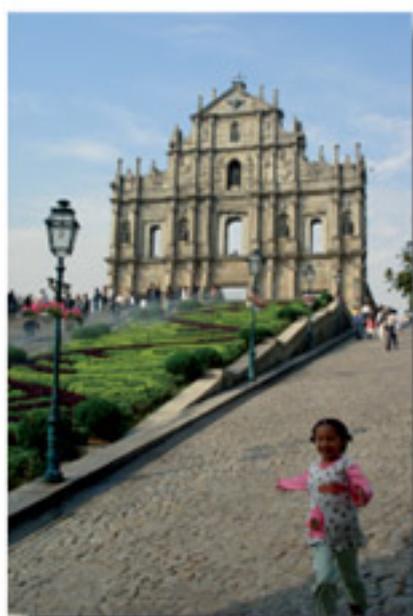


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EMOTIONS, MOTIVATIONS AND DESTINATION POSITIONING

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Abstract

This paper presents a latent two-factor (pleasantness and arousal) model that successfully explains the affective perception of the routine daily environment by visitors to Douro Valley, a widely known wine region whose cultural landscape has been acknowledged as World Heritage, and is becoming an emergent tourism destination. Visitors more often attribute agitation related emotions to their home environment and pleasant low activated emotions to the destination. Level of urbanization of tourists' residence was shown to be negatively related to pleasantness and positively related to arousal, which, in its turn, is positively related to escape motives and to the peaceful image of Douro. These findings, complemented with destination perceptions measured on a national sample of domestic travelers, are taken into account to contribute to targeting and positioning decisions, focusing discussion on the issue of destinations' substitutability.

Keywords: Travel motivation; approach-avoidance; social psychology of tourism; destination marketing

INTRODUCTION

The approach-avoidance distinction has been posited to be a fundamental and basic conceptual foundation of motivation, as the idea of behavior being motivated by desirable and undesirable events or expectations is highly intuitive (Elliot & Covington, 2001). There are two different views on the emotional sequence of approach and avoidance behavioral systems (Carver, 2001). One relates approach with positive emotions and avoidance with negative emotions, thus considering only the valence of affect to define the two motivational systems. The other posits that either valence of affect may be involved in either type of motive, and there is a need to consider a second dimension of affect, usually called arousal, after Mehrabian and Russell (1974). According to this view, the avoidance system deals with anxiety in high activity levels and relief in low activity levels, whereas the approach system involve elation in high activity and depression in low activity (Carver & Scheier, 1999).

There are two important implications of this latter view on the relationships between emotions, motivational processes involved in leisure travel, and destination images. First, the dialectics of escape and seeking (Iso-Ahola, 1982, 1983) should explicitly consider escape as a process of moving away from anxiety related emotions (towards relief) and seeking as a process of obtaining elation related emotions (from depression). In other words, escapers should be pleased in a relaxation state, whereas seekers would be pleased in an excitement state. Several authors researching emotions have recognized the healing or preventing function of low activity levels associated to leisure and tourism. Carver (2001) states that «the experience of relief, of

safety and serenity, also has a function [...] of regrouping, restoring one's access to energy supplies preparatory to turning to some new activity» (p. 351) and it was found that exciting and relaxing situations are equally preferred, because high arousal levels experienced in modern urban life induce fatigue and, thereby, temporarily enhance the greater attractiveness of less arousing stimulation (Mehrabian, Wihardja, & Ljunggren, 1997).

The second implication is that it supports the idea of Rossiter and Percy (1987, 1991) about the emotional sequence of advertising. Informational messages accommodate negative emotions like annoyance and fear and deliver relief, relaxation and peacefulness, while transformational messages anticipate positive emotions like excitement or pride. The prevalent motivational pattern of visitors is therefore essential to form the affective image of destination, as it is reasonable to expect that escapers attach more value to peaceful images, whereas seekers would prefer lively and exciting images. According to Rossiter and Percy, another distinguishable feature is that escapers would need more information to ease the anxiety of destination choice, which is not present in the seeking motivation.

The main purpose of this paper is to apply the emotion sequences of approach and avoidance systems to the motivation for pleasure travel. Considering that «responses to threat have an emergency character that is generally lacking in responses to incentives» (Carver, 2001, p. 350), the starting point will be the assessment of affect attributed by travelers to their daily environment, as it is assumed to be fundamental to the drive to avoid “threats”. That affective image of home environment will then be related to travel motives and to the affective image of a particular destination in the North of Portugal and will support a brief discussion on the positioning alternatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Affect systems are fundamental to human choice processes because they increase the accuracy and efficiency of decisions (Damasio, 1995), but nevertheless they have received too little attention in travel motivation research. In this field, affect has primarily been studied to model destination image, following the established assumption that attitudes are formed upon the cognitive and affective appraisals (Bagozzi, 1992; Gnoth, 1997). Researchers have investigated how the affective qualities attributed to destinations relate to travel motivations (Baloglu, 1997), benefits sought (Kastenholz, 2003), visitation intentions (White & Scandale, 2005) and recommendation (Kastenholz, 2003). Although the two latter studies provided evidence of the consequences of affective images on intentions and positive referral, the former failed to accept motivations as its antecedents. However, the idea that motivations should be related to destination image, both cognitive and affective, is theoretically appealing if one takes into consideration the approach and avoidance motivation systems. In such instance, some measure of affect related to the routine environment could also enlighten the relationships between motivations and emotions, but it has seldom been done, notwithstanding the common view that «people go away because they no longer feel happy where they are» (Krippendorff, 1987, p. xiv).

According to Mayo and Jarvis (1981), travel is a source of variety in the boredom of everyday lives. Travelers leave behind the attitudinal and behavioral restrictions that inhibit the unusual, indulgent, playful activities they engage when enjoying holidays (Dann, 1977; Dumazedier, 1962; Ryan, 2002). Although admitting that “work environments differ widely in the amount of consistency or complexity they provide” (p. 166), Mayo and Jarvis emphasize the relation between the need to travel and excess of predictability (or lack of variety) in routine work environments. Instead of traveling for pleasure, over-stimulated workers would spend most of their leisure time relaxing at home.

This assumption was, at least partially, contradicted by the findings of a study relating perceived stimulation and holiday preferences (Wahlers & Etzel, 1985). First, 85% of respondents (from a consumer panel) perceive their daily stimulation over the optimum level. Second, relaxing and restful holidays were equally preferred by both this group of avoiders and the remaining group of seekers (feeling a lower than optimum stimulation). Avoiders preferred cultural and planned vacations, while seekers were eager for unusual and stimulating vacation experiences. It may be concluded that the majority of vacation travelers are avoiding over-stimulating environments, but not necessarily laying down most of the vacation time – they avoid over-stimulating travel, but they may seek educational and cultural rewards.

In a study relating affective states induced through work and motivations to go on holidays (Gnoth, Zins, Lengmueller, & Boshoff, 1999), a negative correlation was found between the tendency to escape and positive emotions related to work. On the other hand, the scale that represents potency and drive, i.e. emotional energy to meet challenges, is positively related to seek motivation. However, no significant

relationship was found between travel motivations and the scale that measures activity, the one dealing with demands and impacts of work activity levels.

Findings from these two reviewed studies are consistent in the notion that the amount of stimulation desired by the tourist depends on affect related to daily lives, although only the former directly compared it to preferred anticipated stimulation levels on vacation. In order for the potential tourist to “feel” motivated to travel, a match is needed between anticipated affect of leisure experiences and his or her psychological needs (Gnoth, 1997; Goossens, 2000). The level of involvement in the process or the intensity of motivation, depends on the intensity of affect, in this case the urgency of escaping agitation-related experiences (Carver & Scheier, 1999) and the appraisals and generation of anticipatory emotional responses linked to experience (Bagozzi, Baumgartner, & Pieters, 1998). An assessment of affect in tourists’ daily lives is therefore a valuable instrument to understand travel motivation and destination choice, and it is the main purpose of this study.

METHODOLOGY

A set of four hypotheses was defined for this study. The first proposes that a two-factor model correctly depicts the affect attributed to the routine environment of tourists. The second is that, given the defined bi-dimensional model, level of urbanization of tourists’ residence is negatively related to valence of affect and positively related to arousal. The third posits that escape related motives are positively related to arousal and seeking related motives are negatively related to arousal. Finally, the fourth states that arousal at home is negatively related to arousal at destination.

The bi-dimensional model of Russell and Pratt (1980) has been successfully applied to destination images, using semantic differential scales (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997) or Likert scales assessing the emotional poles separately (White & Scandale, 2005). A different approach is proposed here, a number of discrete emotions representing high and low levels of each factor is presented to respondents, who pick the ones they think better characterize their daily environment. Three emotions were defined for each of the four combinations of factor levels, which are *tense*, *distressing* and *restless* (high arousal and low pleasantness), *exciting*, *lively* and *interesting* (high arousal and high pleasantness), *boring*, *dull* and *sad* (low arousal and low pleasantness) and *relaxing*, *refreshing* and *safe* (low arousal and high pleasantness). The emotions were originated in a focus group with undergraduate students and tested on a sample of 32 tourists, whose data were correctly depicted in two dimensions by a Multidimensional Scaling analysis.

To test Hypothesis 1, latent class factor analysis (LCFA) will be used, a two dichotomous factor model will be assessed and, if it holds, it is conceptually equivalent to a four latent classes model, each class representing the unique combinations of factor levels (Magidson & Vermunt, 2004) and being determined by the respective three emotions. The subsequent hypotheses posit relationships between the factors and sets of covariates and will be dealt by the same LCFA. The covariates defining destination image are the same 12 emotions that characterize home environment. As to the travel motives, they were validated by a confirmatory factor analysis in a sample of 558 Portuguese domestic travelers, but, instead of the original seven point scale, a dichotomous one is used here.

Data for the analyses were collected in a sample of 857 visitors to Douro Valley, a Portuguese regional destination most known for its winescape, as it is the *terroir* of the renowned Port. Visitors were personally interviewed at accommodation premises, river cruisers and tourist sites, by professional interviewers from a market research company, during the high season (July to October) of 2004.

FINDINGS

Respondents were asked to choose the emotions that best describe their home environment and the destination, and results from this task are reported in Table 1, showing the proportion of visitors that picked out each emotion. The most striking finding is the negligible percentage of respondents attributing to the destination those emotions expected to be indicators of unpleasantness, confirming previous findings that destinations’ affective assessment is in general favorable, and more favorable than cognitive images (Baloglu, 1997; Edwards, Fernandes, Fox, & Vaughan, 2000). Regarding the affect attributed to home environment, indicators of high arousal tend to be more frequently chosen. In discordance with the idea of Mayo and Jarvis (1981), Douro visitors do not attribute monotony to their daily routine, as it is best described by agitation related emotions.

Table 1 – Affective images of origin and destination (per cent)

Emotion	Origin	Destination
Restless	51	1
Distressing	44	0
Tense	27	1
Interesting	34	78
Exciting	16	41
Lively	27	16
Safe	26	21
Refreshing	17	56
Relaxing	13	78
Dull	13	3
Boring	12	1
Sad	7	2

The attribution of affect to the daily environment is hypothesized to conform to a model of two latent variables, pleasantness and arousal. Each of the 12 chosen discrete emotions is supposed to be indicator of both latent variables, simultaneously. To test the first hypothesis, the response patterns were assessed by LCFA with two dichotomous factors. The model fit the data, but the parameter for one of the emotions, *lively*, was not significant at $p < .05$, and this indicator was removed from the analysis. Model fit is compared against alternative models in Table 2. The first row presents statistics for the independence model, whose fit is unacceptable, and the following models may be interpreted comparing to this baseline, because they are nested. The one-factor model (equivalent to two latent classes) reduces the likelihood-ratio chi-squared statistic by 43% and provides a reasonable fit, but a significant improvement is attained by adding a second dichotomous factor. The last row on Table 2 shows that relaxing the constraint of orthogonal factors implies an additional parameter with no significant change in the likelihood-ratio chi-squared statistic. Results of LCFA then confirm that a two-factor model is preferable to a one-factor in explaining the patterns of emotions attributed to the routine environment.

Table 2 – Chi-squared statistics of the latent model

Model	L ²	L ² change	df change	Sig.
1-Cluster	2,556.01			
1-Factor	1,450.72	-1,105.29	-12	<0.001
2-Factor	1,074.24	-376.48	-12	<0.001
2-Factor corr.	1,073.08	-1.16	-1	0.281

LCFA produces several pieces of information that may be used to verify if the two factors correspond to the latent variables pleasantness and arousal. One parameter is estimated for the relationship between a factor and an indicator and, from that parameter, a partial conditional mean may be computed, which, being expressed in probabilities (for the case of nominal indicators) is easier to interpret comparatively to the logit parameters. In the case of a dichotomous factor, the probability of being in the second level of the factor, given a category of the indicator, is the mean of the factor scores of all subjects on that category, so the factor means are an easy to interpret measure of the relationship between factors and indicators (Magidson & Vermunt, 2001).

Given the fact that all indicators are dichotomous, the difference between the factor means on the two categories of each indicator is also straightforward to interpret as an indication of “loadings”. Differences for the indicators are reported on

Table 3 and are used to help on the interpretation of the latent variables. For example, the value -.598 on the last column, first row, means that the mean probability of being high on Factor 2 is roughly .6 lower for

respondents that considered their daily environment as dull, compared to those that did not (actually it is .19 vs. .79, values not reported here for sake of simplicity).

Table 3 - Differences between mean scores of categories “yes” and “no” of indicators

Indicator	Factor 1	Factor 2
	Pleasantness	Arousal
Dull	- 0.146	- 0.598
Sad	- 0.449	- 0.511
Boring	- 0.462	- 0.461
Safe	0.460	- 0.346
Relaxing	0.598	- 0.296
Refreshing	0.607	- 0.132
Exciting	0.476	0.312
Interesting	0.515	NS
Restless	- 0.519	0.493
Distressing	- 0.729	0.251
Tense	- 0.569	0.129

All differences sig. at $p < .001$

All the differences between the mean scores of indicators’ categories conform to expectations, except for *interesting* that shows no significant difference on Factor 2 (not even at $p < .05$). The emotions with positive values on Factor 1 are the ones expected to have a positive valence and those with negative values are the ones expected to have negative valence. Regarding Factor 2, the first six emotions are low activated and the last five, with the mentioned exception of *interesting*, are high on activation. In sum, Factor 1 represents Pleasantness and Factor 2 represents Arousal, as predicted by the first hypothesis. The discrete emotions were hypothesized to indicate the four combinations of the levels of latent variables and did very well, except for the combination of high states of both Arousal and Pleasantness, since only *exciting* behaved precisely as expected. *Lively* was removed from the model and *interesting* didn’t prove to be a good indicator of high Arousal.

A nice feature of the factor means computed from the LCFA parameters is that they describe as well the relationship between latent variables and covariates, even if these are inactive, i.e. used just to compute factor means on their categories and not inputted in the estimation (Magidson & Vermunt, 2001). Table 4 presents the significant relationships between the latent variables and the (inactive) covariates that are relevant for this study, namely travel motives, affective image of destination and level of urbanization of the home environment.

Table 4 – Relationship between factors and covariates

	Pleasantness	Arousal
Travel motives¹		
Do nothing at all	0.111*	0.064*
Seek adventure	- 0.018	- 0.141**
Get rid of stress	- 0.098**	0.103**
Be close to nature	- 0.095**	0.080*
Destination emotions¹		
Restless	- 0.205	- 0.273*
Lively	0.072	- 0.108*
Interesting	0.054	- 0.093*
Relaxing	- 0.082*	0.136**
Sad	0.022	0.189**
Habitat²		
Metropolitan - city	- 0.221***	0.122***

Metropol. - small town	- 0.290***	0.211***
City - small town	- 0.070	0.089*

¹Differences between mean scores of categories "yes" and "no" of covariates
²Post hoc Bonferroni tests, after ANOVA
*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Concerning motivation to travel, it was hypothesized that high levels of arousal and low levels of pleasantness in daily environment tend to push people out in a negative motivation process, so people experiencing that kind of environments are expected to have higher probability of picking escape motives. On the other hand, positive motivation to explore, socialize or improve knowledge should be negatively related to the same type of distressing environments. This line of reasoning is partially supported by results, as negative type of motives, like “get rid of stress” and “be close to nature” are associated with higher probability of high level of arousal and with lower probability of high level of pleasantness, while a positive type like “seek adventure” is negatively related to arousal felt at home. Other positive motives, related to knowledge and to social needs, have no relationship to the latent variables.

The rationale for the fourth hypothesis, relating affective images of origin and destination, is that travelers project on the destination the cognitive (Kastenholz, 2003) and affective (Goossens, 2000) elements that correspond to their motivations to travel. The emotional sequence implicated in negative motivation “moves” the consumer from high arousal and unpleasant states to relaxation and relief (Carver & Scheier, 1999; Rossiter & Percy, 1991), which is concordant with the finding of the positive association between relaxing destination and high level of arousal on the home environment, and negative association between relaxing destination and high level of pleasantness at home. In the process of positive motivation, it is not necessary to be in an original negative environment, one may be neutral, but the findings show that tourists perceiving destination as lively and interesting tend to have less probability of feeling high levels of arousal at home.

The most important finding of the relationship between affective images of origin and destination, however, is that the latent variable Arousal has more impact on affect attributed to destination, thus supporting Hypothesis 4. Perceiving low levels of arousal on destination is positively related to high arousal at the origin, while perceived high arousal on destination is negatively related to high arousal at the origin. This pattern cannot be explained by approach-avoidance models based solely on the valence of affect, in which case the latent variable Pleasantness should be more important. There is a need to incorporate arousal and differentiate avoidance motivation targeted to relaxing environments and approach motivation targeted to exciting environments (Carver, 2001).

Finally, results on Table 4 also support the hypothesis that higher levels of urbanization are positively related to Arousal and negatively related to Pleasantness. Visitors from metropolitan areas (n=428, i.e. half of the sample) have most probability of feeling high levels of distressing emotions in daily life, a favorable condition to develop the need to escape and to value peaceful environments. From this perspective, Douro has a good position, as confirmed by the findings from a national sample of 1,700 potential visitors, who have very favorable expectations on benefits related to escape, compared to alternative destinations (Table 5).

Table 5 – Attitudes to Douro on some benefits

Motive	Relative score
Be calm	5.67
Relax	4.17
Escape routine	2.26
Learn new things	1.56
Do exciting things	0.75
Have fun	0.42

As an emerging destination, Douro faces a dilemma as to what kind of tourists should be attracted, what positioning should be developed. Will it be wiser to capitalize on the image of calmness or to try to improve on fun and excitement? The answer is not straightforward and two considerations have to be taken into account. The first is that the systems of approach and avoidance perform different roles in the process of attitude formation (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). If the avoidance system is prevalent, negative affect is critical to energize behavior and to process information about alternatives to cope with the uncomfortable or anxious situation. If approach is dominant, images of destinations and respective anticipated emotions may be the

triggers to energize potential tourists whose goals are related to those emotions. In either case, the affective image of the destination is fundamental, but, as proposed by Gnoth (1997), if the travel behavior is drive-motivated, the experienced emotions related to drive reduction are the focus of the process and destinations are instrumental and substitutable. In another tone, Krippendorf (1987) really summarizes the point — «Where the journey leads is not so important, the main thing is to get away [...]. To this extent travel destinations are altogether interchangeable» (p. 29).

A second point that should be considered is that tourism promotion often emphasizes aroused positive emotions, be they self or other-oriented, because this tactic increases tourists' ability to perceive differences in service supply (Goossens, 2000), but the risk involved in vacation decision-making calls for the need to cognitively evaluate some attributes, being the choice dually motivated (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). In this line, it has been suggested that negative motivation is associated to the need for the category (travel) and to reservation facilitation, whereas positive motivation is primarily associated to destination image (Marques, 2005).

In this context, the key to position Douro should be to portray the positive emotional expectations while, at the same time, not jeopardizing the good position related to avoidance motivation. Studying the image of rural Northern Portugal, where Douro is included, Kastenholz (2003) arrived at identical implications and suggested a «peaceful, natural and culturally interesting rural North» (p. 312), underrating fun and enjoyment as they seem to be less important in a rural destination. The positive reinforcement of traveling to Douro may be portrayed in relation to (1) intellectual stimulation, knowing about the traditions and particularly the winemaking; (2) sensory gratification, by tasting wine, crushing grapes with bare feet or just admiring the landscape, acknowledged as World Heritage; (3) social approval, by feeling flattered to stay at a manor eventually owned by traditional Port producers. All these are consistent with the negative motivation of escaping from the high aroused unpleasant urban environment.

CONCLUSION

A two-factor model of affect has been successfully applied to the concept of affective image of daily environments as perceived by tourists. It was shown that discrete emotions may be simultaneous indicators of the dimensions Pleasantness and Arousal. In this framework, Douro visitors more often attribute agitation related emotions to their home environment and pleasant low activated emotions to the destination. Level of urbanization of tourists' residence was shown to be negatively related to Pleasantness and positively related to Arousal, which, in its turn, is positively related to escape motives and to the peaceful image of Douro.

It may then be concluded that tourists tend to balance arousal by traveling to destinations whose affective images are in contrast to their perceived daily environments. Given the priority of avoidance appraisals (Carver, 2001; Carver & Scheier, 1999), if daily routine is agitated to a point that people feel near the feared self, avoidance motivation focus on search for peaceful destinations. When the actual self is distant from the feared self, the affect attributed to the home environment is not so important and tourists may be seeking novelty, experiences, knowledge, self-development, social approval and so on, eventually at less peaceful and more lively destinations.

Douro has a relatively good position on benefits related to escape but, as it has been suggested that destinations should position in relation to positive motivation rather than negative motivation (Crompton, 1979; Gnoth, 1997; Goossens, 2000; Marques, 2005), the positive reinforcement of traveling to Douro has to be portrayed in relation to emotional expectations that must be consistent with a low activation affective image. Resources related to the tradition of grape growing and winemaking at this unique *terroir* seem to be suitable to build such sensory, intellectual and social expectations. Cooperative marketing is really a challenge in this destination because only a fraction of those resources are controllable by the tourism industry and there are some conflicting expectations in the development of the cultural economy (Ray, 1998) of the area and on the targeting of tourists' segments (Kastenholz, 2000). Furthermore, tour operators, wineries, cruise carriers, accommodation providers, national tourism board and regional tourism promoters, should get to a synergistic communication mix (Laws, Scott, & Parfitt, 2002) to answer to both positive and negative motivational systems involved in the need for travel, attitudes towards destination and services and reservation and purchase facilitation.

NOTES

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