DIMENSIONS OF THE SOCIAL GROUP ROLE IN PLEASURE VACATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Crompton, John L., Dimensions of the Social Group Role in Pleasure Vacations, Annals of Tourism Research 1981, VIII(4):550-568. Interviewees were asked about their patterns of interpersonal association in pleasure vacations. In an individual's selection of a destination, social groups exerted four kinds of influence. First, some respondents were directly persuaded to accompany another member of their social group on a vacation. Second, social groups exerted a normative influence both on choice of destinations and choice of attractions at selected destinations. Third, long term socialization appeared to have some influence on the predisposition to vacation and the predisposition to go to a particular destination. Fourth, the distant physical location of some social group members was found to influence destination decisions. Keywords: social group, pleasure vacation.

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RESUME


INTRODUCTION

It has long been recognized that the interactive nature of social groups exerts a strong influence on an individual’s behavior. Olmsted and Hare (1978) define a group as “a plurality of individuals who are in contact with one another, who take one another into account, and who are aware of some significant commonality.” Individuals do not function as independent entities in society, rather they interact with other people. Personal motivational drives are filtered and redirected by the social circles of workmates, family and friends (Burch 1969). Exposure to social influences serves to modify or reinforce psychological drives. Every group exerts pressure on the individual to conform to its particular belief systems, values and norms. These are powerful influences. In contemporary industrial societies, individuals belong to a great variety of groups and frequently aspire to belong to many others.

The influence of the social group, characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation, was classically formulated by Cooley (1909). He suggested that such groups are fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual. He viewed them as “the spring of life,” the great socializers and incubators of human character. “The result of intimate association,
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...is a certain fusion of individuals in a common whole, so that one's self for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group." Mead (1934) carried Cooley's analysis further emphasizing that the group influence is not superficial, but rather individuals derive their very psychic skeleton from the social environment in which they live and grow. Mead described how a child's personality is developed in relation to "significant others." The child internalizes the attitudes of others by virtue of an ability to "take on the role of the other." This role of social groups extends to later years so the primary group plays a vital part in the psychic life of an individual at all stages of development.

Several dimensions of the impact of groups on individuals have emerged from this reservoir of sociological thought. In recent years a considerable amount of research has been devoted to identifying the extent to which an individual's decisions are molded by the social influences deriving from the group (Olmsted and Hane 1978). The study reported here was concerned with expanding this work to the tourism field.

The indigenous presence, and determining influence, of the social group in the leisure time milieu has been recognized in several studies. Cheek (1971) investigated differences in social characteristics between work and non-work behavior and found that while work involved behavior and actions of the social person, non-work exhibited involvement by the social group. Field (1971) further demonstrated the importance of social groups in the non-work setting. He examined a variety of outdoor leisure activities. Categories of "alone," "with friends," and "family and friends" were established. Data suggested that regardless of leisure settings, participation within a group predominated. Among the social group types, "family" in each of the identified leisure settings emerged as the most common social unit in which leisure participation took place. Yancy and Snell cited in Cheek et al. (1976) investigating leisure activities among lower, working and middle class blacks and whites living in Nashville, Tennessee, discovered that:

...leisure activities are social activities. Among all urbanities and particularly among blacks, they occur in relatively small groups characterized by relatively high continuity of membership...in almost every activity that we investigated...informal groups of family and friends were involved.
Cheek et al. (1976) in their study of behavior at a zoological park concluded that group membership was more influential in channelling participation into particular activities than individual needs or desires. Similarly, Burch (1969) reported that the inner social circle of acquaintances exerted greater influence on leisure activity decisions than other factors he examined. He concluded that this circle of close friends constrains an actor to remain within a given style of leisure.

This study addressed three primary questions concerned with identifying the influence of social groups in pleasure vacation experiences. First, what influence do social groups exert on the selection of a vacation destination? Second, what is the composition of social groups in the vacation context? Third, what are the roles of social groups in enhancing the satisfaction derived from a pleasure vacation?

Methodology

Data were derived from thirty-nine unstructured interviews, each of approximately two hours duration. The interviews were tape recorded, subsequently transcribed, classified, and their content was analyzed. The content analysis did not seek to quantify responses, rather it was concerned with stimulating insights by identifying the range of dimensions revealed in the respondent interviews. This is a phenomenological approach which emphasizes the meaningfulness of insights gained from individual cases rather than through analysis based on quantification. The qualitative case study nature of the study made such quantification inappropriate. The study's objectives were limited to identifying, and obtaining insights into, the role of the social group. Hence, the content of each interview was analyzed by exception. That is, if a respondent reported a particular social group impact, then a similar impact noted by a subsequent respondent was not usually recorded.

The characteristics of the sample are described elsewhere (Crompton 1979). Because of the research design, data collection technique, and the limited sample size, this study was not concerned with the distribution or strength of these social group roles in a population.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The Influence of Social Groups on the Selection of a Vacation Experience
Most respondents observed that pleasure vacation experiences were a relatively popular topic of conversation. Hence, information about vacation destinations appears to be effectively disseminated within social groups through word of mouth communication. This is consistent with the consumer behavior literature which suggests that word of mouth or personal communication from an immediate and trusted source is typically more influential than media communications (Berelstein and Steiner 1964). In the tourism field, Nolan (1976) reported that in overall popularity of travel information sources, the typical respondent noted the advice of friends and relatives first, ahead of nine types of media communications.

Kotler (1972) indicated that the influence of social groups in purchase decisions appears to be especially potent in situations where the product is expensive, risky, or purchased infrequently, and in situations where the product has a significantly social as opposed to a private character. The pleasure vacation product appears to embrace both of these situations.

Several studies have furthered understanding into the motivations of pleasure vacationers (e.g. Dann 1977; Crompton 1979) by addressing the question, "Why do people go on vacation or go to a particular destination?" The evidence in this study suggested that social groups may serve to reinforce or modify biogenic or psychogenic tension states. They appear to exercise at least four kinds of effects on destination selection.

First, they may directly persuade the individual to visit a destination. Second, they may exert a normative influence which molds an individual's image and opinion of a destination. Third, through the long term socialization process, individuals acquire conventional wisdom and stereotype about destinations and attractions over time. Fourth, social group members living in distant locations exert an influence on destination selection.

1. Direct Group Influence on Destination Selection

Direct influence on destination selection occurred when a respondent was persuaded to accompany another member of a social group on a vacation. The importance of this influence was stressed by an unmarried respondent:

I need somebody to give me the impetus to go on a trip. I could probably afford to do more than I do if I planned accordingly, but I need somebody to put the bug in me. I might say, "gee I would like to do that," but I do not do it on my own.
A specific example of this influence occurring was offered by a Boston respondent who recalled:

This friend of mine in Minneapolis called me one Sunday morning in January when it was freezing here in Boston and even colder in Minneapolis. She said I have just been looking through all the travel pages in the newspaper and a cruise to the south sounds nice. How about going to the Caribbean? My friend's enthusiasm for going attracted me to it.

Sheth (1968) suggested that in many instances, in order to minimize the cost and effort of seeking information, individuals simply imitate the behavior of their reference group. This social influence may be non-overt (Hansen 1972). Person A is positively evaluated; person A is known to have visited destination X (is positively related to destination X); the attractiveness of X is increased because of this relationship. That is, whether A acts as an information source or not, the fact that he or she represents a positively evaluated concept associated with an alternative may influence the choice. This was illustrated by a respondent who commented that another family with whom his family was well acquainted, went to Mexico once a year: "They love it down there on the Gulf of California. They like to go fishing and it is not crowded. That is a plus to me, for if they like it, it must be halfway decent.”

There was evidence that the group's direct influence was constrained by an individual's previous experiences or established set of norms. Howard and Sheth (1968) have suggested that individuals select purchase items from within a limited number of brand (destination) alternatives, which they term the evoked set. Respondents in this study confirmed that if a destination was not a member of the evoked set, then information provided about it by other social group members would not be absorbed. For example, one respondent commented:

If I had not thought of going to a place before, I don't think somebody mentioning it and saying they had a fantastic time would convince me to go. It might convince me to investigate but usually it would be an addition to my own thinking. I really do tend to know where I want to go. If you said you were just back from Tahiti and you said it was fantastic, the best place you had ever been in your whole life, the ultimate, and Tahiti was not
part of my train of thought, you could talk forever about it and it would not bother me one way or another.

Children exercised a substantial influence on destination decisions. This influence was exerted either by parents making decisions with their children's welfare uppermost in mind, or more directly through persistent requests from the children themselves. Respondents with children observed that, in deference to their children, they frequently elected to visit places of interest to the children and they preferred to visit friends who also had children.

A recent popular innovation which has greatly expanded the influence of social reference groups on destination selection is the C.B. radio. Several respondents alluded to it as being something of a social group surrogate. Effectively it extended the social network to everyone within listening range who owned a C.B. The possible embarrassment of seeking advice in a face-to-face context was removed and social input, directly relevant to the current experience, was received at an influential stage in the planning decision. For example, one respondent stated that it was his normal practice to drive into a general area on vacation and then to seek advice over the C.B. as to what places he should visit.

2. The Normative Influence of Social Groups

The normative influence of social groups was apparent both in their influence on selection of a destination, and in determining what was to be seen and done at a destination. When members of a group discuss their vacation experiences, they communicate impressions to other group members which may be absorbed for future reference. In this way they exercise a normative influence which modifies or reinforces existing destination images. For example, one respondent stated: "I would like to go to Hawaii. Everybody who has been there has said it is good. I know a lot of people who have been there. It is expensive but they enjoyed it." This impression emerged from the cumulative impact of many people saying the same thing.

Even when there is direct personal contact with a destination, other members of a group may exercise a normative influence. They discuss their individual experiences with one another and come to share a collective image of the destination that reflects as much an internalization of their own group norms as it does a direct perception of the destination (Herman and Schild 1961).

In some instances, respondents selected a destination without seeking advice from others. However, once the selection decision had been made, detailed information about its specific attributes
was sought from primary groups. This normative influence was illustrated by the respondent who said she had no interest in seeing a bullfight when she was in Spain, because she found the whole idea repulsive. However, "Everyone said you cannot go to Spain without seeing a bullfight. So I went to see a bullfight, but I was sorry I went and I would not go back again."

3. The Long Term Influence of Social Groups

To this point, concern has been with the relatively short term influences of social groups. However, there is also a long term mechanism operating in the form of the socialization process, through which the individual acquires conventional wisdom and stereotype over time. This process influences development of cognitive structure and personality which may engender basic psychological dispositions toward particular destinations.

Le Vine (1965) suggests that each group of people with a common culture has a cognitive map of other groups and their traits as part of their common culture. A good deal of this cognitive map is transmitted to each generation of children by means of direct tuition. The individual is an entity moving through time continually exposed to stimuli. Hence, vacationers are likely to have been quietly assimilating impressions and information about particular destinations for a number of years.

The long term socialization influence appeared to be as influential in creating a predisposition to vacation as in stimulating a predisposition to go to a particular destination. Typically, it was observed: "If my relatives, and particularly my parents, had not gone on vacations, I might not have become as interested." It was noticeable that some respondents who had never been on long pleasure vacation trips as children did not go on such trips today. If parents had not gone on pleasure vacations, that option had frequently never been seriously considered by respondents because it was beyond their experience. The potential of such experiences for satisfaction was unknown and thus there was no desire for them:

As a child I did not think about pleasure vacations. I was in another world. Some of my friends would drive across the country to Florida or California, but I just had no concept. I lived in a pretty small world. As long as you don't know it is out there you cannot be too concerned about it.
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In contrast, another respondent stated: "Traveling has been indigenous to our family." This person had always traveled extensively, and went on pleasure vacations frequently, as a child. She recalled living in California where her father was stationed in the war: "We traveled every weekend, seeing, doing and taking advantage of all that California had to offer." This respondent was an enthusiastic pleasure vacationer today, going at every opportunity.

At the same time, there were some respondents whose current attitude toward vacations contrasted with their own family's pattern. Some were now avid pleasure vacationers even though as a child their family had not gone on such vacations:

The trip we took last year was 20,000 miles and four months, but I have not traveled very much before in my life. As a child I traveled hardly at all. My folks did not travel. The first time I went on a vacation was with my spouse in 1971. I did not go on a vacation until we were married.

In this case, the change in vacation patterns was the result of a change in life cycle stage. The movement away from the dominant parental family milieu and the new influence of a close other person, provided the stimuli which promoted pleasure vacation behavior. The influence of change in life cycle stage on changing behavior was frequently reported. Change in influence from one group to another led to a change in vacation use patterns for many respondents. Most of them identified the critical stage as being transition from the parental home to a different milieu:

This vacation pattern I have now, started in college when I started to go backpacking with a group of people. Ever since I started college I have gone on vacations.

This change permitted free expression of the individual's desires without parental constraints for the first time. One respondent commented:

I started traveling the day I had enough money of my own to go and psychological independence from my parents. I had always read all kinds of biography, geography and history books since I was a child. My favorite game was a puzzle of the United States fitting the States together. There was something in me. When I became financially able to do it and had the means with my own car, I started.
4. The Locational Influence of Social Groups

Major influence was exerted by the presence of social group members living in distant locations. Some respondents felt an obligation to use the time to visit with them while others perceived them to be an inexpensive base from which to stage a pleasure vacation. Their influence suggests that attractions at a destination should promote strongly in the local area for local area residents bring out of town visitors to attractions.

In cases where members of a social group were physically located very distant from each other, periodic visits to other members were perceived to be required in order to retain membership in the group. Almost all respondents recognized strong familial ties which had to be periodically reinforced. If non-resident family members lived some distance away there was a feeling of obligation to use vacation time to visit with them:

Visiting relatives is not the type of vacation I normally like, but I feel once in a while it is necessary. We have not been back to Oregon for four years and I feel we should go back to see my mother. I didn't see my father before he died and I have to go see my mother. Once in a while you have just got to fit that in.

This sense of obligation to other members of the family meant that relatives provided the essential rationale for going on the trip and they determined the destination. In these instances, the only decisions which remained, related to the extent to which other desired destinations or attractions could or should be built into the trip. Many respondents indicated that they visited places of interest en route to their relatives' destination:

One of my sons is now in Philadelphia. I have never been there. I would like to drive there and take my two youngest children to see Washington, D.C., through Williamsburg, and all the areas they have not seen there.

A similar strategy adopted, but with different emphasis, was to select a pleasure destination and then to plan the route in such a way that visits to friends and relatives could be incorporated: "We try to pick areas we have not been before, but where we can take in family on the way." In some cases, trips to visit distant social group members served not only to cement relationships, but also to increase the cultural satisfaction derived from the trip because the other members served as local guides.
The Composition of Social Groups on Vacation

In most cases the family unit was the primary social group on pleasure vacations. Indeed, for some respondents the potential for enhancing family unity was a primary function of the vacation:

The reason we started going to this island off the coast of Georgia was to be together as a family. I was traveling a great deal alone at that time in my work. We went as a family and we stayed together for two weeks, sometimes longer. We were together and not dispersing into many different directions. We went to one place and stayed there.

However, other respondents indicated that while their family was the primary focal group, this group was flexible and dynamic rather than fixed and static, for in some instances the group members did not stay together while on the vacation. At the same time, it was unusual for the family to disaggregate to such an extent that each individual member behaved independently. The more usual situation was for members to subdivide into groups: “When we go on vacations and split up it is usually me or my wife going off somewhere, leaving the other one with the children.”

Respondents indicated that a similar arrangement occurred in friendship as well as family social groups. It was important that the option was available to pursue whatever desire was paramount without constraint from others in the group:

I do not necessarily split up with the friends I go away with, but the possibility is there. I do not want to have the feeling that I have to do everything with that person I am with. At some point there may be something that they may want to do and I do not want to do, and vice-versa.

Several respondents observed that family vacations often ended when children reached their mid-teens:

They do not want to come with us because their interests are too varied. A family vacation is not what they want anymore. Also, once your children, especially boys, become old enough to take summer jobs, your family vacations are over or are confined to the children that are left.

When teenagers did elect not to go with their family on vacations, they often went on pleasure vacations with peers. One respondent reported that his daughter each year vacationed with a church
group, backpacking in different areas. The church group acted as a social surrogate for the family.

The family unit was sometimes expanded to embrace as many others as were necessary to reduce the need for intra-family compromise on vacation preferences. This strategy appeared to be particularly prevalent as an alternative to having teenagers break with the family. In this situation their friends were sometimes invited to join in the family vacation and form a subgroup within the primary family group: "We found last time we went on a vacation trip, the children wanted to go, but they wanted to take their friend Jimmy or Susie." This enabled the children to take friends with compatible interests on the trip and extended the period of time over which the family could vacation together. It recognized the disparity of interests which emerge within the family unit and took some positive action to resolve it.

The strategy of extending a family unit to incorporate others was not confined only to embracing other young children or teenagers. In some instances, a family unit sought out a complete other family unit as a strategy for reducing intra-family conflicts in vacation preferences. For example, one respondent particularly enjoyed challenging physical activities on vacation and so did the husband in another family with which he was acquainted. Hence, the two families arranged to vacation together. The husbands went off and did things together. Similarly, their wives enjoyed sitting around the camp and shopping together in the local towns, while the children from each family enjoyed playing with each other. The extended group was more efficient than the family group alone. It avoided intra-family conflict by extending the family to bring in carefully selected others whose interests were compatible.

The development of an extended family as the necessary unit for a pleasure vacation was not uncommon. A respondent, who was a travel agent by profession, observed that some customers could not conceive of having a satisfactory experience unless they were going with another one or two couples: "Certain people who book with me never book as a single couple. They need to go as a party all the time. They need other people." The advantages of extending the family group by going with another family unit were elaborated upon by the respondent who stated:

It is really nice to go with other people on something like skiing or biking. In skiing it works out that my husband and my girl friend are the best skiers. Her husband and I
are usually slower. We usually wind up skiing in pairs because they are really fast and really good, and we are slower and like to look at the scenery and take pictures. It usually ends up that there are two people paired up somehow. If we go on a bike trip, my girl friend and I would probably be behind the two men.

Vacationing with another family unit appears to ameliorate the need to compromise the differing preferences of a husband and wife, enabling them both to do more of what satisfies them most. One respondent provided insight into the type of circumstances in which this type of extended group appeared to be most appropriate:

Especially if there are skills involved or if there are opportunities to go shopping. I enjoy clothes shopping with my girl friend whereas my husband and her husband may like to go out and do something else. It removes some of the tensions from the two of us.

Some respondents reported that individual family members went on separate pleasure vacations and that the family did not vacation together as a unit. This tended to occur when one member had a particular interest which was not followed by the others. For example, one respondent reported that his father went hunting for two weeks every year but his mother never went with him. When this occurred, others, such as non-nuclear family or friends, usually were sought and served essentially as family surrogates.

The tourist industry has attempted to provide these surrogates by developing vacations for special interest groups and the use of organized tours.

The extended family group may be extrapolated to include all participants on an organized tour. One respondent went on an organized tour with three other ladies, but if they were tired and did not want to go somewhere, she found somebody else on the tour with whom to go. She provided two specific examples:

When we were in Puerto Rico, I wanted to go shopping and they did not want to go shopping. Some women down the hall were going shopping and asked if I wanted to go with them. I said sure, and went off with them, while the other three laid in bed and rested. But nobody minds that, we all start out that way. When we were aboard ship, I wanted to go into Freeport to see a floor show. They didn’t want to go because the show started
at midnight and it was too late. This other woman, who
was at the table at supper with us, said she had been
wanting to see the floor show too. So the two of us took a
cab and went to see the floor show. Her group did not
want to go and mine did not want to go.

It seems that the greater the number in the group, the more likely
it is that an individual will find compatibility and the less require-
ment there is for the individual to have to compromise desires.

The Role of the Social Group in Enhancing a Pleasure Vacation

Respondents reported that the social group played four roles
which were important in facilitating a satisfying vacation ex-
perience. They were saving money, ameliorating loneliness,
stimulating additional perspectives, and providing a sympathetic
forum for recalling and reminiscing about vacation experiences.

First, the pragmatic financial advantages of traveling with
others to save money were recognized. A double room is cheaper
per individual than a single room, and other economies accrue by
sharing automobile costs, camping fees, and so on.

Second, the presence of companions on a pleasure vacation
removed the risk of unwanted loneliness. Plog (1976) in his em-
pirically derived composite profiles, describing typical
characteristics of peoples' viewpoints towards travel at different
stages in their life cycle, portrayed the typical 35 to 50 year old
single female as thinking:

After all who really wants to travel if there is no one to go
along with? How can she enjoy the excitement and
glamour of Rome, Paris, or London if there's no one to
talk to about it while she's there? And that return trip
home! How dreadful it would be for her to step off the
plane and find there's no one to greet her and say, “Hi,
welcome back. I'm so glad to see you.”

This concern to avoid loneliness was particularly prevalent among
single respondents. Often such respondents were happy enough to
go by themselves for limited periods like weekends but the
thought of having to sit down at meals alone and not talk with any
familiar associates for a week was generally viewed as a disconcer-
ting and undesirable experience.

The requirement for companionship was not just a question of
being accompanied by anyone, but of being with particular peo-
ple. One respondent commented, “It's not where you go or what
you do that makes a vacation, it's who you go with." It was pointed out that compatibility with fellow travelers was not always easy to achieve. This was illustrated by a respondent who lamented his experiences on a cruise. Table seating for meals was assigned and he found himself thrust with others with whom he had nothing in common. They were older, he considered their conversation mundane, and he came to regard mealtimes with considerable misgivings because of the incompatibility of the companions to whom he was assigned. This was an important ingredient in the lack of satisfaction received from that pleasure vacation. The key ingredients in compatibility between traveling companions appeared to be genuine commonality of interest and familiarity with each other's idiosyncracies gained over a period of time.

The third important role of the social group identified by respondents was the stimulation and additional perspectives which its members could offer. This sometimes heightened satisfactions derived from the trip. Respondents indicated they liked to go with others because they enjoyed sharing what they see and they also appreciated the observations of friends. Typical comments included "I just cannot keep it in me when I see something I enjoy that is different" and "I would miss not having someone to share the experience with." In some cases sharing a pleasure vacation experience with someone appeared to increase the enjoyment of it exponentially:

I am enjoying it, they are enjoying it, and we can almost enjoy each other enjoying it too. I need people and like to be close to people. If I am enjoying myself I want to pass it on and I want to get it from them too.

The fourth way in which the social group increased satisfaction derived from a pleasure vacation was by providing an interested and sympathetic forum within which an individual's vacation experiences could be reported. Not all respondents were interested in discussing their vacation experience with others for some considered it a very personal, unique and private experience. However, such views were atypical. For most respondents opportunities to recall and reminisce about vacation experiences made an important contribution to the total satisfaction derived from the vacation. Although respondents usually enjoyed discussing their vacation experiences with friends, they generally observed that such opportunities were confined primarily to the time period immediately after their return.
The extent of reminiscing opportunities appeared to be dependent upon the degree of congruency between the vacation and the interests of the social group. Most respondents who did not enjoy listening to the vacation experiences of others rejected them because they were unable to identify with those experiences. A commonality of interest was needed within the group to facilitate dialogue and social intercourse about the vacation. This commonality of interest arose if others had been on the same trip; to the same destination on another occasion; or on a recent vacation to a different destination. It was observed that "The people who travel a lot talk a lot. The people who don't travel don't talk about it." Alternatively, the focus of a vacation sometimes provided the necessary congruency:

The people I enjoy being with are the same kind of people in the sense that they are always reading and concerned about the historical, or have an historical consciousness. Also some of them are social-anthropological buffs, and like that sort of thing. So everybody's ears perk up, for they like to talk and hear about other people's trips. For the most part people are not taking the kind of trips where they go for a weekend in Las Vegas. If somebody brought that up people would pooh-pooh and not listen.

Another respondent provided an illustration of an experience that was beyond the parameters with which her social group could identify and hence the trip aroused little interest:

They found it difficult to identify with Mexico. It is a remote place with well publicized dangers from driving, drugs and that sort of thing. They could not understand why we went at all. If we had gone to Canada they would have understood because both sides of the family had relatives in Canada.

Although his relatives and friends were not especially interested in details of that trip experience, this respondent reported that they did want to learn more about the specific context within which their gifts or momentos were purchased: "The conversation was around what was brought home rather than the actual trip." The gifts provided a congruency of interest which facilitated some opportunity for recalling the experience.

CONCLUSIONS

The potential for influence on individual's behavior by social
groups has long been recognized. An increasing amount of empirical research is being conducted with the intent of furthering understanding into the motivations of pleasure vacationers. The evidence in this study suggests that the answer to the question "Why do people go on vacation or go to a particular destination?" is sociological as well as psychological, for the social group reinforces, modifies, and molds the motivations of its members. It appears that research efforts in this area should be designed to address both of these dimensions rather than either independently.

The intended contribution of this study is to provide insights into the phenomenon of social group roles in the pleasure vacation experience which will be useful for conceptualizing and developing subsequent hypotheses. No inferences are intended as to whether group influences were typical or atypical. The relative strength and distribution in the population of social group impacts on their members remains a subsequent research task.

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