 1994). The social aspect of an adventure tourism activity is an important motivation due to the increased popularity of adventure tourism (Anderson et al., 2000).

Adventure tourists are motivated by the need to conquer an adventure tourism activity, and to successfully navigate the activity (i.e. successful rafting trip, successful skydive, successful mountain climb) (Anderson et al., 2000). These motivations include the need to achieve self-defined or operator-defined success when partaking in an adventure activity. An adventure tourist's self-defined success can include goals and objectives that he wishes to achieve when participating in an adventure tourism activity (Brocato, 2006; Kane & Tucker, 2004).

Push-pull Motivational Theory

The push and pull motivations of a destination represent the reasons why people choose to participate in a tourism activity and in the case of the current study, an adventure tourism activity (Dann, 1977). Push-pull motivational theory is a motivational theory that specifically applies to tourism, and is the only tourism-specific motivation theory which explains why people travel (Klenosky, 2002). The push factors of motivation include the factors which *push* the tourist to travel. These factors can include excitement, physical fitness, achievement, and risk (motivational push factors used to measure motivational need in this study). The factors that pull a tourist to travel are related to the precise location of the destination (such as the natural surroundings or *nature* used as a motivational need in this study). The pull factors we can liken to the specific attributes of that destination that are unique to any other destination. These unique attributes pull the tourist to a specific place that will most likely meet his or her motivational needs. When we consider push and pull motivational factors, they can be likened to two important travel decisions. The push motivations represent whether the

person will travel and the pull motivations represent where the person will travel (Dann, 1981; Klenosky, 2002).

Tourism studies measuring push-pull motivations have measured motivations in different ways. Some authors have used qualitative approaches to explore push-pull motivational theory including personal interviewing in the methodology (Crompton, 1979; Grimm & Needham, 2012; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). Other studies have used survey data to explore the motivations of travellers (Cha, McCleary, & Uysal, 1995; Fluker & Turner, 2000; Oh, Uysal, & Weaver, 1995; Smith et al., 2010; Sirakaya & Mclellan, 1997; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Of the studies which have measured push-pull motivations using survey data, two studies in adventure tourism have used push-pull theory as theoretical support for their study (Fluker & Turner, 2000; Pomfret, 2006). One of the two adventure tourism studies utilizing push-pull theory studied the activity of whitewater rafting (Fluker & Turner, 2000). Another study viewed push and pull motivational factors for the participation in mountain climbing (Pomfret, 2006). A key pull motivator outlined in this study was the characteristics of the natural environment. Being outside, being close to nature is important to the adventure tourist. This is due in part to the natural setting of a majority of adventure activities whether it is skiing, spelunking, sky diving, mountain climbing, or whitewater rafting. Other factors have been outlined as pull motivations for adventure tourists includes the brand, services provided, landscape features, and weather (Pomfret, 2006).

Adventure Tourism Activities

As stated above, adventure tourism includes activities such as backpacking, kayaking, sailing, snowshoeing, spelunking, sky diving, rock climbing, rafting, mountaineering, ballooning, zorbing, hang-gliding, diving, and bicycling. These activities occur outdoors, are exciting to the consumer, and have an element of risk/danger. There have been limited empirical articles measuring the motivations of adventure tourists and the outcomes of these motivations. Studies of adventure activities includes research on mountain climbing (Carnicelli-Filho, Schwartz, & Tahara, 2010; Kiewa, 2001; McIntyre, 1992; Pomfret, 2006) skydiving (Allman, Mittelstaedt, Martin, & Goldenberg, 2009; Laurendeau, 2006; Lipscombe, 2010) and whitewater rafting (Arnould & Price, 1993; Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Cater, 2006; Fluker & Turner, 2000; Holyfield & Fine, 1997; Wu & Liang, 2011). This research has helped to introduce new theory to explain the needs and motivations of adventure tourists. As a prime example, edgework theory has been discussed as a possible explanation for the reasoning as to why people participate in adventure activities (Allman et al., 2009; Laurendeau, 2006).

Edgework

Edgework theory is critical to consider when examining the motivations of adventure tourists (Lyng, 1990). One of the strongest motivators for the participation in adventure tourism is risk. Risk is a key motivator whether there is actual risk or whether the risk is just perceived but minimal. A number of articles have stated that one of the allures of adventure tourism is any apparent danger that might be involved. Adventure tourists want to feel challenged, and when they face danger, this can lead to exhilaration

and joy upon completing the task. The edgework theory of voluntary risk-taking can be used to help explain why people (edgeworkers) chose to engage in risky behavior such as whitewater rafting and base jumping (Lyng, 1990). Edgeworkers are people that engage in edgework activities. The sensations that edgeworkers feel when they engage in risky edgework activities can include fear during the moments leading up to the activities following by feelings of exhilaration (Lyng, 1990).

Edgeworkers seek feelings of discomfort as they face their fears, navigating boundary between possible danger/disaster and safety without losing control (Laurendeau, 2006; Lyng, 1990). They continue to take risks (lasting, enduring involvement) even though they may be desensitized to the level of risk after frequent participation (Lupton & Tulloch, 2002). Lyng (1990) used the BASE jumping subculture (adventure tourism activity) as an example of those that take voluntary risk (edgeworkers). Edgework activities which include a very high chance of injury or death are called extreme sports. Any mishap during extreme sports can prove to be fatal (Brymer & Oades, 2007). BASE jumping is an example of an extreme sport which includes a high degree of risk (Allman et al., 2009).

According to Lyng (1990), there are three stages in how people practice edgework activities. The first stage is the preparation stage in which edgeworkers feel nervous and a little fearful about participating in the activity. The second stage is the performing stage, when edgeworkers often act without considering the serious consequences. The third state is the aftermath stage, when edgeworkers achieve self-actualization and their self-image is magnified and reflective of their latest triumph (Lois, 2005).

Enduring Involvement

Enduring involvement is a measure that finds its roots in consumer literature. This leisure theory can be traced back to 1985, when Laurent & Kapferer (1985) proposed that enduring involvement had more than one dimension. The traditional method of using one overarching dimension had been widely accepted until Laurent and Kapferer's (1985) study. Enduring involvement encompasses the concept of commitment, i.e. how engaged is the consumer in relation to the product (McIntyre, 1989). When we think in terms of consumerism, when one has high involvement, they will make purchases that are personally important and pertinent to the consumer. In contrast, low involvement consumers will make purchases that are not personally important (Havitz & Howard, 1990).

If we are aware of the degree of consumer involvement towards an adventure tourism activity, we will be able to create a marketing strategy based on the meanings that the activity reflects in the mind of the consumer. Marketing managers will know how to better craft a marketing strategy by understanding the meanings involved in a product or in this case an adventure tourism product. As stated by Laurent and Kapferrer (1985) enduring involvement: "derives from the perception that the product is related to centrally held values, those defining one's singularity, and identity, one's ego." (p. 42).

It was not until 1989, that the idea of enduring involvement was applied and conceptualized for leisure and tourism. Research by McIntyre (1989) facilitated the measurement of the strength of the meanings of different leisure activities in the minds of consumers. McIntyre (1989) posits that the personal meaning we derive from activities pertaining to leisure can be conceptualized as enduring involvement. The first

operationalization of an enduring involvement for adventure activities classified the concept into four factors: enjoyment, importance, centrality, and self-expression (Schuett, 1993). These four factors have proven reliable among various studies (Gross & Brown, 2008; Kyle & Chick, 2004; McIntyre, 1992). Since this initial conception, some of the factors have been applied in leisure activities (centrality, self-expression, enjoyment), but the application of enduring involvement to adventure activities has been largely ignored (Kouthouris, 2009).

Dimensions of enduring involvement: Attraction/Enjoyment

The first of the three dimensions that have been the most widely used is enjoyment. This measure is conceptualized as the acknowledged significance of an activity (in this case an adventure tourism activity) and the pleasure derived from participation in that activity (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004). This enjoyment dimension was created using items related to importance of participation and enjoyment (McIntyre, 1992).

Dimensions of enduring involvement: Self-Expression

The second dimension of enduring involvement is self-expression. Self-expression is the degree to which participants express their individuality through the setting (Michael J. Gross & Brown, 2008). Participation prompts feelings of freedom from the constrictions of normal life. Self-expression denotes the impression of the self that consumers wish to express to others through their participation in the tourism activity (Kyle & Chick, 2004). The activity provides the opportunity for self-affirmation, and allows consumers to be themselves.

Dimensions of enduring involvement: Importance

The third dimension of enduring involvement, importance, represents the perceived meaning that an adventure tourism activity has for the consumer. Importance is an ongoing care and interest in the adventure activity (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). If the activity is important to the consumer, then the consumer will be more involved with the activity and it will place a greater meaning to that adventure consumer (Havitz, 1995). According to Mittal (1989), importance is a primary factor for an enduring and lasting involvement. When an adventure consumer has a strong enduring involvement (importance dimension) in an activity, they have a high interest in the strategy, skills, and knowledge involved in becoming an expert in the activity.

Dimensions of enduring involvement: Centrality

The final dimension of enduring involvement is centrality to lifestyle. Centrality to lifestyle is the extent to which consumers' social bonds circulate around a *leisure* activity. Whether consumer lifestyles are impacted in a meaningful way is a key aspect of this dimension (Havitz et al., 1994). An adventure tourism activity could be considered central if a consumer's way of life is organized about that activity (Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2003). While this factor can be applied in an adventure setting, the authors would argue that seasonal activities cannot be central to one's lifestyle. Therefore, whitewater rafting in many areas cannot be central to one's lifestyle as people raft the river during the warmer months only.

Place Attachment

Place attachment is important to study in order to better understand adventure tourist behavior (Lee, 2001). Place attachment is defined as an emotional bond between a consumer and a specific place (Bowlby, 1988). This emotional bond results from visiting and fulfilling one's adventure needs at a place. The attachment that an adventure consumer has with a place produces strong emotions resulting in positive outcomes such as revisit intention and word of mouth communications (Bloemer & Ruyter, 1999; Gitelson & Crompton, 1984; Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2004). When people visit a place over and over, this becomes habitual and they become reliant on that place for their adventure needs (George, 2004). When adventure tourists visit a place more often, their attachment to the place tends to become stronger (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Thus place attachments develop over time between a person and an adventure destination and are generally positive depending on the nature of the experiences (Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005). Places that seem ordinary can become exceptional due to repeated adventure experiences (Stedman, Beckley, Wallace, & Ambard, 2004). The more experiences one has in a place, the higher the place identity and place dependence for that person (Hunt, 2008).

Research has revealed that attachment can be applied in different settings. Some of these settings include psychology research (Weiss, 1988), various brands in marketing research (Belk, 1988; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park, 2005), various places in tourism research (Gross & Brown, 2006; Hou, 2005), and various places in recreation settings (Kyle et al., 2004; Smith, Siderelis, & Moore, 2010), including a whitewater adventure tourism setting (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000). Place attachment can help adventure

tourism marketers in their understanding of the responses of consumers to a variety of outdoor adventure activities relating to place (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Moore & Graefe, 1994).

Dimensions of Attachment: Place Identity

An individual's internal concepts can be characterized as aspects of his/her self-identity (Knez, 2005). An important concept for determining one's own self-identity is place (Steele, 1988). Hence place identity is defined as "those dimensions of the self that define the individual's personal identity in relation to the physical environment," (Proshansky, 1978, p.155). Place identity is not instantaneous but rather it is built over time as a result of positive experiences from repeat visits (Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). For adventure tourists, any place that offers adventure activities can be a representative focal point to one's life and will consequently have a high degree of place identity (Moore & Graefe, 1994).

Dimensions of Attachment: Place Dependence

As stated above, people visit a place to fulfill their motivational (adventure) needs. When the adventure needs of a tourist are fulfilled in a place, the person becomes more dependent on the place for these types of experiences (Prayag & Ryan, 2011). Place dependence can be defined as a person's perception of their association and dependence on a particular place (Stokols & Schumaker, 1981). If a place offers the services required to participate in desired adventure activities, there will be a strong place dependence (Kyle, Bricker, et al., 2004). When a consumer is place dependent there would be difficulty substituting that one place for another (for adventure activities) (Hunt, 2008).

Enduring Involvement and Place Attachment

The first study to measure enduring involvement and place attachment in a single study occurred in 1997 (Mowen, Graefe, & Virden, 1997). The authors for this conference proceeding found that the more attached and involved leisure consumers are, the more positive they will be in their evaluation of the setting and experience, in this case a national park. Since the setting was a national park, the majority of those surveyed were not there for adventure, but rather for leisure, so limited risk was involved. The authors recommend that scholars study enduring involvement and place attachment together because as a whole, they have a strong impact on the perceptions of both the recreation experience and the site of the leisure activity. We can use both leisure involvement and place attachment to create a more complete framework that will help both managers and scholars alike become more aware of how service quality, satisfaction, and visitor evaluations affect consumers' leisure experience and their view of the activity, setting, and experience (Mowen et al., 1997).

Kyle et al. (2003) sought to measure both place attachment and enduring involvement simultaneously using covariance structure analysis. The sample for this study included hikers on the Appalachian Trail. The goal of the authors here was to predict whether activity involvement (attraction, centrality, and self-expression) leads to place attachment (place identity and place dependence). Because this was a hiking sample, the study should be considered leisure recreation rather than adventure tourism. The findings of the study indicated that the place identity dimension of place attachment was best predicted by the self-expression and attraction dimensions of enduring

involvement. Self-expression was the lone predictor of place dependence (Kyle et al., 2003).

Kyle et al (2004) conducted another study using the same data set as the study above in comparison with two other leisure activities. In addition to using the sample of hikers along the Appalachian Trail, the authors also used rafters and kayakers (mentioned above) on a California river and anglers in New England. The results of the three groups showed that recreationists' relationships with settings and activities varied among the three sample groups. The overall results suggested that leisure involvement and the centrality dimension, in particular, was a better predictor of the place identity dimension of place attachment than of place dependence.

One of two studies of tourism using place attachment and enduring involvement studied visitors to a national park in Taiwan. This study discovered that involvement and place attachment had positive effects on satisfaction and perceived service quality (Hwang et al., 2005). The authors in this study used a structural equation model to examine the relationships between the constructs satisfaction, place attachment and tourists' involvement.

The most recent study measuring enduring involvement and place attachment simultaneously is a study from Gross & Brown (2008). This study used the exact same model as Kyle et al. (2003) to determine the relationship between enduring involvement and place attachment. The authors designed a path model of enduring involvement leading to place attachment and tested this model using structural equation modeling. The sample in this study was clearly different from that of leisure research in that people were not sampled in a leisure setting. Rather, the people sampled were tourists who were

present at a Visitor Information Centre (VIC) or a selected attraction like a wine cellar or resort (Gross & Brown, 2008). Thus this study is using theory derived in leisure to conduct a study in the tourism field. Because this model was used for tourists, the authors added a dimension to the leisure involvement construct (food and wine) for a total of four dimensions including centrality, attraction, and self-expression. Two dimensions were used for the place attachment construct, place dependence and place identity. The results of the study indicated that an involvement in tourism on the food and wine and the centrality dimensions were positive predictors for place attachment. This indicates that the lifestyle of the Australian tourist positively affects the attachment to the visited place (Gross & Brown, 2008).

The research studies mentioned above support the notion of measuring enduring involvement and place attachment together. Looking at the relationship between multiple constructs can help to gain a better overall understanding of the nature of the relationship between the consumer and the activity/setting under analysis. In applying another study of tourism to leisure theory, scholars from one field can learn from another and ultimately achieve a synthesis of research across disciplines. Because various studies listed above have different outcomes depending on the setting and location, it is difficult to predict the result of the path model between enduring involvement and place attachment.

Positive Outcomes: Word-of-Mouth and Revisit Intention

Tourism marketers wish for adventure travellers to speak positively about a destination and revisit that destination in the future. Word-of-mouth is communicated when adventure consumers speak positively of their adventure experiences to friends,

acquaintances, and family (Wangenheim & Bayón, 2004). Word-of-mouth marketing is especially important to adventure tour providers because it helps to generate new business (Williams & Soutar, 2009). This new business is primarily generated through word-of-mouth communications. These word of mouth communications considerably affect an adventure tourist's destination choice (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984; Nolan, 1976). In fact, word-of-mouth marketing is the primary vehicle for which adventure tourism customers receive information about adventure destinations/services (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Meric & Hunt, 1998; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993).

Because of the experiential nature of adventure tourism providers/services, word-of-mouth communications are perceived to be more credible and reliable (than professional marketing communications) (Williams & Soutar, 2009). The positive and unique experiences of an adventure destination cause an adventure tourist to travel to the destination again to repeat these experiences. The more positive these experiences, the more likely these experiences will generate new business for the destination via positive word of mouth (Smith et al., 2010). Though these positive outcomes are so important to the success of an adventure destination, few adventure tourism studies have addressed the outcomes of marketing adventure locations. Consequently, Williams and Soutar (2009) recommends that future studies should explore the causes of the behavioral intention of adventure tourists (specifically word-of-mouth and revisit intention). Repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth communication/marketing are important for the continued growth of the adventure tourism industry (Ruyter & Wetzels, 1997).

Hypotheses Development

This study uses a model of motivation and involvement to explain the behaviors of adventure tourists. The model is supported by Edgework theory, theories of motivation, and leisure theory/consumer behavior including enduring involvement and place attachment. In this model, it is being tested whether or not motivational factors have a direct effect on enduring involvement with the activity, and whether this enduring involvement leads to an affective response which in turn leads to an attachment to the adventure setting. An attachment to the adventure setting may in turn lead to a positive word of mouth and a revisit intention toward the place.

Motivations → Involvement

The enduring involvement concept is central to the integration of motivational push and pull factors (Goossens, 2000). Furthermore, an understanding of the motivations for adventure activities can provide insight into the level of involvement in an activity (Havitz & Dimanche, 1990). Only two previous studies have investigated how the motivations of recreational participants directly affect the enduring involvement in an activity (Kouthouris, 2009; Kyle, Absher, Hammitt, & Cavin, 2006). Only one of these studies measured the relationship between motivations and involvement in an adventure setting (skiing) (Kouthouris, 2009). Kouthouris (2009) investigated the degree to which motivation and involvement predict intention to continue to participate in the adventure (skiing) activity rather than an intention to revisit a specific adventure tourism destination. Motivation was tested as a mediator between involvement and intention to continue skiing using multiple regression. Results found that motivation partially

mediated the relationship between involvement and continued participation in skiing. Motivation and involvement directly predicted continued participation.

Kyle et al. (2006) tested the relationship between motivation and a conceptualization of enduring involvement designed to measure leisure activities. This conceptualization split the factor self-expression into two separate factors: identity expression, and identity affirmation. Additional factors of enduring leisure involvement included centrality to lifestyle, social bonding, and enjoyment (attraction). Each of these five factors of enduring leisure involvement had 3-5 representative item measures. The relationship between enduring leisure involvement and motivations (Escape, Nature, Bonding, Learning, and Social) were measured simultaneously using structural equation modeling (SEM). The data was obtained using a sample of campers (leisure activity rather than adventure) drawn from three campsites in the southeastern USA. The authors sought to determine whether motivations for participating in a leisure activity (camping) had a positive impact on the dimensions of enduring involvement. The effect of motivation (escape, nature, bonding, learning, and social) on enduring involvement (attraction, centrality, social bonding, identity affirmation, identity expression) was positive though not all paths were significant. Based on the results the authors concluded that motivation is an antecedent of enduring involvement in a leisure setting. Kyle et al. (2006) indicates that the relationship between motivations and enduring involvement can be understood by viewing the expectancy-value model developed by Lawler (1973). This model indicates that as time passes, people learn the benefits that adventure tourism activities contribute, and thus become more deeply enmeshed or involved in those activities which best meet their adventure needs.

Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman (2004) investigated the relationship between motivation and enduring involvement among attendees at a Women's National Basketball Association game. Their analysis identified 18 motive attributes (measured using 54 items) that were specific to a spectator sport (WNBA basketball). This study therefore cannot be generalized further than women's professional basketball. The results from this study indicated that motives (of spectator sport) were antecedents of enduring involvement. The enjoyment dimension of involvement was most strongly affected by motivational elements such as a (wholesome) environment, entertainment and excitement. Centrality (to lifestyle) was strongly affected by a socialization motivation. A third dimension of involvement, self-expression, was strongly affected by the motivations team identification and role models (Funk et al., 2004).

Another study by Schuett (1993) measured the effect of a number of independent variables (frequency of participation, skill level, experience, social orientation, environmental preference, psychological outcomes, perceived risk, locus of control, and sensation seeking) on the enduring involvement of whitewater kayaking participants. This study was one of the few studies that consider motivations and enduring involvement in an adventure setting. The author found that the strength of enduring involvement was predicted by skill level, psychological outcomes, gender, frequency of participation, and perceived risk. Thus this study supported the notion that perceived risk motivation affects enduring involvement (specifically the self-expression dimension) (Schuett, 1993).

Risk motivation → Self-Expression

Risk has been found to be a significant predictor of the involvement factor *self-expression* but not significant for other factors such as enjoyment or importance. This was demonstrated in two separate regression analyses (Kouthouris, 2009; Schuett, 1993). As mentioned above, Schuett (1993) supports the relationship of risk motivation to the involvement factor self-expression. Schuett (1993) found that whitewater kayakers with a strong risk motivation have a (statistically significant) stronger enduring involvement with the whitewater kayaking activity. Similarly, Kouthouris (2009) measured the effect of a number of independent variables including risk on the enduring involvement of skiing participants. Kouthouris (2009) found that the strength of the enduring involvement factor self-expression was predicted by risk using multiple regression analysis. Furthermore, Lyng (2005) states that edgeworkers (those that voluntarily take risks) express themselves by demonstrating (to themselves and others) they can survive and excel when participating in risky activities. These adventure tourists (edgeworkers) affirm their own existence (self-expression) through the participation in risky adventure activities (Lyng, 2005).

Motives have been shown to be significantly affected by past experience (Todd et al., 2001). If tourists are reliant on an activity and destination for the type of experiences that they are motivated to pursue, then the tourist will more likely participate in the activity again and again forming an enduring involvement (Kouthouris, 2009; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Push-pull motivational theory and enduring involvement theory supports this relationship, thus in testing the relationship we can expect it to be significant on different levels according to the level of experience of participants. When people are

pushed and pulled to participate in an activity, the level of past experience influences type of motivations and level of enduring involvement in the activity. The types of motivations in the literature that are influenced by the level of experience include risk and excitement (Holyfield, Jonas, & Zajicek, 2005; Todd et al., 2001). The more experienced an adventure tourist is in an activity, the less perceived risk and the lesser its effect on enduring involvement (Anderson et al., 2000). While the risk motivation may decrease, it still is a motivating factor for experienced adventure tourists. The risk involved often results in fear, exhilaration and a high that results in continued involvement (supported by edgework theory, push-pull motivational theory, and involvement theory, Holyfield, Jonas, & Zajicek, 2005; Lyng, 2005; Todd et al., 2001).

H1a: Higher risk motivation level will lead to a stronger level of involvement: self-expression.

H1b: Experience Level with whitewater rafting will moderate the relationship between risk motivation and involvement: self-expression.

Excitement motivation → Enjoyment

As stated above, push-pull motivational theory and enduring involvement theory support that an excitement motivation leads to a lasting involvement in an activity. The adventure need *excitement* is a powerful magnetic pull for adventure tourists' continuance to participate in an adventure activity. *To experience feelings of excitement* is a motivational need for adventure tourists (Buckley, 2012). These feelings (of excitement) are directly related to enjoying one's adventure experience, as an ultimate goal of adventure tourists is to experience excitement and the resulting enjoyment that

occurs (McIntyre & Pigram, 1992) . Excitement has been found to be a predictor of enjoyment in studies of outdoor activities but was insignificant as a predictor of self-expression or importance (in a regression analysis) (Kouthouris, 2009). Characteristics of the excitement dimension include sensations, tension release, exhilaration and action (Kouthouris, 2009; Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986). The more experienced an adventure tourist is in an activity, the less excitement is experienced (when participating in the activity) and the lesser its effect on enduring involvement (specifically the enjoyment dimension) (Anderson et al., 2000). Based on previous relationships formulated in literature, we can make the following hypotheses below.

H2a: Higher excitement motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

H2b: Experience Level with whitewater rafting will moderate the relationship between excitement motivation and level of enjoyment.

Achievement Motivation → Enjoyment

If an adventure tourism setting possesses the activities that can affectively lead to personal achievement, then a lasting involvement with the activity and setting can occur (Yuksel et al., 2010). Alternatively, when a person is motivated to achieve an adventure activity (such as whitewater rafting); they are more likely to continue to participate in that activity. This enduring involvement in the activity is influenced by the adventure tourist's expression of their individuality through the participation in the activity. This is supported through previous research on motivations and involvement which have shown that achievement is an antecedent to the involvement factors enjoyment and self-expression (Kouthouris, 2009; Kyle et al., 2006). Kouthouris (2009) sought to establish a

link between motivations and involvement using a multiple regression analysis. A separate regression analysis was entered for each the involvement dimensions enjoyment (attraction), and self-expression. The motivations of escape, achievement, and socialization (be with friends) were found to significantly affect enjoyment. In other words, when a person is motivated to achieve an adventure activity, they will obtain a sense of pleasure resulting in a lasting involvement.

H3: Higher achievement motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

Achievement Motivation → Self-Expression

People that like to experience risk are motivated to achieve success when participating in risky activities (Slanger & Rudestam, 1997). These people (adventure tourists) express themselves by succeeding in adventure activities (Kiewa, 2001). Adventure activities that are physically demanding (such as whitewater rafting) are difficult to navigate (staying in the raft, avoiding rocks) thus people feel a sense of achievement upon completion of the rafting trip. In other words, people express themselves by participating in physically demanding activities that come with a sense of achievement (Ferrer-Caja & Weiss, 2000).

H4: Higher achievement motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

Socialization Motivation → Enjoyment

Adventure tourists enjoy socializing with others (family, friends, and acquaintances) that have similar interests, and participate in similar activities. Socializing with those who have similar interests motivates adventure tourists to participate in an activity (Buckley, 2012). This enjoyment leads to a lasting, enduring involvement in the

adventure activity (Kyle, Bricker, Graefe, & Wickham, 2004). Previous research on motivations and involvement have shown that socialization is an antecedent to the involvement factor enjoyment (Schuett, 1993). This relationship implies that when a person is motivated to interact with others socially during an adventure activity, they will experience pleasure during participation resulting in a lasting involvement (Kyle et al., 2006).

H5: Higher socialization motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

Socialization Motivation → Self Expression

Adventure tourists affirm their own self-identity via interacting with friends, family, and acquaintances (during an adventure activity). Prior research has demonstrated that socialization is an antecedent to self-expression (when participating in an adventure activity) (Schuett, 1993). In other words, when a person is motivated to interact with others socially during an adventure activity, this activity will help to formulate and shape their own self-identity. Through the participation in adventure activities, the adventure tourist will affirm who they are and this participation will result in a lasting, enduring involvement (in the adventure activity) (Kyle et al., 2006).

H6: Higher socialization motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

Nature Motivation → Self-Expression

Nature is a significant pull factor for those that participate in adventure activities outdoors (Morgan & Hodgkinson, 1999). When adventure tourists are motivated by nature and the natural environment, they are *pulled* to a specific destination (Dann, 1981; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). While at this adventure destination, adventure tourists express

themselves through the participation in an adventure activity (such as whitewater rafting) (Hwang, Lee, & Chen, 2005; Kyle, Mowen, & Tarrant, 2004). The adventure tourist's self-image and the image they wish to portray to others through participation in outdoor activities will lead to a lasting involvement in adventure activities such as whitewater rafting (Kyle et al., 2006). People express themselves through travel, thus when people are motivated to travel by the natural surroundings, they are identifying themselves as outdoor adventure tourists (Adler, 1989).

H7: Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

Nature Motivation → Enjoyment

For many tourists, their primary hobbies include the participation in outdoor activities for enjoyment. Outdoor adventurers that travel to an adventure destination experience their natural surroundings while enjoying the scenery, plants, animals, trees, water, and other natural elements (Luzar & Diagne, 1995). The enjoyment obtained from outdoor activities can lead to a lasting involvement (in the type of activities that bring adventure tourists into their natural surroundings) (McIntyre, 1992; Schuett, 1993). A hobby indicates an enjoyment in the activity and the participation in outdoor activities as a hobby specifies an enduring involvement in the activity (Chick & Hood, 1996).

H8: Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

Nature Motivation → Importance

The participation in nature-based activities is a lifestyle choice and is thus important to adventure travellers (Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2002). When adventure tourists participate in activities they consider important in their lives, they will have an

enduring, lasting involvement in the activity. Adventure activities are enhanced by their natural surroundings, and dependent on these surroundings for due to their beauty (i.e. flowers, trees, water, and mountains), and unpredictability (rapidly flowing water, rocks, weather, wildlife) (Valentine, Weiler, & Hall, 1992). These attributes of nature are important to the adventure tourist. The more the destination communicates the splendor of the environment (both experientially and via marketing), the more lasting an involvement with the adventure activity (such as whitewater rafting) (Luo & Deng, 2007).

H9: Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of importance.

Physical Fitness Motivation → Self-Expression

People participate in outdoor adventure activities in order to obtain exercise and become physically fit (Buckley, 2012). Being fit is a lifestyle choice and many people identify themselves as physically fit, and having a healthy, active lifestyle (Kluge, 2002). This healthy active lifestyle is part of one's self-image and the self they wish to portray to others (Kilpatrick, Hebert, & Jacobsen, 2002). In other words, an adventure tourist's self-image is the image they desire others to see by participating in physical activities.

Attaining physical fitness utilizing adventure outdoor activities will lead to a lasting involvement in adventure activities such as whitewater rafting (Fluker & Turner, 2000; Kouthouris, 2009).

H10: Higher physical fitness motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

Physical Fitness Motivation → Enjoyment

As stated above, people participate in outdoor adventure activities in order to obtain exercise and become physically fit (Silverberg, Backman, & Backman, 1996). Many people have an affinity for exercise and derive pleasure from participating in physical exertion resulting in fitness (Heesch, Mâsse, & Dunn, 2006). In other words, many people that participate in activities resulting in physical fitness enjoy the feeling they achieve during and after participating in these activities. The enjoyment that an adventure tourist experiences through participation in physical activities outdoors will lead to a lasting involvement in adventure activities such as whitewater rafting (Flucker & Turner, 2000; Kyle et al., 2006).

H11: Higher physical fitness motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

Physical Fitness Motivation → Importance

Adventure tourists place an importance on the participating in outdoor recreation in order to obtain exercise and become physically fit (Schuett, 1993). Many people find it important to take time to exercise and find it essential to their emotional and physical well-being. Alternatively, many people that participate in activities resulting in physical fitness find it vitally important to their lifestyle and well-being (Scully, Kremer, Meade, Graham, & Dudgeon, 1998). The importance that an adventure tourist places on the physical adventure tourism activity (such as whitewater rafting) will lead to a lasting involvement in the adventure activity (Kouthouris, 2009). Thus people will participate more in the activity based upon the physical fitness resulting from said participation.

H12: Higher physical fitness motivation level will lead to a stronger level of importance.

Enduring Involvement → Affective Response

Enduring involvement theory supports the notion that an enduring involvement in an activity results in an affective response towards that activity. An affective response toward the activity represents an adventure consumer's feelings, moods, and emotions toward the activity (Malhotra, 2005). When a participant in an adventure tourism activity such as whitewater rafting has an ongoing involvement in that activity, an affective response (feelings moods, and emotions) toward the activity occurs (McIntyre & Pigram, 1992; Robinson, 1992). The stronger the enduring involvement in an activity, the greater the affective response will be. This affective response can be characterized by purchasing specialized equipment, more frequent participation in the activity, and tailoring one's lifestyle to adventure activities.

H13a: Higher level of importance will lead to a stronger affective response.

H13b: Higher level of enjoyment will lead to a stronger affective response.

H13c: Higher level of self-expression will lead to a stronger affective response.

Affective Response → Place Attachment

An affective response occurs when an adventure tourist participates in an activity and has positive experiences during the participation in that activity. This affective response towards an adventure activity is directly related and resulting in an attachment to the destination (Hong, Kim, Jang, & Lee, 2006). In other words, the positive feelings, moods, and emotions that occur (as a result from an affective response) will lead to an attachment to the place. This affective response factors significantly into whether or not an adventure tourist becomes attached to a destination. This is because an affective

response plays a heavy role in whether or not adventure tourism consumers chose to revisit a destination (Hong et al., 2006; McIntyre & Pigram, 1992). If adventure tourists have a strong affective response from the activity the place will become part of their self-identity and they will become more reliant on that place (place dependent) for the type(s) of activity (or activities) they desire (Kyle, Bricker, et al., 2004).

H14a: High level of affective response will lead to a stronger place identity.

H14b: High level of affective response will lead to stronger place dependence.

Place Identity → Positive Outcomes (Revisit Intention/Positive WOM)

Support for the relationship of self-identity to word-of-mouth and revisit intention can be found in consumer behavior literature. Prior studies have discussed the positive relationship between self-identity with a company/service and positive outcomes such as word-of-mouth communications and revisit intention (Ahearne, Bhattacharya, & Gruen, 2005; Arnett, German, & Hunt, 2003). Self-identity is a concept within place identity because place identity ensues when an adventure tourist self-identifies with the place in which the activity is taking place. When an adventure tourist identifies with the place of the activity, they are more likely to promote the place (via WOM) and adventure activities/services offered at the place (Baloglu, 2002; Petrick; 2004; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008).

H15a: A strong place identity will lead to an intention to revisit.

H15b: A strong place identity will lead to positive word-of-mouth toward the place.

Place Dependence → Positive Outcomes (Revisit Intention/Positive WOM)

When an adventure tourist becomes dependent on an outdoor adventure location, an emotional bond is formed with that location (Beckman, Kumar, & Kim, 2013; Bowlby, 1988; Uusitalo, 2010). Resulting from this emotional attachment to the downtown, the visitor promotes his or her adventure experiences to family, friends, and acquaintances (Hankinson, 2009). In due course, these positive experiences influence him or her to return to the adventure location (Beckman et al., 2013; Hunt, 2008). In other words, once a visitor is dependent on a (adventure) destination (for adventure activities), it leads to revisit intention and positive word of mouth (Beckman et al., 2013).

H16a: A strong place dependence will lead to an intention to revisit.

H16b: A strong place dependence will lead to positive word-of-mouth toward the place.

CHAPTER III

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research investigates the motivations for adventure tourism as related to enduring involvement, place attachment and positive outcomes such as revisit intention and positive word-of-mouth. As the number of adventure tourists has increased, as well as the amount of available adventure tourism activities, it is important to understand the roles that motivations and involvement play in the success of an adventure tourism destination. Few studies have examined how the motivations of adventure tourists relate to the success of an adventure tourism destination. Due to the dearth of research in this area, the main purpose of this study is to develop an adventure tourism model, outlining the main motivations of adventure tourists which lead to an enduring involvement and place attachment, and ultimately an intent to revisit and speak positively about a destination. Specific objectives for this study include:

Objective 1: To determine the primary motivations for adventure tourists at a whitewater destination.

Objective 2: To determine which motivations lead to each dimension of enduring involvement.

Objective 3: To determine which dimensions of enduring involvement lead to an affective response.

Objective 4: To determine if the affective response leads to a place attachment.

Objective 5: To determine if place attachment leads to positive outcomes such as word-of-mouth and revisit intention.

The following chapter consists of two sections. The first section describes the population and sample including all things related to the population and sample including the setting, sampling, data collection, and procedure. The second section illustrates

instrument development including content validity test, construct measurements, and a pre-test.

Population and Sample

The purpose of the study was to better understand the motivations of adventure tourists leading to enduring involvement and ultimately positive outcomes relating to the specific adventure tourism destination. The population selected to represent adventure tourist were whitewater rafters (adventure tourists) at Ocoee River in Ocoee, TN (for the year 2012). The sample included 690 whitewater rafters representative of the total whitewater rafters that visit the Ocoee River in Ocoee, TN (for the 2012 season). All the surveys were collected during the months of June-September, 2012. These months surveyed accounted for over 87% of the demand for whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River in 2011 (Moates, 2012). Rafters were surveyed on weekdays and weekends to increase the quality of the data. To further increase the quality of the data, five different outfitters (out of 24 outfitters in Ocoee, TN) were selected as sites to survey rafters after their trip (Wright, 2013). These outfitters (adventure tour operators) included Wildwater, Ocoee Outdoors, Quest Expeditions, Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC), and High Country.

Water is released on the Ocoee River from March-October with the peak rafting season in the months of June-August. Over 240,000 rafters a year visit the Ocoee River to whitewater raft with one of the 24 outfitters. The survey location was at the outfitter after the participants had finished their river trip. After dropping off their paddle, lifejacket,

and helmets participants walked toward the clubhouse area where the survey team administered the surveys.

Proposed Research Model

The proposed research model representing the impact of motivations on adventure tourism can be seen in Figure 1. Again, the motivations were selected from the Recreation Experience Preference scale. These motivations are specific to an adventure activity which may lead to an enduring involvement in the activity. This enduring involvement is represented by three different factors: enjoyment, importance and self-expression. This enduring involvement with the activity will lead to an affective response toward the place which leads an attachment to the place. Place attachment is represented by two factors: place dependence and place identity. This place attachment ultimately will result in positive word-of-mouth about the place/activity and intention to revisit the adventure destination.

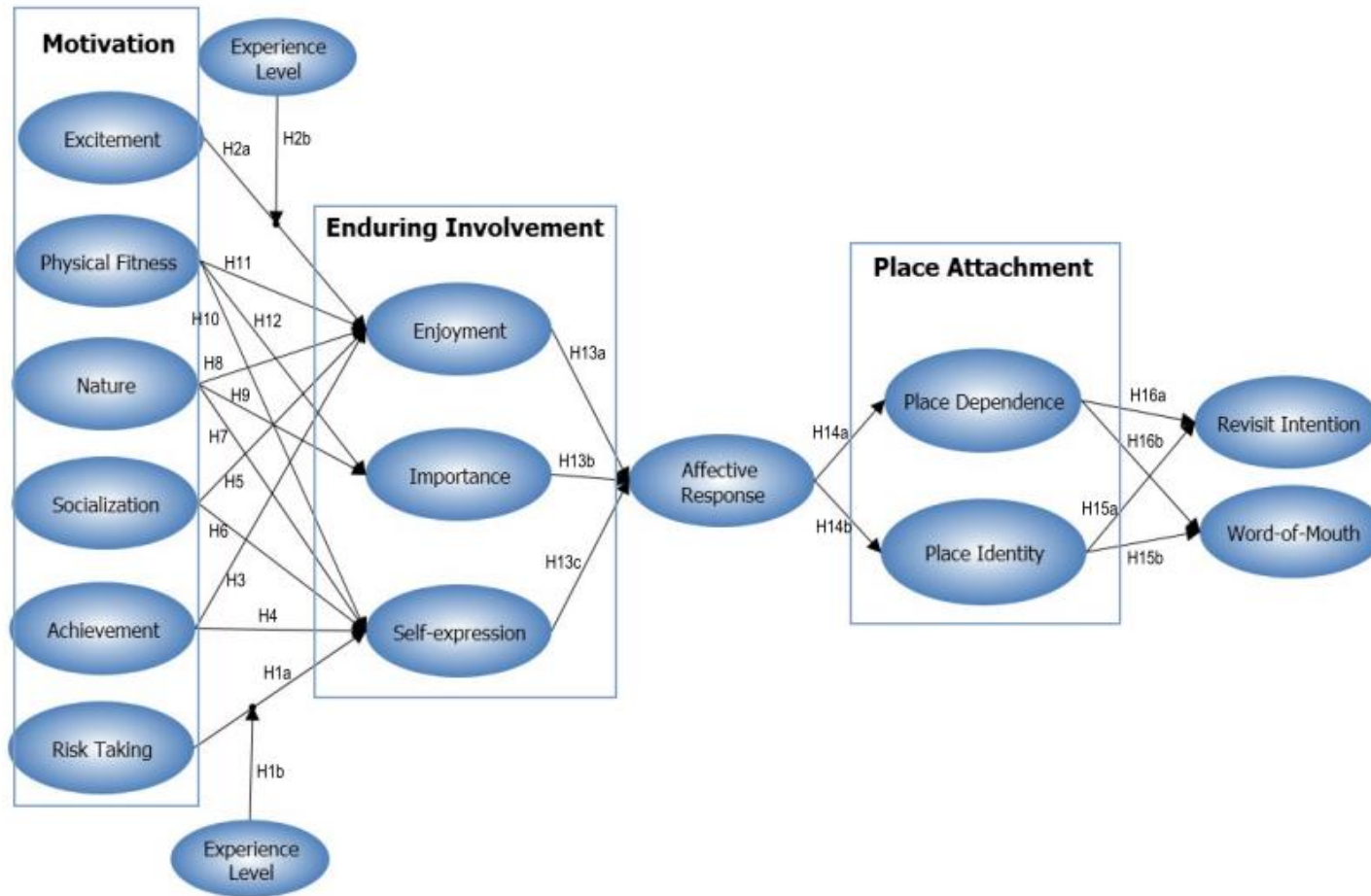


Figure 1: Proposed Model

Survey Method

This study employed a cross-sectional street-intercept survey to collect the data. A cross-sectional survey collects data at one specific point in time (Creswell, 2012; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). The street-intercept survey is a method of data collection used to intercept survey participants (Groves, Biemer, Ninin, & Parsons, 2006). While conducting a street-intercept survey, the researcher intercepts a potential participant and asks if they would be willing to participate in a research study. Often, a small incentive is offered to encourage participation. If potential respondents affirm that they are willing to participate, the researcher briefly describes the research project and hands the survey that has to be completed (Malhotra & Birks, 2006).

There are a number of advantages to a cross-sectional (street) intercept survey. First, it creates a snapshot of responses from a target sample at a specific time and place. This type of survey is a quick and economical method of sampling, especially if the segment of a population is difficult to access. Since it is a face-to-face interviewing method, it establishes good rapport with respondents thus motivating them to participate in the survey. The cross-sectional intercept method enables the researchers to provide clarifications/help to the respondents during the survey response process thus reducing missing data and bias resulting from any misunderstandings the participant may have. The researchers collect questionnaires once they are completed, which helps to diminish the problem of low response rates (Gates & Solomon, 1982). Lastly, a large advantage of the cross-sectional street-intercept survey method is that it is more efficient for the

subject to come to the researcher than for the researcher to go to the subject (for the purpose of filling out a survey, Malhotra & Birks, 2006).

There are some disadvantages associated with a street-intercept survey. First, there could be issues related to interviewer or sampling bias (Nowell & Stanley, 1991). Interviewer bias can result as a byproduct of the opinion or prejudice of the interviewer unduly influencing the responses of the subject. Bias was reduced in this study as the researchers attempted to limit any behavior that would unintentionally influence any responses. Sampling bias can occur when a non-representativeness of the sample selection exists (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). For the current study, some of the guides (whitewater rafting guides) completed a survey. The guides did not reflect our target population/sample and thus their responses were ultimately discarded. Despite some of the limitations, a cross-sectional street-intercept survey was deemed appropriate due to the numerous advantages outlined above.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher contacted the outfitters 2-3 days prior in order to determine when whitewater rafters were returning from the river and to let the outfitters know that representatives from the University of Tennessee would be present surveying their customers on a certain day/time. The five outfitters selected for the survey were Wildwater, Ocoee Outdoors, Quest Expeditions, Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC), and High Country. These outfitters are among the largest and most successful at the Ocoee River (many customers raft with these outfitters). All the outfitters knew of the study

before the researchers contacted each outfitter (whitewater rafting tour provider), and were in support of the study.

When the researchers arrived (2-12 per trip), we coordinated with the outfitter management to determine the best place to stand to intercept rafters after their trip. Wherever the researchers set up, it was important not to interfere with the business (each outfitter had a gift/merchandise store) of the outfitters. Thus we conferred with the owner of the outfitter to determine how best to achieve this. It was also important to find the appropriate area that would intercept the most participants exiting the bus (arrival at the outfitter after the rafting trip). After a location was determined for the surveying, clipboards were filled, granola bars boxes were opened, and ice cold lemonade was prepared. Each researcher had a different role. Some of the researchers (surveyors) handed out lemonade and granola bars. The rest of the volunteers passed out and collected surveys. These roles were determined prior to surveying to avoid confusion.

Each clipboard had about 5-10 surveys, thus when someone finished the survey, we could pass the clipboard to someone else (often, there were more participants than clipboards). The number of clipboards on hand was about 20 per location. When a high number of researchers were present, (9-12) we would simultaneously survey 2-3 locations (outfitters). Of the researchers, 9 were paid students, and three were professors. As many as 72 rafters exited the buses at once therefore it was important to have a large number of clipboards and as many researchers as possible per location. It was also important to train the researchers on the purpose of the study, instructions on the survey, and how to answer any questions that the surveyors might have. The author of the study was responsible for training the researchers. Some of the training was accomplished

during the car ride from Knoxville, TN to Ocoee, TN and some of the training occurred as a group at the outfitter (tour provider). The author prepared the researchers for any questions that the respondents may have. Some respondents asked questions regarding the ratings (Likert Scale 1-strongly disagree, 7-strongly agree), terminology, clarification of instructions, etc. The majority of respondents spent an average of about 6 minutes on each survey.

Participant Selection

Our survey participants were adults aged 18+, who had just participated in a rafting trip. The researchers were stationed near the point in which the bus dropped off the rafters, thus a majority of those who completed the trip would walk by. The researchers introduced themselves and briefly explained the purpose of the survey and thanked them for their time in completing the survey. The researcher had an IRB (Institutional Review Board) informed consent form which outlined the confidentiality and anonymity of the answers provided by the rafter. After the survey was completed, the researcher checked completed surveys to be sure that no page was skipped and filed completed surveys away in a plastic folder. If any pages were found unanswered, the researchers would ask the respondent to complete the survey. This process helped to reduce missing values.

Sample Size

In selecting the sample size for the study, a researcher should consider that an increased sample size produces greater power for statistical tests (Creswell, 2012). The selected statistical test for this study is structural equation modeling (SEM). The size of

the sample is important for interpreting and estimating SEM results as well as estimating sampling errors (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). The sample size recommended for SEM is 200 or greater. This sample size is also known as the *critical sample size* (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). For any survey study, 350 or more participants are recommended especially when a large number of variables are measured (Creswell, 2012). As stated above, the number of survey participants (whitewater rafters) surveyed totaled 690.

Instrument Development

Measurement scales used in this study were adapted from previous studies. The measurement items were modified to reflect an adventure tourism activity or an adventure setting (Ocoee River). The original and modified items (and their source) are depicted in Table 1. The survey questionnaire included seven sections: (1) Economic Impact of Whitewater Rafting, (2) Skill Level/Experience Level Whitewater Rafting, (3) Motivation for Whitewater Rafting, (4) Involvement with Whitewater Rafting, (5) Experiences with Ocoee River (includes *place dependence* and *place identity*, and the resultant *affective response* factor), (6) Outcomes from Ocoee River (word-of-mouth and revisit intention), and (7) General Characteristics (demographics). All scale items were measured by a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7).

The first section of the instrument (economic impact), was a separate study designed to gauge the economic impact of whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River. This section of the instrument was not used in the current study.

Measurement of skill level/experience level

The measures of skill level and experience level included a 1) *3-item self-reported rating* (novice, intermediate, advanced), 2) *number of years whitewater rafting*, 3) *number of times rafting in the past year*, and 4) *class of rapids the participant normally rafts*. All of these measures were adapted from Schuett (1993). For the current study, the *self-reported skill-rating* (1) and *number of years whitewater rafting* (2) were deemed the best indicators for skill level and experience level (and used in the subsequent analysis). For experience level, respondents indicated their number of years of experience whitewater rafting. Respondents who had less than one year of whitewater rafting were coded (1), whitewater rafters with 1-2 years of experience were coded (2), and whitewater rafters with 3 or more years of experience were coded a (3).

Measurement of Motivations for Whitewater Rafting

Motivation for risk, socialization, physical fitness, excitement, achievement, and nature were measured on a 7-point Likert scale and adapted from Manfredo et al. (1996). These are among the most important factors identified in a literature review of motivational needs for adventure tourists (Buckley, 2012). Also, these factors (risk, socialization, physical fitness, excitement, achievement, and nature) were utilized in an adventure study (skiing) by Kouthouris (2009). As stated previously, Kouthouris (2009) examined the relationship of motivations to enduring involvement via regression analysis. This provides support for the six factors that were selected as representative of adventure needs. For this section, *I participate in whitewater rafting in order to*, was written above in bold to help clarify the motivational items. Again, Table 1 depicts the

original and modified scale items. The original scale items used to measure motivations for leisure and all have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.6 or greater. All of the factors identified in Manfredo et al. (1996) have been used and validated in multiple studies (Brown & Haas, 1980; Haas, Driver, & Brown, 1981; Knopf, 1983; Knopf, Driver, & Basset, 1973; Knopf, Peterson, & Leatherberry, 1983; Manfredo, Brown, & Haas, 1980; Manfredo et al., 1996; Manfredo & Larson, 1993).

Measurement of Involvement with Whitewater Rafting

Measures of enduring involvement in an adventure tourism activity were selected from a *adventure recreation* study (Schuett, 1993). Schuett (1993) used four factors of involvement to measure the enduring involvement of whitewater kayakers (enjoyment, importance, self-expression, and centrality). These four factors of involvement were originally used in a study of leisure (camping) to measure recreation involvement profiles (McIntyre & Pigram, 1992). Centrality or centrality to lifestyle is an often-occurring factor in the literature but does not apply to a seasonal activity such as whitewater rafting (in East Tennessee, March-October). Centrality to lifestyle implies that people participate in the activity year-round thus activities in seasonal locations would not become central to one's lifestyle. The activity *whitewater rafting* replaced *kayaking* in each of the involvement variables in Schuett's (1993) study. More recent conceptualizations of enduring involvement are available, but little of these conceptualizations are geared towards adventure tourism. For instance, the enduring involvement of campers has been studied previously. The most recent study from Jun et al. (2012) utilized a five-factor (identity affirmation, identity expression, attraction, centrality, social bonding)

conceptualization of enduring involvement for the leisure activity, camping. This conceptualization was not considered due to the lack of theoretical support for the addition of the identity dimensions, the context of the study (leisure) and the inclusion of the centrality dimension. Kouthouris (2009) utilized attraction (enjoyment), centrality, and self-expression for a study for the adventure activity skiing. Kyle et al. (2003) used the dimensions attraction (enjoyment), centrality, and self-expression to determine the enduring involvement of hikers (a leisure activity).

Table 1: List of Original/Modified Scale Items for Each Construct and their Source

Factor	Original Scale Items	Modified Scale Items	Source
Motivation: Socialization	To bring family/friends closer together. To do something with your family/friends. To be with others who enjoy the same things you do.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to bring family/friends closer together. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to do something with my family/friends. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to be with others who enjoy the same things I do.	Manfredo et al. (1996)
Motivation: Nature	To be close to nature. To enjoy the natural scenery. To be where things are natural.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to be close to nature. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to enjoy the natural scenery. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to be where things are natural.	Manfredo et al. (1996)
Motivation: Physical Fitness	To get exercise. To keep physically fit. To feel good after being physically active.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to get exercise. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to keep physically fit. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to feel good after being physically active.	Manfredo et al. (1996)
Motivation: Excitement	To have thrills. To experience excitement. To experience the fast paced nature of things. To feel exhilaration.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to have thrills. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to experience excitement. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to experience the fast paced nature of things. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to feel exhilaration.	Manfredo et al. (1996)

Table 1: List of Original/Modified Scale Items for Each Construct and their Source (Continued)

Factor	Original Scale Items	Modified Scale Items	Source
Motivation: Risk Taking	To take the risks. To chance dangerous situations. To experience the risks involved.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to take the risks. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to chance dangerous situations. I participate in whitewater rafting in order to experience the risks involved.	Manfredo et al. (1996)
Motivation: Achievement	To gain a sense of accomplishment. To gain a sense of self-confidence. To develop my skills and abilities.	I participate in whitewater rafting in order to gain a sense of accomplishment I participate in whitewater rafting in order to gain a sense of self-confidence I participate in whitewater rafting in order to develop my skills and abilities	Manfredo et al. (1996)
Involvement: Enjoyment	Kayaking is one of the most enjoyable things I do. Kayaking offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up. Kayaking rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.	Whitewater rafting is one of the most enjoyable things I do. Whitewater rafting offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up. Whitewater rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.	Schuett (1993)
Involvement: Importance	I have little or no interest in kayaking. Kayaking is very important to me. I enjoy discussing kayaking with my friends.	I have little or no interest in whitewater rafting. Whitewater rafting is very important to me. I enjoy discussing whitewater rafting with my friends.	Schuett (1993)

Table 1: List of Original/Modified Scale Items for Each Construct and their Source (Continued)

Factor	Original Scale Items	Modified Scale Items	Source
Involvement: Self-Expression	Kayaking says a lot about who I am. When I am participating in kayaking, others see me the way I want them to. You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in kayaking. When I am kayaking I can really be myself.	Whitewater rafting says a lot about who I am. When I am participating in whitewater rafting, others see me the way I want them to. You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in whitewater rafting. When I am whitewater rafting I can really be myself.	Schuett (1993)
Skill level/ Experience	Rate your kayaking skill level (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced) Rate the difficulty of water you normally kayak in (Class I to Class VI) Number of years kayaking Number of days kayaking in the past 12 months	Rate your whitewater rafting skill level (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced) Class of rapids I normally experience (Class I to Class VI) Number of years whitewater rafting. Number of days whitewater rafting in the past 12 months.	Schuett (1993)
Affective Response	unpleasant/pleasant dislike very much/like very much left me with a bad feeling/left me with a good feeling	Whitewater rafting at the Ocoee River was very pleasant. I very much enjoyed whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River. Whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River left me with a good feeling.	Kim et al. (1996)

Table 1: List of Original/Modified Scale Items for Each Construct and their Source (Continued)

Factor	Original Scale Items	Modified Scale Items	Source
Place Dependence	I get more satisfaction out of visiting this river than from visiting any other river I enjoy doing rafting/kayaking here more than any other river Rafting/kayaking here is more important than rafting/kayaking in any other place This river is the best place for the kind of whitewater recreation I like to do I wouldn't substitute any other river for the type of whitewater recreation I do here.	I get more satisfaction out of whitewater rafting at Ocoee River than from whitewater rafting at any other river. I enjoy whitewater rafting at Ocoee River more than any other place. Whitewater rafting at Ocoee River is more important than whitewater rafting at any other place. Ocoee River is the best place for the kind of whitewater recreation I like to do. I wouldn't substitute any other place for the type of whitewater recreation I do at Ocoee River.	Bricker & Kerstetter (2000)
Place Identity	This river means a lot to me I feel no commitment to this river I am very attached to this river). I identify strongly with this river	Ocoee River means a lot to me. I have a strong commitment to Ocoee River. I am very attached to Ocoee River. I identify strongly with Ocoee River.	Bricker & Kerstetter (2000)
Revisit Intention	You intend to revisit Hong Kong in the next 2 years You plan to revisit Hong Kong in the next 2 years You desire to visit Hong Kong in the next 2 years You probably will revisit Hong in the next 2 years	I intend to revisit Ocoee River. I plan to revisit Ocoee River. I desire to revisit Ocoee River. I probably will revisit Ocoee River.	Huang & Hsu (2009)
Word-of-mouth	How likely are you to spread positive WOM about (Internet provider)'s online service? I would recommend (Internet provider)'s online service to my friends. If my friends were looking for an online service, I would tell them to try (Internet provider).	I would spread positive word-of-mouth about this river. I would recommend this river to my friends. If my friends were looking for a river to visit, I would tell them to try this river.	Maxham (2001)

Measurement of Experiences with Ocoee River

Measures of experiences include *place attachment* and *affective response*. Place attachment with Ocoee River is measured on a 7-pt Likert scale with variables adopted from Bricker and Kerstetter (2000). Bricker and Kerstetter (2000) used a two-factor model of place attachment (*place identity* and *place dependence*) modified for an adventure setting (whitewater kayaking/rafting). This scale was originally adapted from Moore and Graefe (1994). The items were modified to reflect the activity (whitewater rafting only) and Ocoee River setting (modifications from the original items can see seen in Table 1). For instance, *Rafting/kayaking here is more important than rafting/kayaking in any other place* became *Whitewater rafting at Ocoee River is more important than whitewater rafting at any other place* (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000). Measures of affective response were adopted from Kim et. al (1996). These items are measured on a 7-pt Likert scale with the variables modified to reflect the activity and setting. For example, *unpleasant/pleasant* became *Whitewater rafting at the Ocoee River was very pleasant*, (Kim et al., 1996) (again, see Table 1 for the precise modifications of all scale items).

Measurement of Outcomes from Ocoee River

Measures of outcomes from the Ocoee River are measured using the constructs Word-of-Mouth and Revisit Intention. Word-of-Mouth is measured on a 7-pt Likert scale with variables adapted from Maxham (2001). The variables were modified to reflect the river setting. For instance, *I would recommend this river to my friends* was one of the modified items. This item was modified from the original item: *I would recommend (Internet provider)'s online service to my friends* (Maxham, 2001). Measures of revisit

intention are measured on a 7-pt Likert scale with the variables adapted from Huang and Hsu (2009). The variables were modified to reflect the Ocoee River setting (Table 1).

Pre-test

The survey was pre-tested to check for the need of improving the measurement items and to check for face validity. An early iteration of the pen-and-paper survey was administered to 44 whitewater rafters at Ocoee River at Quest Expeditions outfitters on June 8, 2012. The researcher gave an overview of the study and then distributed the survey to recent whitewater participants. Respondents were asked to notify the researchers if any of the questions were unclear or not representative of their motivations for participation in whitewater rafting. After the pilot test, it was determined that the original survey items reflected motivations for whitewater rafters and there were no issues with the wording of the items. The next iteration of the survey reconfigured the survey items to reflect the original proposed path model. The previous survey included each of the factors but did not include the factors in the recursive direction of the model. Thus a logical order of the survey was established: 1) Economic Impact of Whitewater Rafting, (2) Skill Level/Experience Level Whitewater Rafting, (3) Motivation for Whitewater Rafting, (4) Involvement with Whitewater Rafting, (5) Experiences with Ocoee River, (6) Outcomes from Ocoee River, and (7) General Characteristics.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

After 690 cases were inputted into SPSS, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted on the motivational and involvement items. EFA was conducted in order to determine the proper number of common factors and to discover which variables are

indicators of the different latent dimensions (factors) (Brown, 2006). The exploratory factor analysis used the maximum likelihood extraction method with Varimax (orthogonal) rotation. Maximum likelihood is the most commonly used extraction method for both EFA and CFA (Brown, 2006). In identifying the number of factors to retain, the number of factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 is most often used (Kaiser, 1960; Lance, Butts, & Michaels, 2006). Factor loadings can be observed for an EFA of motivational items (from the Recreation Experience Preference Scale) in Table 2. Factor loadings for the EFA of enduring involvement items can be viewed in Table 3. Exploratory factor analysis was used on these two scales (motivation and enduring involvement) for two reasons: 1) The motivation factors and the involvement factors have been rarely used in an adventure setting and 2) To enhance the quality of the adventure tourism model (by determining the proper number of common factors for each scale) to make it easier to replicate in future studies.

The results of each exploratory factor analysis lead to a revised model. This revised model reduced the number of motivational factors from 6 to 4 (four eigenvalues > 1), and reduced the number of involvement factors from 3 to 2 (two eigenvalues > 1). The result of each factor loading for the EFA of motivational items can be viewed in Table 4 and the result of the EFA for enduring involvement measures can be viewed in Table 5 (i.e. factor reduction, item deletion). The modified model based on the EFA results can be seen in Figure 2.

After running the exploratory factor analysis, the quality of the solution should be evaluated. Items with loadings on more than one factor should be eliminated and items with small loadings on all factors should be eliminated (socialization items and the

reverse coded importance item). If factor loadings were less than 0.50, they were considered too small (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). If cross-loading exists, (variable loads on multiple factors), then the cross-loadings (loading on different factors) should differ by more than **0.2**. If the factors cross-load, there is an issue with discriminant validity (Gaskin, 2012; Hair et al., 2009). As a result of the item reduction, the four factor solution for motivational items was acceptable.

Table 2: Factor loadings based on an exploratory factor analysis with orthogonal (Varimax) rotation for 19 items from the Recreation Experience Preference Scale (N = 690)

Factor		Risk	Physical Activity	Nature	Excitement
Sociability	To bring family/friends closer together.				
	To do something with my family/friends.				
	To be with others who enjoy the same things I do.				
Nature	To be close to nature.			0.869	
	To enjoy the natural scenery.			0.873	
	To be where things are natural.			0.805	
Physical Activity	To get exercise.		0.806		
	To keep physically fit.		0.897		
	To feel good after being physically active.		0.777		
Excitement	To have thrills.				0.740
	To experience excitement.				0.784
	To experience the fast paced nature of things.				0.594
	To feel joy.				0.585
Risk taking	To take the risks.	0.752			
	To chance dangerous situations.	0.936			
	To experience the risks involved.	0.904			
Achievement	To gain a sense of accomplishment.				
	To gain a sense of self-confidence.				
	To develop my skills and abilities.		0.535		

Table 3: Factor loadings based on an exploratory factor analysis with orthogonal (Varimax) rotation for 10 items of the Enduring Involvement Scale (N = 690)

Factor		Self-Expression	Enjoyment
Enjoyment	Whitewater rafting is one of the most enjoyable things I do		0.774
	Whitewater rafting offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up.		0.712
	Whitewater rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.		0.789
Importance	I have little or no interest in whitewater rafting (recoded) INVIMP1REC		
	Whitewater rafting is very important to me.	0.613	
	I enjoy discussing whitewater rafting with my friends.	0.649	
Self-Expression	Whitewater rafting says a lot about who I am.	0.808	
	When I am participating in whitewater rafting, others see me the way I want them to.	0.872	
	You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in whitewater rafting.	0.826	
	When I am whitewater rafting, I can really be myself.	0.658	

While the number of factors that represented motivation changed, the items representing those four factors did not change except for physical fitness. One item on achievement loaded on physical fitness. Thus this item was included in a reworded factor, *physical activity*. A table with the results of the EFA for motivations can be seen in Table 4. For involvement, the four items representing self-expression did not change, but two of the items representing importance loaded on involvement. In addition all three items of enjoyment loaded on *enjoyment*. A Table with the results of the EFA for enduring involvement can be seen in Table 5. Again, the modified proposed path model (based upon the EFA results) can be seen in Figure 2 and a list of the renumbered hypotheses can be seen in Table 6.

Table 4: Result of the Motivation EFA Factor Loadings

<u>Factor</u>		<u>Result of EFA Factor Loadings</u>	<u>Reason if deleted</u>	
			Low Factor loading (<0.5)	Cross Loading
Sociability (Eliminated from the model)	To bring family/friends closer together.	Eliminated from the model	Yes	Yes
	To do something with my family/friends.	Eliminated from the model	Yes	Yes
	To be with others who enjoy the same things I do.	Eliminated from the model	Yes	Yes
Nature	To be close to nature.	Included in the factor <i>nature</i>		
	To enjoy the natural scenery.	Included in the factor <i>nature</i>		
	To be where things are natural.	Included in the factor <i>nature</i>		
Physical Activity	To get exercise.	Included in the factor <i>physical activity</i>		
	To keep physically fit.	Included in the factor <i>physical activity</i>		
	To feel good after being physically active.	Included in the factor <i>physical activity</i>		
Excitement	To have thrills.	Included in the factor <i>excitement</i>		
	To experience excitement.	Included in the factor <i>excitement</i>		
	To experience the fast paced nature of things.	Included in the factor <i>excitement</i>		
	To feel joy.	Included in the factor <i>excitement</i>		

Table 4: Result of the Motivation EFA Factor Loadings (Continued)

<u>Factor</u>		<u>Result of EFA Factor Loadings</u>	<u>Reason if deleted</u>	
			Low Factor loading (<0.5)	Cross Loading
Risk taking	To take the risks.	Included in the factor <i>risk taking</i>		
	To chance dangerous situations.	Included in the factor <i>risk taking</i>		
	To experience the risks involved.	Included in the factor <i>risk taking</i>		
Achievement (Eliminated from the Model)	To gain a sense of accomplishment.	Eliminated from the model	Yes	Yes
	To gain a sense of self-confidence.	Eliminated from the model	Yes	Yes
	To develop my skills and abilities.	Loaded/included on <i>physical activity</i>		

Table 5: Result of the Enduring Involvement EFA Factor Loadings

<u>Factor</u>		<u>Result of EFA Factor Loadings</u>	<u>Reason if deleted</u>	
			Low Factor loading (<0.5)	Cross Loading
Enjoyment	Whitewater rafting is one of the most enjoyable things I do	Loaded on enjoyment		
	Whitewater rafting offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up.	Loaded on enjoyment		
	Whitewater rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.	Loaded on enjoyment		
Importance (Eliminated from the model)	I have little or no interest in whitewater rafting (recoded) INVIMP1REC	Eliminated from the model	Yes	No
	Whitewater rafting is very important to me.	Loaded on self-expression		
	I enjoy discussing whitewater rafting with my friends.	Loaded on self-expression		
Self-expression	Whitewater rafting says a lot about who I am.	Loaded on self-expression		
	When I am participating in whitewater rafting, others see me the way I want them to.	Loaded on self-expression		
	You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in whitewater rafting.	Loaded on self-expression		
	When I am whitewater rafting, I can really be myself.	Loaded on self-expression		

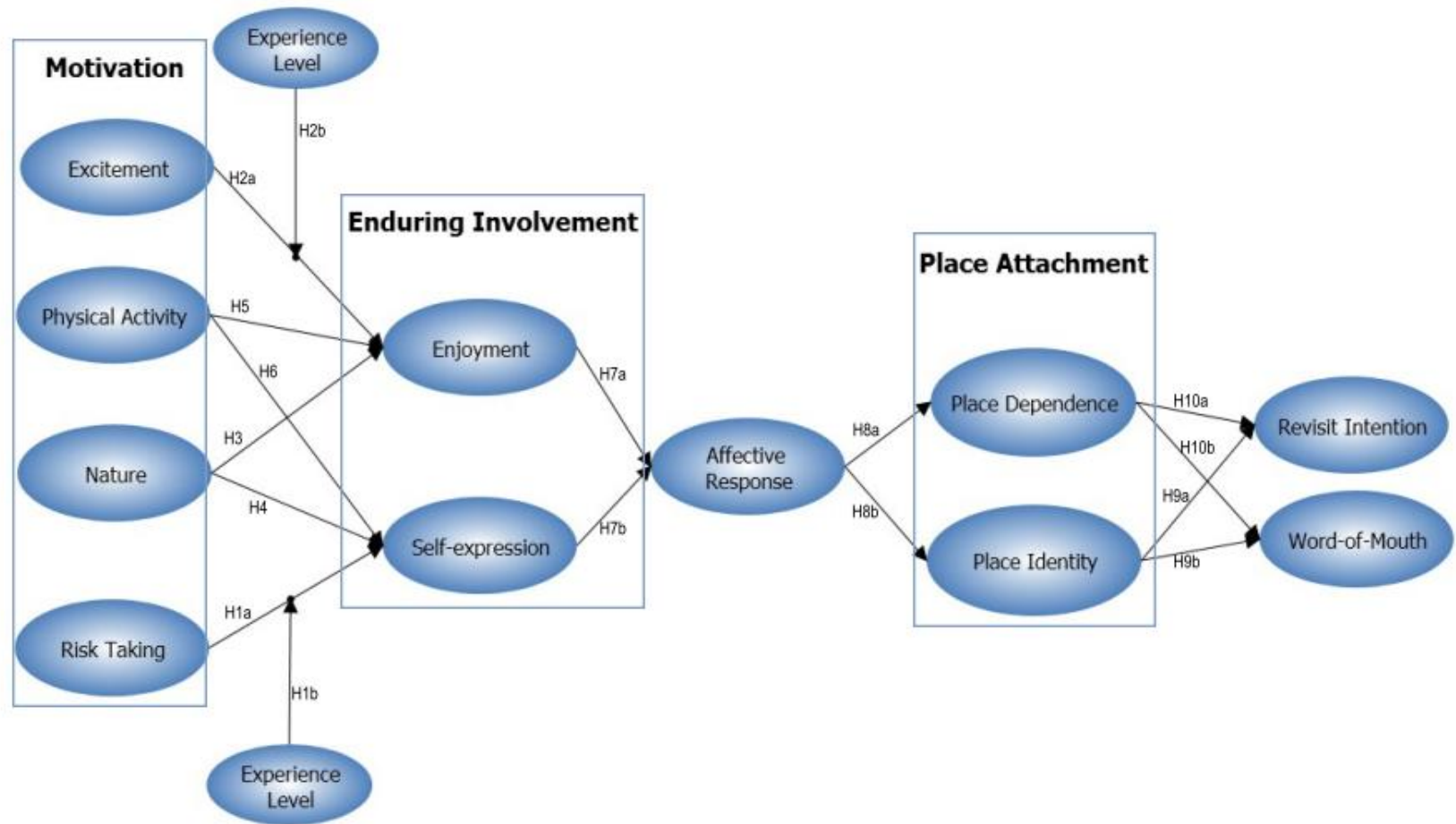


Figure 2: Modified Proposed Path Model

Table 6: List of Hypotheses after the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Hypothesis	
H1a	Higher risk motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.
H1b	Experience level moderates the relationship between: Risk → Self-expression
H2a	Higher excitement motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.
H2b	Experience level moderates the relationship between: Excitement → Enjoyment
H3	Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.
H4	Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.
H5	Higher physical activity motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.
H6	Higher physical activity motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.
H7a	Higher level of enjoyment will lead to a stronger affective response.
H7b	Higher level of self-expression will lead to a stronger affective response.
H8a	High level of affective response will lead to stronger place dependence.
H8b	High level of affective response will lead to a stronger place identity.
H9a	A strong place identity will lead to an intention to revisit.
H9b	A strong place identity will lead to positive word-of-mouth toward the place.
H10a	A strong place dependence will lead to an intention to revisit.
H10b	A strong place dependence will lead to positive word-of-mouth toward the place.

The original hypotheses do not have to be modified to reflect the new model. Rather, the numbers of the hypotheses changed due to the reduction in the number of factors (motivation factors from 6 to 4, involvement factors from 3 to 2). The motivational items for the four remaining motivational factors are almost identical to the original factors; thus the relationships between the motivation factors and the involvement factors enjoyment (enjoyment) and self-expression will remain. The self-expression involvement factor now contains two of the items from the original importance factor which is not a surprise given the consideration that these 2 measurement items have loaded on the self-expression factor before in a previous study of involvement with recreational tourism in national parks (Huang & Hsu, 2009). These items have also loaded on the attraction/enjoyment factor in previous studies of enduring involvement in leisure (Kyle et al., 2004; Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2003).

Summary

This chapter outlined the research design, and provided the relevant information required to test the research model and hypotheses. The first section of this chapter discussed aspects of the research design such as data collection procedures and participant selection. A cross-sectional street-intercept survey was employed for this study where respondents were surveyed as they exited the bus. The respondents were surveyed directly after participating in a whitewater rafting trip (returning to the outfitter from the river). The second section of this chapter included instrument development procedures. This section discussed measurement of all the constructs. Scale items to measure the constructs used in this study were revised from previous studies. Content validity testing and pre-test was discussed. A pre-test was conducted in order to check for content and face validity. Reliabilities of the scale items to be utilized in the final survey were above the cut-off criteria of 0.70. Finally an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to determine the appropriate number of common factors and to extract which measured variables are functional indicators of the different latent dimensions.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter addresses the results of the hypotheses. First characteristics of the sample are explored as well as differences in factor means (among experience levels) and categorical frequency differences (among experience levels). Then descriptive statistics from the data obtained is explored (pertaining to the motivations for adventure tourists' participation in whitewater rafting). The research model and proposed hypotheses were tested using SEM (Structural Equation Modeling). The steps in the process included conducting a CFA (confirmatory factor analysis) on the measurement model in order to determine if the measurement items for each factor are suitably placed. After the CFA, a structural equation model was used to investigate the causal relationships among the latent constructs. Both the CFA and the SEM were launched using AMOS 20.0. Maximum likelihood estimation was used for the CFA and SEM. Maximum Likelihood Estimation is the most widely used criterion and produces parameter estimates that conform to the constraints of internal and external consistency (superior to other estimators, Anderson & Gerbing, 1982).

There are three sections to the following chapter. The first section includes the characteristics of the sample, differences in factor means (among experience levels) and categorical frequency differences (among experience levels). The next section consists of the descriptive statistics of the data collected during the street intercept survey. Descriptive statistics of each survey item including the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, skewness and kurtosis are outlined. The next section

provides the validity, reliability, and fit statistics of the model. The fourth section includes the results of the structural equation model and hypotheses testing.

Characteristics of the Sample

On the final page of the survey, demographic information was gathered including gender, ethnicity, age, and marital status. Gender, ethnicity and marital status were coded as nominal. For age, the birth year was asked which was subtracted from the current year to obtain the age of the respondent. Income and education level were coded as ordinal. The characteristics of the sample are depicted in Table 7. Of the participants, 52.7% of were female and the average age was 34 years (51% of the respondents were aged 18-31). Ethnicity characteristics of the sample include 84.5% White, 7.6% African American, 4.5% Hispanic, and 3.4% other. Respondent education level included 21.1% with a graduate or professional degree, 36.5% with a 4-year college degree, 23.4% with some college, 14.5% high school graduate and 4.5% some school. In terms of household income, 24.2% of respondents had less than \$40,000 in total household income, 41.4% of respondents had between \$40,000 and \$100,000 in household income and 34.4% of respondents had greater than \$100,000 in household income. The majority of the visitors to Ocoee River were tourists (94.5%) who travelled a distance of greater than 50 miles one-way to the Ocoee River region.

The demographic characteristics of whitewater rafters on the Ocoee River were dissimilar than the U.S. average household population. The median household income is \$49,777 (compared with 61.1% of rafters with a household income of \$60,000 or

greater), and 29.9% (compared with 59.9% of rafters) of citizens hold a bachelor's degrees or higher ("U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey," 2012).

Table 7: Characteristics of the Sample

Demographics		Frequency n=690	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	319	47.3
	Female	356	52.7
Ethnicity	African American	51	7.6
	Asian	17	2.5
	White	569	84.5
	Hispanic	30	4.5
	Other	6	0.8
Age	18-25	225	33.9
	26-35	159	23.9
	36-45	118	17.8
	46-55	122	18.4
	over 55	40	6.0
Education	Some school	28	4.5
	High school graduate or equivalent	91	14.5
	Some college (includes 2 year degree)	147	23.4
	College (4 year degree)	229	36.5
	Grad or professional degree	142	22.6

Table 7: Characteristics of the Sample (Continued)

Demographics		Frequency N=690	Percentage (%)
Income	Less than \$20,000	72	11.6
	\$20,000-39,999	78	12.6
	\$40,000-59,999	91	14.7
	\$60,000-79,999	89	14.4
	\$80,000-99,999	77	12.4
	\$100,000-119,999	69	11.1
	\$120,000-139,999	43	6.9
	\$140,000-159,999	19	3.1
	\$160,000 or more	82	13.2
Tourist or Local	Tourist	596	94.5
	Local	35	5.5

Differences in Factor Means

After the descriptives were recorded, a One-Way ANOVA (analysis of variance) of the data was executed to test the difference in factor means between three different levels of experience: (1) *less than 1 year*, (2) *1-2 years*, and (3) *3 or more years* of experience (see Table 8). The results of this analysis provided support for whether or not experience level significantly affected the responses of each factor in the measurement model. Table 8 depicts the differences in means for each factor in the measurement model across experience levels (starting with motivational factors). Motivational factors were not significant across experience levels (all four factors) therefore we can deduce that experience level does not affect the strength of the motivation for adventure tourists.

Of the 685 respondents for the self-expression factor (5 of the 690 cases eliminated due to incomplete data), 234 participants in the *less than 1 year* of experience level had an average response of 4.27 (SD = 1.46); the 214 participants in the *1-2 years* of experience level had an average response of 4.46 (SD = 1.47), and the 237 participants in the *greater than 3 years* level had a mean of 4.68 (SD = 1.43). The effect of experience level, therefore, was significant, $F(2,682) = 4.68$, $p=.010$. The levels *1-2 years*, and *greater than 3 years* express themselves through the participation in rafting more than those with *less than 1 year* of experience. This stronger self-expression through the participation in an adventure tourism activity leads to a stronger enduring involvement. One would expect those adventure tourists that participate in an activity for a longer period of time would express themselves more through the participation in the activity than those that have limited experience with the activity.

Table 8: Differences in Factor Means (By Experience Level)

Years of Experience	< 1 year	1-2 years	> 3 years	Significance Level
Factor	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Motivation: Nature	5.96	6.14	6.11	0.230
Motivation: Physical Activity	5.41	5.38	5.40	0.978
Motivation: Excitement	6.20	6.30	6.26	0.539
Motivation: Risk	5.47	5.66	5.48	0.364
Involvement: Enjoyment	4.92 ^A	5.28 ^A	5.37 ^A	0.001*
Involvement: Self-Expression	4.27 ^B	4.46	4.68 ^B	0.010*
Affective Response	6.56	6.49	6.41	0.160
Place Dependence	5.10	5.38	5.35	0.066
Place Identity	4.71 ^C	4.75 ^C	5.29 ^C	0.000*
Revisit Intention	6.48	6.47	6.59	0.216
Word-of-mouth	6.64	6.65	6.61	0.765

*Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

^AThe means within the levels 1-2 years and > 3 years are significantly different than the level < 1 year. at $p < 0.05$.

^BThe mean of > 3 years is significantly different than the level < 1 year. at $p < 0.05$.

^CThe mean of > 3 years is significantly different than the levels < 1 year and 1-2 years. at $p < 0.05$.

Likert scale: (1- Strongly Disagree, 7- Strongly Agree)

Of the 685 respondents for the enjoyment factor, 234 participants in the *less than 1 year* of experience level had an average response of 4.92 (SD = 1.40); the 214 participants in the *1-2 years* of experience level had an average response of 5.28 (SD = 1.28), and the 237 participants in the *greater than 3 years* level had a mean of 5.37 (SD = 1.26). The effect of experience level, therefore, was significant, $F(2,682) = 7.47, p=.001$. Thus, adventure tourists with *greater than 3 years* of experience enjoy their whitewater rafting trip and they have a stronger enduring involvement in the activity than those rafters with less than 1 year of experience. One would expect *highly experienced* adventure tourists to have a lasting involvement in an activity and find it highly enjoyable.

Of the 685 respondents for the place identity factor, 234 participants in the *less than 1 year* of experience level had an average response of 4.71 (SD = 1.70); the 214 participants in the *1-2 years* of experience level had an average response of 4.74 (SD = 1.72), and the 237 participants in the *greater than 3 years* level had a mean of 5.29 (SD = 1.57). Adventure tourists with *greater than 3 years* of experience have a stronger place identity than those with *less than 1 year* of experience and those with *1-2 years* of experience. As a result, Ocoee River is more likely to be representative of the participant's identity and sense of self for those with *greater than 3 years* of experience. This is expected, as the more that an adventure tourist is exposed to a place, the more he or she will adapt the place in his or her own self-identity (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Place identity is a dimension of place attachment; therefore adventure tourists with

greater than 3 years of experience have a stronger attachment to the place than adventure tourists with *less than 1 year* of experience or *1-2 years* of experience.

Categorical Data: Frequency Differences

Following the test of differences in means across experience levels, a cross-tabulation was used to determine if the categorical data (gender, income, education level, marital status) differed across experience levels. As in the one-way ANNOVA, experience levels used in the cross-tabulation included: (1) *less than 1 year*, (2) *1-2 years*, and (3) *3 or more years* of experience. The result of the frequency analysis (cross-tabulation) and chi-square test can be seen in Table 9. The findings for gender across experience levels provided evidence that gender can be an indicator of the experience level of an adventure tourism participant. For instance, females accounted for 39% of rafters with more than 3 years of experience (91:232) and accounted for 61% of rafters with less than 1 year of experience (141:231). The findings for income across experience levels provided evidence that income category can be an indication of the experience level of an adventure tourism participant. A rafter that has a household income of \$160,000 or more accounted for 22% of rafters with more than 3 years of experience (47:214) and accounted for 8.4% of rafters with less than 1 year of experience (18:212). Findings for education level across experience levels demonstrated that education level can be an indicator of an adventure tourist's experience level. A rafter that has a graduate or professional degree accounted for 26% of rafters with more than 3 years of experience (57:218) and accounted for 17.8% of rafters with less than 1 year of experience (38:213). The findings for marital status across experience levels do not provide evidence that

marital status is an indicator of experience level of an adventure activity participant. In other words, whether or not someone is married does not indicate how many years an adventure tourist has participated in an adventure activity.

Table 9: Categorical Data: Frequency Differences (By Experience Level)

Household Income		Experience			Total	Chi-Square
		< 1 year	1-2 years	> 3 years		
What was your approximated total household income last year (before tax)?	Less than \$20,000	33	22	17	72	
	\$20,000-\$39,999	25	26	26	77	
	\$40,000-\$59,999	42	24	24	90	
	\$60,000-\$79,999	26	32	31	89	
	\$80,000-\$99,999	25	18	34	77	
	\$100,000-\$119,999	21	32	14	67	
	\$120,000-\$139,999	15	17	11	43	
	\$140,000-\$159,999	7	2	10	19	
	\$160,000 or more	18	16	47	81	
Total		212	189	214	615	0.000*

Education Level		Experience			Total	Chi-Square
		< 1 year	1-2 years	> 3 years		
Education Level	Some school	15	9	4	28	
	High school graduate	43	25	23	91	
	some college	49	48	50	147	
	college graduate (4yr)	68	75	84	227	
	graduate or prof degree	38	35	57	130	
Total		213	192	218	623	0.009*

*Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

Table 9: Categorical Data: Frequency Differences (Continued)

Gender		Experience			Total	Chi-Square
		< 1 year	1-2 years	> 3 years		
Gender	Male	90	88	140	318	
	Female	141	120	91	352	
Total		231	208	231	670	0.000*

Marital Status		Experience			Total	Chi-Square
		< 1 year	1-2 years	> 3 years		
Marital Status	Single	132	106	103	341	
	Married	68	76	97	241	
	Divorced, Separated, Widowed	29	26	30	85	
Total		229	208	230	667	0.069

*Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

Data Analysis Overview

The first step in the data analysis is to explore the descriptive statistics of the sample (Table 10). Tests for normality were performed to measure variability. Other descriptives that were recorded include mean, minimum/maximum values, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. For kurtosis we use the threshold of 7 to determine if there is an instance of non-normality. In this study none of the values of kurtosis exceeded the threshold of 7 (Byrne, 2006). Kurtosis should always be addressed when using structural models as excessive kurtosis can lead to an adverse effect on tests of variances and covariances (DeCarlo, 1997).

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items

Factor	Measurement Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Motivation: Nature	Overall	6.07	1.23		
	To be close to nature.	6.03	1.29	-1.52	2.23
	To enjoy the natural scenery.	6.17	1.15	-1.73	3.34
	To be where things are natural.	6.01	1.25	-1.37	1.75
Motivation: Physical Activity	Overall	5.40	1.41		
	To get exercise.	5.44	1.53	-0.74	-0.28
	To keep physically fit.	5.18	1.65	-0.58	-0.53
	To feel good after being physically active.	5.53	1.52	-0.89	0.11
	To develop my skills and abilities.	5.44	1.68	-0.91	-0.09
Motivation: Excitement	Overall	6.25	1.10		
	To have thrills.	6.35	0.98	-1.98	5.16
	To experience excitement.	6.39	0.93	-1.83	4.06
	To experience the fast paced nature of things.	6.07	1.26	-1.67	2.78
	To feel joy.	6.20	1.16	-1.80	3.44
Motivation: Risk	Overall	5.53	1.67		
	To take the risks.	5.79	1.49	-1.30	1.14
	To chance dangerous situations.	5.35	1.75	-0.86	-0.25
	To experience the risks involved.	5.45	1.73	-0.98	0.00
Involvement: Enjoyment	Overall	5.19	1.33		
	Whitewater rafting is one of the most enjoyable things I do.	5.37	1.34	-0.63	0.12
	Whitewater rafting offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up.	5.24	1.49	-0.66	-0.15
	Whitewater rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.	4.96	1.56	-0.51	-0.31

Likert scale: (1- Strongly Disagree, 7- Strongly Agree)

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items (Continued)

Factor	Measurement Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Involvement: Self-Expression	Overall	4.46	1.45		
	Whitewater rafting is very important to me.	4.60	1.57	-0.17	-0.66
	I enjoy discussing whitewater rafting with my friends.	4.72	1.76	-0.39	-0.76
	Whitewater rafting says a lot about who I am.	3.86	1.85	0.13	-0.95
	When I am participating in whitewater rafting, others see me the way I want them to.	4.23	1.83	-0.15	-0.89
	You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in whitewater rafting.	4.35	1.81	-0.22	-0.84
	When I am whitewater rafting, I can really be myself.	5.02	1.72	-0.56	-0.53
Affective Response	Overall	6.49	0.83		
	Whitewater rafting at the Ocoee River was very pleasant	6.40	1.02	-2.23	5.88
	I very much enjoyed whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River.	6.54	0.85	-2.32	6.12
	Whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River left me with a good feeling.	6.52	0.83	-2.17	5.26
Place Dependence	Overall	5.27	1.42		
	I get more satisfaction out of whitewater rafting at Ocoee River than from whitewater rafting at any other river.	5.27	1.53	-0.54	-0.41
	I enjoy whitewater rafting at Ocoee River more than any other place.	5.34	1.54	-0.64	-0.31
	Whitewater rafting at Ocoee River is more important than whitewater rafting at any other place.	5.13	1.54	-0.49	-0.37
	Ocoee River is the best place for the kind of whitewater recreation I like to do.	5.42	1.49	-0.77	0.09
	I wouldn't substitute any other place for the type of whitewater recreation I do at Ocoee River.	5.17	1.64	-0.66	-0.26
Place Identity	Overall	4.92	1.69		
	Ocoee River means a lot to me.	5.29	1.65	-0.78	-0.20
	I have a strong commitment to Ocoee River.	4.89	1.78	-0.46	-0.75
	I am very attached to Ocoee River.	4.76	1.85	-0.42	-0.85
	I identify strongly with Ocoee River.	4.73	1.84	-0.39	-0.83

Likert scale: (1- Strongly Disagree, 7- Strongly Agree)

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items (Continued)

Factor	Measurement Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Word-of-Mouth	Overall	6.63	0.68		
	I would spread positive word-of-mouth about this river.	6.67	0.73	-3.30	15.52
	I would recommend this river to my friends.	6.59	0.76	-2.41	6.81
	If my friends were looking for a river to visit, I would tell them to try this river	6.63	0.74	-2.64	5.22
Revisit Intention	Overall	6.51	0.81		
	I intend to revisit Ocoee River.	6.46	0.95	-2.18	5.55
	I plan to revisit Ocoee River.	6.52	0.89	-2.31	6.22
	I desire to revisit Ocoee River.	6.53	0.85	-2.26	6.15
	I probably will revisit Ocoee River.	6.55	0.88	-2.56	6.13

Likert scale: (1- Strongly Disagree, 7- Strongly Agree)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Next, the data was analyzed utilizing a two-step approach outlined by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The first step of this process is to conduct a CFA (confirmatory factor analysis). The difference between EFA and CFA is that there is no prior specification of the number of factors in EFA, whereas in CFA, the number of factors and affiliated measurement items are specified a priori (Brown, 2006). EFA was conducted in order to determine the proper number of common factors and to discover which variables are indicators of the different factors. EFA and CFA are similar in that they both identify latent factors that account for the variation and co-variation among a set of indicators. All hypothesized latent constructs and their indicators were measured using CFA (motivation factors, involvement factors, affective response, place attachment factors, and outcome variables including word-of-mouth and revisit intention). All eleven constructs during CFA were allowed to intercorrelate freely (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Factor loading (standardized regression weights) for the CFA should be greater than 0.50 for items to be retained (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The highest modification indices (MI) were addressed in the measurement model (Byrne, 2010). The modification indices reflect the extent to which the hypothesized model is adequately described. For each fixed parameter specified, AMOS provided a modification index (each error term represented as e followed by the number associated with the measurement item in the model). The modification index represents the expected decrease in the overall chi-square value if the parameter were to be freely estimated. When a parameter is freely estimated, it has a modification index equal to zero (Byrne, 2010).

High modification indices provide evidence of misfit (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). The highest modification indices of the error terms should be targeted to correlate (Byrne, 2010). There is no specific threshold number to target, but scholars caution against over fitting the model via the correlation of too many error terms (Byrne, 2010; Wheaton, 1987). When examining the modification indices, five pairs of error variance showed indices higher than 40: e36 <--> e37 (111.888), e58 <--> e59 (56.645), e61 <--> e62 (42.377), e33 <--> e37 (41.239), and e33 <--> e34 (40.610). Only those error covariances with a strong theoretical reasoning in the model to add such covariance were included. Error covariance errors were not included after the 40 threshold due to the avoidance of over fitting the model (reasoning is stated above) (Byrne, 2006). Modification indices lower than 40 were highly clustered, thus to avoid over fitting, (and correlating a high number of modification indices) 40 was utilized as the threshold. Model fit after including the error covariance is depicted in Table 11.

Table 11: Fit Statistics for Each Construct – Refined Model

Model	χ^2 (df)	χ^2 / df^1	CFI ²	GFI ³	RMSEA ⁴
Initial measurement Model	2523.727 (764)	3.303	0.940	0.846	0.058
Measurement model after adding error covariances (Final Measurement Model)	2267.975 (759)	2.988	0.949	0.864	0.054

¹ < 5 indicates acceptable fit level, < 3 good fit

² ≥ 0.80 acceptable fit, ≥ 0.90 good fit

³ ≥ 0.80 acceptable fit, ≥ 0.90 good fit

⁴ < 0.05 very good, < 0.08 acceptable, < 0.10 mediocre, ≥ 0.10 poor errors of approximation (Hair et al., 2009)

Reliability and Validity

This study performed checks for validity and reliability. Reliability is the degree to which scores from an instrument can produce consistent results across time (Creswell, 2012). Reliability of latent constructs is determined by calculating the composite reliability (CR) of each construct. Composite reliability values of 0.70 or greater are considered acceptable and internally consistent (Hair et al., 2009). Validity is the magnitude to which scale items accurately measure the construct it was designed to measure (Hair et al., 2009). Both convergent and discriminant validity were examined in relation to the latent constructs.

Reliability

The final measurement model featured 11 constructs measuring 42 observed variables. The items had factor loadings ranging from 0.654 to 0.970 and all paths were significant ($p < 0.001$). The composite reliabilities of each construct ranged from 0.89 to 0.96, meeting the minimum 0.70 criteria (Hair et al., 2009). Composite reliabilities and factor loadings of the final measurement model are provided in Table 12. The same composite reliabilities for each construct can be viewed in the reliability/validity table (see Table 13).

Table 12: Factor Loadings of the final measurement model

Construct	Scale Items	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability
Motivation: Nature (MOTNAT)	To be close to nature.	0.929	0.94
	To enjoy the natural scenery.	0.933	
	To be where things are natural.	0.895	
Motivation: Physical Fitness (MOTFIT)	To get exercise.	0.905	0.91
	To keep physically fit.	0.954	
	To feel good after being physically active.	0.872	
	To develop my skills and abilities.	0.654	
Motivation: Excitement (MOTEX)	To have thrills.	0.869	0.90
	To experience excitement.	0.903	
	To experience the fast paced nature of things.	0.773	
	To feel exhilaration.	0.779	
Motivation: Risk (MOTRSK)	To take the risks.	0.843	0.95
	To chance dangerous situations.	0.970	
	To experience the risks involved.	0.951	
Involvement: Enjoyment (INVENJ)	Whitewater rafting is one of the most enjoyable things I do.	0.830	0.89
	Whitewater rafting offers me relaxation when life's pressures build up.	0.841	
	Whitewater rafting is one of the most satisfying things I do.	0.897	
Involvement: Self-expression (INVSE)	Whitewater rafting is very important to me.	0.753	0.91
	I enjoy discussing whitewater rafting with my friends.	0.769	
	Whitewater rafting says a lot about who I am.	0.857	
	When I am participating in whitewater rafting, others see me the way I want them to.	0.858	
	You can tell a lot about a person when you see them participating in whitewater rafting.	0.799	
	When I am whitewater rafting I can really be myself.	0.735	
Affective Response (AFFRES)	Whitewater rafting at the Ocoee River was very pleasant.	0.766	0.91
	I very much enjoyed whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River.	0.957	
	Whitewater rafting on the Ocoee River left me with a good feeling.	0.911	
Place Dependence (PDEP)	I get more satisfaction out of whitewater rafting at Ocoee River than from whitewater rafting at any other river.	0.892	0.95
	I enjoy whitewater rafting at Ocoee River more than any other place.	0.922	
	Whitewater rafting at Ocoee River is more important than whitewater rafting at any other place.	0.913	
	Ocoee River is the best place for the kind of whitewater recreation I like to do.	0.894	
	I wouldn't substitute any other place for the type of whitewater recreation I do at Ocoee River.	0.862	

Table 12: Factor Loadings of the final measurement model (Continued)

Construct	Scale Items	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability
Place Identity (PID)	Ocoee River means a lot to me.	0.865	0.96
	I have a strong commitment to Ocoee River.	0.932	
	I am very attached to Ocoee River.	0.971	
	I identify strongly with Ocoee River.	0.949	
Revisit Intention (RI)	I intend to revisit Ocoee River.	0.847	0.93
	I plan to revisit Ocoee River.	0.900	
	I desire to revisit Ocoee River.	0.872	
	I probably will revisit Ocoee River	0.889	
Word-of Mouth (WOM)	I would spread positive word-of-mouth about this river.	0.876	0.91
	I would recommend this river to my friends.	0.882	
	If my friends were looking for a river to visit, I would tell them to try this river.	0.866	

Validity

Construct validity in this study was assessed consisting of convergent and discriminant validity. If measurement items that are supposed to load on the same factor (specified via theory) load on separate factors, then they lack convergent validity. An indication of convergent validity is *average variance extracted*. If the average variance extracted (AVE) for all latent variables are greater than 0.50, then convergent validity exists (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As depicted on Table 13, the AVE for all the constructs are greater than 0.50. Discriminant validity occurs when measurement items from two or more different factors are not significantly correlated. In order to determine discriminant validity, we can view Table 14. If the value in the diagonal entry is greater than the values in that particular column (square correlation between constructs), this confirms discriminant validity among all the constructs. For the current study, there are no values in the diagonal entry that are larger than the values in that particular column (Table 14). This confirms discriminant validity. Other indicators of discriminant validity includes whether the *maximum shared squared variance* (MSV) is less than the AVE (average variance extracted) and whether the *average shared squared variance* (ASV) is less than the AVE (Hair et al., 2009). Both the MSV and ASV for each construct is less than the AVE for each construct thus providing further confirmation of discriminant validity (see Table 13).

Table 13: Validity and Reliability Table

Construct	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
RV	0.930	0.770	0.760	0.250
MOTNAT	0.942	0.845	0.383	0.189
MOTFIT	0.914	0.729	0.383	0.193
MOTEX	0.900	0.694	0.448	0.243
MOTRSK	0.945	0.852	0.448	0.121
INVSE	0.907	0.621	0.569	0.224
AFFRES	0.912	0.777	0.479	0.164
PDEP	0.950	0.793	0.545	0.230
PID	0.963	0.866	0.545	0.218
WOM	0.907	0.765	0.740	0.244
INVENJ	0.892	0.734	0.569	0.251

RV=Revisit Intention; MOTNAT=Motivation: Nature; MOTFIT= Motivation: Physical Activity; MOTEX=Motivation: Excitement; MOTRSK= Motivation: Risk; INVSE=Involvement: Self-Expression; INVENJ= Involvement: Enjoyment; AFFRES=Affective Response; PDEP=Place Dependence; PID=Place Identity; WOM=Word-of-Mouth; CR=Composite Reliability; AVE= Average Variance Extracted; MSV= Maximum Shared Squared Variance; ASV=Average Shared Squared Variance.

Table 14: Discriminant Validity of the Final Measurement Model

Construct	RV	MOTNAT	MOTFIT	MOTEX	MOTRSK	INVSE	AFFRES	PDEP	PID	WOM	INVENJ
RV	0.877										
MOTNAT	0.432	0.919									
MOTFIT	0.353	0.619	0.854								
MOTEX	0.471	0.542	0.511	0.833							
MOTRSK	0.250	0.300	0.393	0.669	0.923						
INVSE	0.331	0.398	0.482	0.438	0.364	0.788					
AFFRES	0.584	0.344	0.247	0.421	0.186	0.217	0.881				
PDEP	0.515	0.356	0.399	0.388	0.238	0.563	0.420	0.890			
PID	0.487	0.373	0.439	0.338	0.204	0.641	0.293	0.738	0.930		
WOM	0.873	0.398	0.311	0.522	0.249	0.265	0.692	0.454	0.382	0.875	
INVENJ	0.414	0.484	0.510	0.548	0.360	0.754	0.340	0.541	0.518	0.406	0.857

RV=Revisit Intention; MOTNAT=Motivation: Nature; MOTFIT= Motivation: Physical Activity; MOTEX=Motivation: Excitement; MOTRSK= Motivation: Risk; INVSE=Involvement: Self-Expression; INVENJ= Involvement: Enjoyment; AFFRES=Affective Response; PDEP=Place Dependence; PID=Place Identity; WOM=Word-of-Mouth

Structural Model Evaluation

Hypotheses Testing

The research model including the proposed relationships among exogenous (independent variables) and endogenous (dependent variables) variables was tested using a structural equation model or SEM. Independent variables in the study included the motivational factors excitement, risk, physical activity, and nature. Dependent variables included self-expression, enjoyment, affective response, place dependence, place identity, revisit intention, and word-of-mouth.

Overall statistics for the structural model include: chi-square (df) of: 3137.19 (795) chi-square/df = 3.95; CFI = 0.920; GFI = 0.815; RMSEA = 0.065. These fit statistics conclude that the data fit the proposed research model. Results of the proposed hypotheses can be found in Table 15 and Figure 3. Indicators of the hypothesis support included standardized regression estimates and path weight significance, previous studies and theory. Critical ratios, standard errors and standardized regression weights, for all hypotheses are provided in Table 15.

Table 15: The Standardized Regression Weights for Hypotheses 1 through 10

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Standardized Regression Weight	Standard Error	Critical ratio	Result
H1a	Risk → Self-expression	0.145	0.027	5.376	Significant
H2a	Excitement → Enjoyment	0.473	0.062	7.627	Significant
H3	Nature → Enjoyment	0.219	0.058	3.756	Significant
H4	Nature → Self-expression	0.151	0.053	2.836	Significant
H5	Physical Activity → Enjoyment	0.265	0.048	5.464	Significant
H6	Physical Activity → Self-expression	0.303	0.048	6.358	Significant
H7a	Enjoyment → Affective response	0.254	0.035	7.241	Significant
H7b	Self-expression → Affective response	-0.072	0.038	-1.92	Not Significant
H8a	Affective response → Place dependence	0.846	0.073	11.658	Significant
H8b	Affective response → Place identity	0.698	0.088	7.902	Significant
H9a	Place identity → Revisit intention	0.092	0.024	3.862	Significant
H9b	Place identity → Word-of-mouth	0.024	0.021	1.139	Not Significant
H10a	Place dependence → Revisit intention	0.204	0.03	6.881	Significant
H10b	Place dependence → Word-of-mouth	0.191	0.026	7.274	Significant

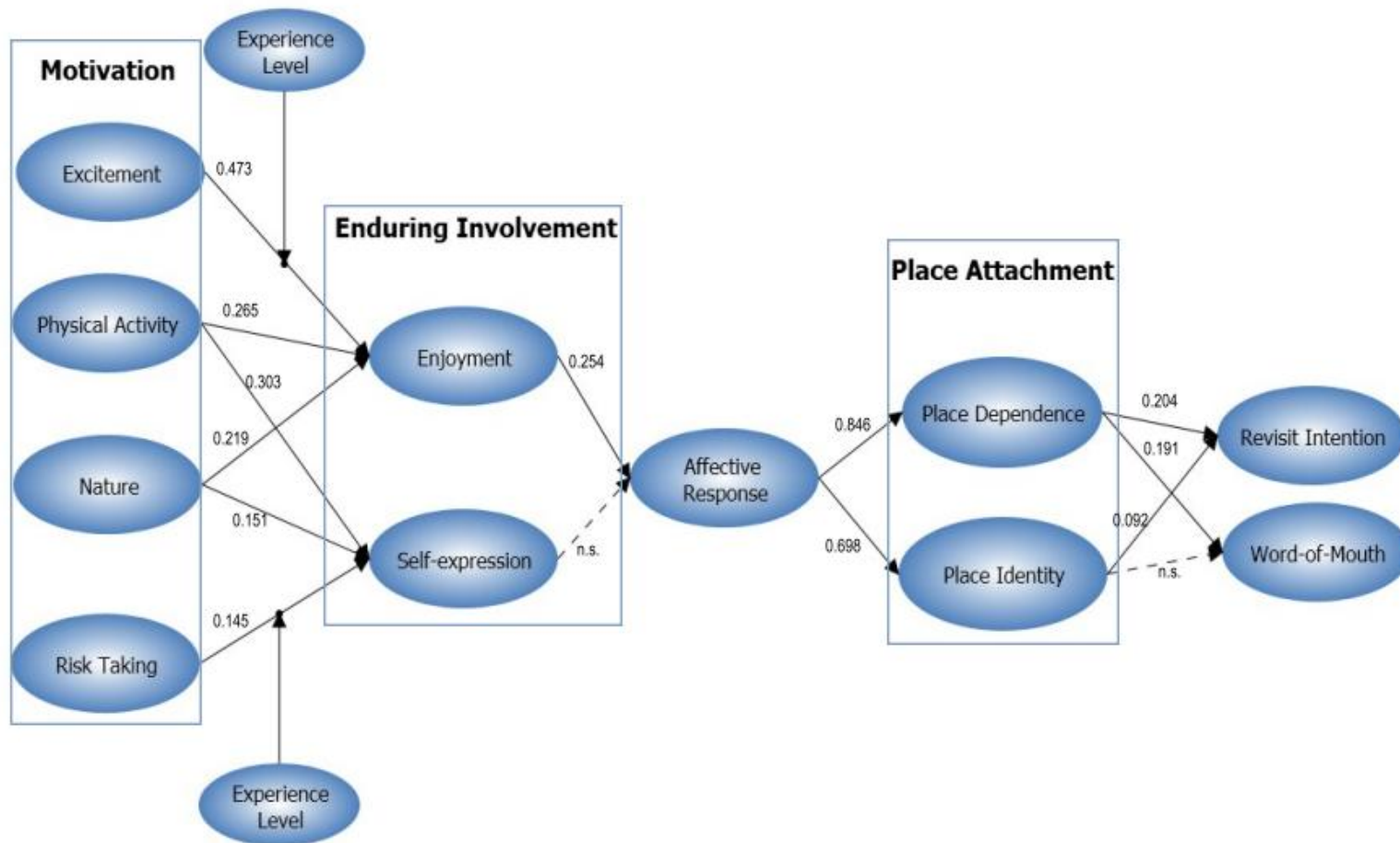


Figure 3: Proposed Research Model with Standardized Regression Weights

H1a: Higher risk motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

The path weight of H1a (0.145) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Risk motivation had a significant effect on the self-expression dimension of involvement. As a result, H1a was accepted. Thus, adventure tourists that are motivated to participate in an adventure activity to experience risk express themselves by participating in risky activities. This expression will lead to a lasting involvement in the activity whitewater rafting, i.e. people will continue to participate in whitewater rafting when they are motivated by the risk inherent in the activity.

H2a: Higher excitement motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

The path weight of H2a (0.473) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Thus the excitement motivation had a significant effect on the enjoyment dimension of involvement. Because this effect was significant, H2a was accepted. Adventure tourists that have a strong motivational need for excitement have a higher level of enjoyment when participating in the activity. This enjoyment will lead to a lasting involvement in the adventure activity whitewater rafting.

H1b: Experience Level with whitewater rafting will moderate the relationship between risk motivation and self-expression.

H2b: Experience Level with whitewater rafting will moderate the relationship between excitement motivation and level of enjoyment.

A test of the model indicated that the experience levels novice (234 cases) and expert (127 cases) were not invariant (the levels were different) based on a multi-group moderation chi-square difference test. In order to determine if the chi-squares of the two models were significantly different, chi-square and degrees of freedom from the unconstrained and fully constrained path model must be obtained (and their chi-squares recorded). Once achieved, we can determine if the two groups (levels) are invariant (do not vary across groups). Each moderation path in the measurement model was tested: (moderation of risk → self-expression; moderation of excitement → enjoyment). The chi-square of the model when the path from excitement to enjoyment is constrained was 4392.99, which was not significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. The chi-square of the model when the path from risk to self-expression is constrained was 4395.00 (significant at the 0.05 level). Thus the moderating relationship of *risk* → *self-expression* was confirmed and the moderation of *excitement* → *enjoyment* was not confirmed (see Table 16).

Table 16: Chi-Square Difference Test (Experience Level as a Moderator)

Moderation Path	Chi Square (Constrained Path)
MOT: Excitement → INV: Enjoyment	4392.99 ^h
MOT Risk → INV: Self-Expression	4395.00*

*** p-value < 0.001

** p-value between 0.001 and 0.01

* p-value between 0.01 and 0.05

^h p-value between 0.05 and 0.1

H3: Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

The path weight of H3 (0.219) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Nature motivation had a significant effect on the enjoyment dimension of involvement. As a result, H3 was accepted. When people participate in outdoor activities and experience enjoyment from the outdoor activity, they will have a lasting involvement in that activity. A motivation to participate in outdoor activities will lead to a lasting involvement activity in the activity given that the activity is enjoyable. People that wish to be close to nature and enjoy the natural scenery experience enjoyment from participation in adventure activities in a natural surrounding (leading to a lasting involvement in the participation in the activity).

H4: Higher nature motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

The path weight of H4 (0.151) was significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Nature motivation had a significant effect on the self-expression dimension of involvement. As a result, H4 was accepted. This indicates that when people express who they are through

the participation in outdoor activities, the types of activities that lead to an active enduring involvement with the activity (and with their natural surroundings). People who express themselves through nature participated in outdoor activities to be close to nature and enjoy the natural scenery.

H5: Higher physical activity motivation level will lead to a stronger level of enjoyment.

The path weight of H5 (0.265) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Physical activity motivation had a significant effect on the enjoyment dimension of involvement. As a result, H5 was accepted. When people participate in physical adventure activities and experience enjoyment from the (physical) adventure activity, they will have a lasting involvement in that activity. A motivation to participate in physical activities will lead to a lasting involvement activity in the activity given that the activity is enjoyable. People that wish to get exercise, keep physically fit, and to feel good after being physically active experience enjoyment from participation in adventure activities (leading to a lasting involvement in the participation in the activity).

H6: Higher physical activity motivation level will lead to a stronger level of self-expression.

The path weight of H6 (0.303) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Physical activity motivation had a significant effect on the self-expression dimension of involvement. As a result, H6 was accepted. This indicates that people express who they are through the participation in physically challenging activities. The participation in physically challenging activities leads to an enduring involvement with the activity. People who

express themselves through physical activity participated in adventure activities to get exercise, keep physically fit, and to feel good after being physically active.

H7a: Higher level of enjoyment will lead to a stronger affective response.

The path weight of H7a (0.254) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. The enjoyment dimension of involvement had a significant effect on affective response. As a result, H7a was accepted. The enjoyment that an adventure tourist experiences when participating in an adventure activity (such as whitewater rafting) will result in an affective response (toward the activity). This affective response toward the adventure activity reflects one's good feelings toward the activity

H7b: Higher level of self-expression will lead to a stronger affective response.

The path weight of H7b (-0.072) was not significant. The self-expression dimension of involvement did not have a significant effect on affective response. As a result, H7b was rejected. Thus, whether or not an adventure tourist expresses themselves through the participation in an adventure activity does not result in an affective response toward the activity. Expressing oneself through the participation in an adventure activity (leading to a lasting involvement) will not influence one's good feelings toward the activity.

H8a: High level of affective response will lead to stronger place dependence.

The path weight of H8a (0.846) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Affective response had a significant effect on the place dependence dimension of place attachment.

As a result, H8a was accepted. The affective response that results from the participation in an adventure activity will lead to dependence in the place for adventure experiences. The feelings one receives when participating in an adventure activity will result in an attachment to the place, and the adventure tourist becomes reliant on the place for his/her desired adventure experiences.

H8b: High level of affective response will lead to a stronger place identity.

The path weight of H8b (0.698) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. Affective response had a significant effect on the place identity dimension. As a result, H8b was accepted. When an affective response results from the participation in an adventure activity, the adventure tourist will relate the setting/place of the activity to their own identity and sense of self. The setting (i.e. river setting in this study) will reflect the identity of the adventure tourist when an affective response toward the activity occurs.

H9a: High level of place identity will lead to stronger revisit intention.

The path weight of H9a (0.092) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. The place identity dimension of place attachment had a significant effect on revisit intention. As a result, H9a was accepted. When an adventure tourist relates the setting/place of the activity to their own identity and sense of self (resulting in an attachment to the place), he/she will more likely revisit the destination to participate in the adventure activity. Because the adventure tourist relates the place to his/her own identity, he/she will be more likely to revisit the place in the future to affirm this identity.

H9b: High level of place identity will lead to positive word-of-mouth.

The path weight of H9b (0.024) was not significant. The place identity dimension of place attachment did not have a significant effect on word-of-mouth. As a result, H9b was rejected. When an adventure tourist identifies with a place (resulting in an attachment to the place), he/she will not necessarily speak positively to friends, family and acquaintances about the place as a result. If an adventure tourist relates the destination to his/her own personal identity, this relationship may not necessarily be communicated to others as a result.

H10a: High level of place dependence will lead to stronger revisit intention.

The path weight of H10a (0.204) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. The place dependence dimension of place attachment had a significant effect on revisit intention. As a result, H10a was accepted. When an adventure tourist is dependent on a place for his/her desired adventure experiences, he/she will more likely revisit the destination to participate in the adventure activity. This dependence in the place for adventure experiences leads to an attachment to the place which results in a commitment and an emotional attachment toward the destination. This commitment and emotional attachment will ultimately draw a person back to the destination for his/her desired adventure experiences.

H10b: High level of place dependence will lead to positive word-of-mouth.

The path weight of H10b (0.191) was significant at $p < 0.001$ level. The place dependence dimension of place attachment had a significant effect on word-of-mouth. As

a result, H10b was accepted. When an adventure tourist is dependent on a place for his/her desired adventure experiences, he/she will more likely speak positively about the destination to friends/family. This dependence in the place for adventure experiences leads to an attachment to the place which results in a commitment and an emotional attachment toward the destination. This commitment and emotional attachment will compel the adventure tourist to speak positively about the destination.

Summary

This chapter addressed the process of analyzing the data. Tests of the hypotheses in the proposed model were outlined and addressed. In this chapter, a test for the difference of factor means across experience levels was analyzed along with a cross-tabulation of the categorical data across experience levels. Secondly, a summary of the descriptive statistics was outlined (including indications of normality, skewness and kurtosis values). Only one of the scale items indicated non-normality. A measurement model was evaluated utilizing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). All scale items had factor loadings of 0.50 or above. The final measurement model indicated an acceptable fit for the data: $\chi^2(759) = 2267.975$; $\chi^2/df = 2.988$; CFI = 0.949; RMSEA = 0.054; GFI = 0.864. The reliability and validity of the data were addressed. All the constructs had composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha scores greater than 0.80. All items indicated the manifestation of convergent and discriminant validity. After determining validity and reliability of the measurement model, the structural model was assessed using structural equation modeling and the proposed hypotheses were verified. The fit indices of the structural model were within acceptable limits: $\chi^2(795) = 3137.198$; $\chi^2/df = 3.940$; CFI = 0.919; RMSEA = 0.065; GFI = 0.815. The data supported all hypotheses with two exceptions. In the following chapter, a thorough discussion of the results will emerge.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research model established for this study was designed to facilitate an understanding of the motivations for adventure tourism and how these motivations affect a lasting, enduring involvement in an adventure activity such as whitewater rafting. This model helped to explain this relationship and how enduring involvement would lead to an attachment to the place through an affective response, and ultimately cause an intention to revisit and speak positively about a destination. The following chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to their implications for industry, academia, limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and conclusion.

Discussion of Findings and Implications

Research objectives of the study include: 1) Determine the primary motivations for adventure tourists at a whitewater destination; 2) Determine which motivations lead to each dimension of enduring involvement; 3) Determine which dimensions of enduring involvement lead to an affective response; 4) Determine if the affective response leads to a place attachment; 5) Determine if place attachment leads to positive outcomes such as word-of-mouth and revisit intention. The following two sections discuss the research and its contributions to marketers (industry) and academia.

Contributions to Academia

This study developed an adventure tourism model designed to outline the primary motivations of adventure tourists which lead to an enduring involvement and place attachment. This will ultimately result in an intention to revisit and speak positively about a destination. Because the proposed research model had an acceptable fit, the model should prove useful in reflecting the motivations for adventure tourists in an adventure setting, how these motivations lead to a lasting/enduring involvement with the activity, an attachment to the place, and ultimately positive outcomes such as word of mouth and revisit intention. The model affirmed the relationship between motivational needs and enduring involvement in an adventure setting (motivations → enduring involvement was confirmed).

The first major contribution of this study to academia was determining four main motivational factors for adventure tourists. Six motivational factors were originally selected as prime motivators for adventure tourists. After data was collected, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) reduced the factors to four key motivational factors to consider: excitement, risk, physical activity, and nature. The factor with the highest response on a 1-7 Likert scale was excitement with an average response of 6.25 (See Table 10). Nature motivation was second in response rate with a 6.07 average followed by risk (5.53) and physical activity (5.40). Thus excitement is the strongest motivator for adventure tourists, followed by nature, risk and physical activity.

The second major contribution of this study was identifying the number of factors for enduring involvement (for an adventure activity) utilizing exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The research model was enhanced by determining the factor loadings for each

enduring involvement item. Ultimately, the measurement items loaded on two factors: self-expression and enjoyment. The result of the EFA of the enduring involvement measurement items will make it more likely the study can be replicated in the future.

This study was the first to develop an adventure tourism model utilizing push-pull motivational theory, edgework theory, leisure theory, and opponent-process theory. The study found that three main push motivations for adventure tourism include *excitement*, *physical activity*, and *risk* while *nature* is the main pull motivation for adventure tourists. For adventure tourists, excitement, risk, and physical activity (push motivational factors) influence a person to travel. The nature pull motivational factor attracts a tourist to a particular destination (such as Ocoee River).

The research model supports the notion that adventure tourists are edgeworkers, they like to live on the edge, to push the boundaries between life and death. The model supports the notion that the more skilled edgeworkers become (with an adventure activity), the lesser the perceived risk (and as a result, risk as a motivator decreases for that activity). Opponent-process theory also supports this notion that enjoyment when participating in an activity again and again tends to decrease over time. Much of the enjoyment adventure tourists receive from adventure activities are from the perceived risks involved. Adventure tourists voluntarily participate in activities they perceive have an element of danger. Thus as perceived level of risk decreases, the impact of the motivational need *risk* decreases.

Enduring involvement was originally a theory of consumer behavior adapted for leisure activities and then later adapted for adventure tourism (Schuett, 1993). As discussed, other more recent studies on adventure tourism used involvement scales

specifically designed for leisure studies (Kouthouris, 2009; Kyle, Bricker, et al., 2004). The author concluded that the involvement adaptation of Schuett (1993) would be more reflective of the setting and the nature of the activity (whitewater rafting). As a result, this study effectively demonstrated the relationship between adventure tourism motivations and enduring involvement for an adventure activity. Academics can adopt this model to evaluate the motivations that ultimately lead to an enduring involvement for an adventure activity. This model can be applied to hard adventure activities such as skydiving and mountain climbing or soft activities such as whitewater rafting a class I river.

Contributions to Marketers

The current study provides contributions beneficial to marketers of adventure tourism activities. These benefits can help marketers of adventure activities acquire new customers and influence repeat visitation. In order to market adventure tourism services and destinations well, marketers should understand the factors that result in the positive outcomes (behaviors and purchase decisions) they desire. The following sections reflect the findings of each hypothesis and specifically discuss the findings that offer contributions for marketers and the adventure tourism industry.

The Impact of Adventure Tourism Motivations on Enduring involvement

Determining the prime motivators for adventure tourists is important because we can begin to market to the push and pull motivations of adventure tourists. If marketers desire to attract a customer to a specific adventure activity, they should consider communicating to the internal (push) motivational needs of excitement, risk, and physical activity. These *motivational needs* push an adventure consumer toward a specific activity

(Dann, 1977). The push motivations appeal to an adventure consumers' internal needs and desires (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Thus tour operators should appeal to an adventure tourist's internal need/desire for risk, excitement, and physical activity in their marketing and word-of-mouth efforts. The strongest push motivating factor for adventure tourists was excitement as discussed above, which had a mean response rate of 6.25 (See Table 10). As a result marketing efforts for the location and activity should stress an appeal to the adventure need excitement followed by risk (5.53) and physical activity (5.40).

Tour operators and other stakeholders should consider marketing to the pull factor *nature* to influence and *pull* adventure tourists to a destination (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The pull factor nature had an overall response average of 6.07, indicating a strong environmental pull motivation. If marketers wish to attract a customer to a specific destination, they should appeal to the motivational need of nature (i.e. to be surrounded by the natural environment, to be close to nature). To attract adventure tourists to visit a specific destination, a destination should communicate its visual appeals (mountain settings, beautiful natural surroundings, wildlife, and nature) in pictures when advertising adventure activities at the place.

As expected, motivations for participation in adventure activities had significant positive effects on an enduring involvement toward the adventure activity. This result is reinforced by a few studies conducted in adventure tourism/recreation (Kouthouris, 2009; Kyle et al., 2004). If adventure tourists are highly motivated by the participation in the adventure activity, then they will have a stronger enduring involvement toward the activity. Alternatively, adventure tourists that are highly motivated by nature, physical fitness, excitement, and risk will continue to participate in an adventure activity over a

substantial period of time. The more a tourist participates in the activity, the more important the activity becomes in his/her life. Thus leisure theories such as enduring involvement and place attachment are important to marketers as these concepts are indicators of the likelihood of repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth about the location and activity. As the model indicates, highly motivated individuals will have a strong enduring involvement in the activity.

Experience was a significant moderator between *risk motivation* and *self-expression*. As an adventure tourist becomes more experienced with an activity, the perceived risk associated with that activity decreases. As a result, the risk motivation decreases as activity experience increases. This is reflected in the comparison of the factor means across experience levels (see Table 8). The mean response of risk motivation was lower with the highest level of experience, (5.48) than the mean of the experience level with 1-2 years of experience, (5.67).

Effect of Enduring Involvement on an Affective Response

As expected, the enjoyment factor of enduring involvement had an effect on affective response. The pleasure that an adventure tourist receives from participation in an adventure activity (and contributes to a lasting involvement) leads to an affective response toward that activity. This affective response is an indication of satisfaction with the activity and overall experience. Thus, marketers need to be sure that adventure tourists have an enjoyable and pleasurable experience that will lead to an enduring involvement and an affective (positive emotional) response toward the activity. The enduring involvement factor self-expression did not have a significant effect on affective

response. Thus whether or not one expresses their individuality through the participation in the activity will not affect the affective response (emotions, feelings, moods) toward the activity.

Effect of Affective Response on Place Attachment

A higher affective response resulted in a strong attachment to the place of the activity across both dimensions of place attachment: place identity and place dependence. First the adventure consumer's feelings, moods, and emotions toward the activity (affective response) resulted in a stronger place dependence. Alternatively, adventure tourists with a higher affective response will become more dependent on a place for the adventure activity of their choice. This supports the notion that affective response (positive emotions toward a destination) plays an important role in an adventure destination decision (Goossens, 2000; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987). Secondly, the adventure consumer's feelings, moods, and emotions toward the activity (affective response) resulted in a stronger place identity. In other words, adventure tourists with a higher affective response toward an activity (at a place) will attribute the place with his or her own self-identity. Marketers should try to influence positive feelings toward an activity and destination to help to ignite positive feelings ultimately leading to place attachment and positive outcomes (word-of-mouth and revisit intention).

Effect of Place Attachment on Positive Word-of-Mouth

As expected, place dependence resulted in an intention to speak positively about a destination. In other words, adventure tourists that rely on a place for adventure activities will communicate their positive experiences to friends, family and acquaintances. This is

free marketing for the destination and thus highly desirable for marketers. As a result, marketers should strive to create unique adventure experiences in a destination thus adventure tourists will be reliant on that destination for adventure experiences. Place identity did not significantly affect word-of-mouth therefore we can deduce that relating the place to one's self-identity will not necessarily result in communicating his/her experiences to others. This result was unexpected and contrary to prior research (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008).

Effect of Place Attachment on Revisit Intention

Similarly, place dependence resulted in an intention to revisit a destination. Further, adventure tourists that rely on a place for adventure activities will revisit the destination to experience those same activities. Again, unique experiences in a destination that creates a reliance on the place will lead to a positive outcome, in this case, repeat visitation. Thus marketers and tour operators should strive to create unique and memorable experiences thus people will return again and again. Place identity, the second factor of place attachment, leads to an intent to revisit a destination. In other words, when a place is a focal point in one's life, the person (adventure tourist) will be more likely to revisit a destination.

Categorical Data: Frequency Differences (By Experience Level)

Table 9, the table of categorical differences across experience levels is important for marketers because it signifies some of the trends in the adventure tourism industry. For instance, 58% of adventure participants that have a household income of \$160,000 or more had an experience level of greater than 3 years. In contrast, only 34% of whitewater

participants in the \$20,000-\$40,000 income level had 3 or more years of experience. Thus, we can deduce that those with a higher income level are more likely to continue to participate in adventure activities such as whitewater rafting over time. The experienced whitewater rafter also can be considered as highly educated. Of those with a graduate or professional degree, 44% had greater than 3 years of experience. In contrast, 23% of those with a high school degree had 3 or more years of experience rafting. Thus tour operators should be aware that affluent and educated people have a higher likelihood to revisit and continue to participate in whitewater rafting.

Interestingly, in the past adventure tourists have been classified as young and male, especially those that participate in hard adventure activities (Hudson, 2003; Sung, 2004). In the current study of rafters at Ocoee River, 63.7% of all rafters were above the age of 25 and 40.5% of rafters were above the age of 35 (see Table 7). In addition, 52.7% of all rafting participants were female. In Table 9, 61% of all new whitewater rafters are female (those with less than 1 year of experience). Prior studies have indicated a similar trend noting an increasing number of adventure participants are older and female (Attarian, 2002; Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Sugarman, 2000). Thus it is important for adventure tour operators to target women and older adults as potential adventure consumers. This can be accomplished in various ways including social media, internet blogs, women's magazines, and in various websites that offer discount packages related to hospitality and travel.

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations and opportunities for future research are important to identify, and have been for this study. First, the activity in this study was a seasonal activity rather than year-round. Because of this, the centrality to lifestyle dimension of enduring involvement was not considered. Activities that are central to one's lifestyle imply that these activities are participated in often, and year-round. The majority of rafting in the Ocoee River occurs from April-September (Moates, 2012). Future studies of adventure activities that lend themselves to all seasons (i.e. mountain climbing) may wish to include this factor (centrality) in the adventure tourism model.

A second limitation would be that this study did not survey more than one river, or more than one activity. The study was limited to whitewater rafters on the Ocoee River in Ocoee, TN. Whitewater kayakers were not surveyed in this study. Future river studies may wish to survey both rafters and kayakers. Future studies that are not river-based may wish to survey additional hard adventure activities such as skydiving, rock climbing or base jumping. This will help to determine if the model can be applied in different settings and in different adventure activities. Third, when comparing different activities, future studies could address the difference in the motivations of adventure tourists for hard vs. soft activities. Ocoee River is a unique location in the Eastern United States in that it is the only class IV rapid east of the Mississippi River. There are limited hard activities in the Eastern United States, but many soft adventure activities exist including rafting class I and class II rivers. Other soft activities in the eastern US include skiing, hiking, and

backpacking in the Appalachian Mountains. Thus ample opportunities exist to apply or adapt the adventure model to soft activities.

This study employed a self-report (street intercept) survey method where respondents reported immediately after their rafting trip. There may have been some response inflation/bias due to the researchers being present during the administration. In the future, respondents could be mailed the survey within days of their rafting trip in order to decrease any perceived response bias (though response rate would be lower). Lastly, the questionnaire used to collect data was fairly lengthy, which may have affected the response rate and the quality of data collected. Thus there may have been some subject fatigue (Creswell, 2012). Future studies should consider a shorter survey, consisting of fewer factors and representative measurement items.

Conclusion

This study established an empirical framework to outline the primary motivations of adventure tourists which lead to an enduring involvement and place attachment, and ultimately an intent to revisit and speak positively about a destination. Further, the empirical framework demonstrated the moderating relationship of experience level on risk motivation → self-expression. This study proposed four main motivating factors of adventure tourists that lead to an enduring involvement. This study also introduced a mediating affective response between the enduring involvement and place attachment scales.

The use of structural equation modeling disclosed several significant results. Excitement was found to significantly affect the enduring involvement factor enjoyment.

Physical activity motivation was found to significantly affect the enduring involvement factors enjoyment and self-expression. Nature motivation was found to have significant effect the enduring involvement factor enjoyment. Risk motivation was found to have a significant effect on the enduring involvement factor. The enduring involvement factor enjoyment significantly affected an affective response to the activity. Contrary to what was expected, self-expression did not lead to an affective response toward the activity. A high affective response to the activity resulted in a strong place identity and strong place dependence (dimensions of place attachment). Place dependence was found to have a significant effect on both revisit intention and word-of-mouth. Place identity was found to have a significant effect on revisit intention but not word-of-mouth. Prior research had shown that place identity was a antecedent to word-of-mouth (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008).

Implications were discussed that will assist adventure tourism marketers in understanding their customer base, such that they can attract new customers and influence positive word-of-mouth and repeat visitation. The author suggested that marketers should focus on creating unique and memorable adventure tourism experiences such that people will enjoy their visit, identify with the location, and be reliant on the place for these types of experiences. Finally, some limitations of the study and recommendations to improve future research were discussed.

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