

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MOTIVATION – ENDURING INVOLVEMENT RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract

We explored the relationship between motivation and enduring involvement using a sample of campers drawn from three distinct campsites in a southeastern National Forest. The campsites varied along the ROS continuum form developed to wilderness. Using multidimensional conceptualizations of both constructs, we hypothesized that the dimensions of motivation would positively influence the dimensions of involvement. Our findings illustrated that, while not all paths were statistically significant, the effect of motivation on involvement was consistent with our hypothesis. No variation in the variation among the path coefficients was observed across the three sites.

1.0 Introduction

Most conceptualizations and operations of enduring involvement that have appeared in the leisure literature over the past 15 or so years have been adapted from work in psychology and consumer behavior (McIntyre & Pigram 1992; Selin & Howard 1988). These conceptualizations stress an ongoing interest in an activity or associated product that has motivational properties (Havitz & Dimanche 1997). These motivational properties are manifested in a number of behavioral outcomes that have been of particular interest to both leisure researchers and practitioners (see Havitz & Dimanche 1997, 1999 for review). In spite of the assumed relationship between motivation and involvement inherent in the definitions of involvement, few leisure researchers have explicitly examined the connection between these two constructs in spite of each receiving considerable attention in the literature. With this in mind, the purpose of this investigation was

to more thoroughly examine the relationship between motivation and involvement within a public leisure service context.

An exploration of the motivation – enduring involvement relationship fills two voids in the literature. First, each of these constructs has an extensive history of inquiry. This is testament to the importance leisure researchers have bestowed upon each for understanding leisure behavior and practice. In spite of conceptual parallels, the product of these research programs appears to be two independent bodies of knowledge. An examination of their relationship has the potential to provide insight on the nature of these constructs' relationship. The second contribution relates to the examination of enduring involvement's antecedent processes. Most research has been directed toward understanding outcomes associated with the construct which have demonstrated implications for leisure service delivery (see Havitz and Dimanche 1999 for review). Given the relative importance of the construct for understanding leisure behavior, it seems logical that attention should also be directed toward understanding the construct's formative processes. While current understanding suggests that motivation is an antecedent of enduring involvement (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman 2004; Iwasaki & Havitz 1998), empirical evidence supporting this sequence is sparse.

2.0 Past Work

2.1 Connecting Motivation and Involvement

The theoretical connection between motivation and involvement is reflected in work that has examined each of these constructs independently. First, from a motivational perspective, expectancy-value models (Ajzen 1991; Lawler 1963) infer that specific behaviors are the product of an individual's desire to satiate specific needs. For example, in his examination of motivation within the context of organizational behavior, Lawler suggested that motivation can be viewed as a hierarchy of instrumental and terminal expectations. That is, instrumental expectations refer to the relationship between effort (e.g., absentee rate, production rate) and performance outcomes (e.g., more pay, more praise) which lead

to terminal outcomes that are valued long term goals (e.g., social recognition, family solidarity, high social affiliation) (Manfredo, Driver, & Tarrant 1996). In this model, behavior is considered a rational process directed toward logical, functional ends. Viewed in this light, then, motivation to initiate and maintain involvement with specific leisure activities can be understood in terms of an individual's pursuit of specific outcomes. That is, their desire to experience a particular activity is inspired by their expectation that engagement in the activity will yield some kind of positive outcome; e.g., physiological, psycho-social. Over time, individuals learn the benefits afforded by various leisure activities and become most deeply enmeshed in those that best meet their needs.

With regard to the study of involvement in psychology and consumer behavior, the construct's connection to motivation can be traced back to Sherif and colleagues' early work on ego-involved attitudes (Sherif & Cantril 1947; Sherif & Hovland 1961; Sherif, Taub, & Hovland 1958). Sherif and Cantril described ego-involved attitudes as "attitudes that have been learned, largely as social values; that the individual identifies himself [sic] with, and makes part of himself [sic]; and that have affective properties of varying degrees of intensity" (pp. 126-127). In this context, ego-involved attitudes are distinguished from other attitudes by the extent to which they are linked to the self which Sherif et al. suggest is the unique constellation of social and personal values. Ostrom and Brock (1968) extended this understanding and suggested that "The closer the connection between his [sic] attitude and these values and the more central these related values are, the higher the degree of attitudinal involvement" (p. 375). Subsequent experiments designed to activate ego attitudes also established their connection to motivation. These early studies illustrated that under high-involvement conditions, subjects were less inclined to alter their attitudinal position (Freedman 1964; Zimbardo 1960) and more inclined to reject positions contrary to their own (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Thus, involvement or ego-involved attitudes refer to those attitudes that are intimately connected to the self and help define and distinguish the individual. When these attitudes are activated by stimuli (e.g., leisure activity or associated object), a motivational state is aroused prompting thoughts and behaviors related to the stimuli encountered.

More recent definitions of involvement appearing in both the psychology and consumer behavior literatures reflect Sherif and colleagues' early work. For example, after conducting an extensive review of psychologists' work related to involvement and its effect on attitude change, Johnson and Eagly (1989) defined the concept as the "motivational state induced by an association between an activated attitude and some aspect of the self concept" (p. 293). Alternately, consumer researchers, Celsi and Olson (1988), defined involvement in terms of "perceived personal relevance." For Celsi and Olson, involvement referred to the degree to which an object, situation, or action is considered personally relevant. The personal relevance of a product is represented by the perceived linkage between an individual's self knowledge (i.e., needs, values, goals) and the product's attributes. Through the activation of personally relevant knowledge, "a motivational state is created that "energizes" or "drives" consumers' overt behaviors (p. 211).

The distinction between motivation and involvement also implies a temporal structure that is reflected in the expectancy-value model and the process by which ego attitudes are activated. Specifically, it is the attributes of specific activities that activate ego-attitudes which in turn arouse emotion, cognition and, ultimately behavior. Consequently, an understanding of activity attributes that recreationists consider personally relevant could potentially provide an understanding of both why recreationists are motivated to engage in specific leisure behaviors and the reasons underlying their continued involvement.

3.0 Methods

3.1 Setting

Our data were collected from visitors to three campgrounds situated in Sumter National Forest in upstate South Carolina. These settings were managed in accordance with the tenets proposed in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) (Bultena & Klessig 1969). The ROS framework acknowledges that recreationists vary with regard to the outcomes or benefits they seek in their leisure. Consequently, many settings situated within National Forests are managed in such a way to afford a diverse range of leisure opportunities to visitors. In addition to providing diverse leisure opportunities

that are somewhat reflective of the diversity of leisure needs reflected in the community, the ROS also provides managers with a straightforward framework for managing these settings.

The first setting, Cherry Hill Campground, is a developed, drive-in campground with bathrooms and showers, potable water, camp-pads, and fire rings. The campsites also have a fee of \$10 per night. The second setting, Burrell's Ford Recreation Area, is a less developed camping area that requires a several hundred yard walk-in and does not have formally designated campsites. The only amenities offered to campers consist of a toilet and several scattered picnic tables. The third area, Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, is a designated wilderness area. Consistent with this designation, there are no Forest Service developed campsites or other built amenities. While these three settings differed considerably in terms of the leisure experiences supported, they were all situated within a 5 mile radius (10 to 15 minute drive) of one another. There is no fee at either of the latter two sites.

While a substantial body of research exists that has examined the relationships among setting attributes and experience preferences (Manfredo, Driver, & Brown 1983; Stewart & Carpenter 1989; Virden & Knopf 1989), it is unclear how setting type moderates the relationship between motivation and enduring involvement. Thus, no formal hypotheses were constructed stipulating the influence of setting type on the relationship between motivation and enduring involvement.

3.2 Sampling

Sampling occurred Friday evenings and weekends between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (a total of 60 sampling days).¹ Given the light use of these recreation areas, all recreationists encountered in each of the settings were requested to participate in the study ('convenience sampling,' Babbie 1995). For recreationists sampled at the Cherry Hill and Burrell's Ford sites, surveys were completed onsite. Surveyors² either waited for the respondent to complete the survey, or came by the

campsite later to collect the completed survey instrument. While there were no direct verbal refusals, 12 survey instruments were returned blank. These procedures yielded 312 completed surveys (96% response rate). For the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, given the difficulty associated with completing survey instruments onsite (i.e., nowhere to sit with a flat surface) in addition to our desire to be as unobtrusive as possible, recreationists were provided with a survey instrument and a stamped self addressed envelope all enclosed within a plastic resealable bag. They were also requested to provide their name and address to be sent a follow-up survey instrument should they lose or damage the survey we provided onsite. One hundred and eighty seven survey instruments were distributed. There were no refusals. Two weeks following the initial onsite contact, the recreationists were sent a postcard with information thanking them for their participation in the study, a reminder for those who had yet to complete the survey to do so and return it at their earliest convenience, and our contact information to acquire another survey instrument in case the one they received had been lost or damaged. One hundred and twelve completed surveys were returned (60 % response rate). Combined, our total sample size was 424 cases; 188 for Cherry Hill, 124 for Burrell's Ford, and 112 for Ellicott Rock.

3.3 Measures

3.31 Motivation

While Manfredo et al. (1996) recommended using all REP scale items to alleviate concerns relating to content validity, the length of our questionnaire and the desire to examine other issues of theoretical and practical interest limited our ability to include all items. The data presented in this paper were collected as part of a broader investigation of campers' attitudes and behaviors related to the Sumter National Forest. Consequently, respondents' motivations for camping were measured using 15 items selected from the battery of REP scale items (Manfredo et al. 1996). These items were measured along a five-point scale where 1=highly unimportant through 5=highly important. Our decision criteria concerning the inclusion/exclusion of items, a priori, was based on the agency's prior use of these scales in these

¹Forest Service managers indicated that most use occurs on weekends.

²Two graduate students from Clemson University.

Table 1.—Confirmatory factor analysis – motivation (pooled sample)

Dimensions		α	AVE	λ	t-value	δ
Escape		.74	.65			
E1	To be away from the everyday routine of home			.58	-	.67
E2	To get away from crowded areas			.76	11.18	.42
E3	To experience the solitude/privacy of camping			.77	11.27	.40
Nature		.88	.73			
N1	To be in a natural setting			.80	-	.36
N2	To enjoy the natural scenery			.89	21.10	.20
N3	To enjoy the tranquility of the area			.87	20.31	.25
Bonding		.84	.76			
B1	To share quality time with family/friends			.91	-	.18
B2	To do something with my family/friends			.94	24.06	.12
B3	To bring family/friends closer together			.61	14.18	.62
Learning		.82	.70			
L1	To develop my knowledge about the area			.72	-	.49
L2	To learn more about nature			.78	14.67	.39
L3	To learn about the natural history or ecology of the area			.78	14.69	.39
Social		.91	.65			
S1	To be with people who have similar interests			.46	-	.79
S2	To talk to new and varied people			.93	9.92	.13
S3	To meet new campers			.93	9.93	.38

settings and reviews of past investigations conducted in similar contexts (Manning 1999). We grouped these items into five conceptual domains titled; escape, nature, bonding, learning, and social. As shown in Table 1, results from the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)³ for the pooled sample demonstrated that the hypothesized factor structure fit the data well as evidenced in factor loadings, average variance explained (AVE)⁴, and measures of internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach's alpha).

3.32 Enduring Involvement. Enduring involvement was measured using Kyle and colleagues (Kyle et al. 2004a) Modified Involvement Scale (MIS). In addition to adapting items from McIntyre (1989) and McIntyre and Pigram's (1992) involvement scale, they utilized

five additional items (see Table 2). For centrality, two items were added 'camping occupies a central role in my life' and 'to change my preference from camping would require major rethinking.' The first item was adapted from Kyle, Graefe, Manning, and Bacon (2003) and Kyle et al.'s (2004b) measure of centrality which they used to measure hikers' enduring involvement with hiking along the Appalachian Trail. The second item was adapted from Pritchard, Havitz, and Howard's (1999) resistance dimension of their commitment scale. While this item was originally developed to measure an outcome associated with an individual's psychological commitment to an agency, we reworded the item so that the primary attitude object now reflected personal

³The fit indices for the measurement model in which CFA was conducted were: $\chi^2=958.41$, $df=360$, $RMSEA=.062$, $NFI=.94$, $CFI=.96$, $IFI=.96$.

⁴The AVE for each latent construct provides an estimate of the variance captured by the construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that values less than .5 infer that the validity of the indicators and the construct is questionable.

Table 2.—Confirmatory factor analysis – enduring involvement (pooled sample)

Dimensions		α	AVE	λ	t-value	ε
Attraction		.86	.66			
A1	Camping is one of the most enjoyable things I do			.80	-	.36
A2	Camping is very important to me			.85	17.87	.28
A3	Camping is one of the most satisfying things I do			.79	16.78	.38
Centrality		.83	.65			
C1	I find a lot of my life is organized around camping			.90	-	.19
C2	Camping occupies a central role in my life			.88	22.69	.23
C3	To change my preference for camping to another recreation activity would require major rethinking			.61	13.75	.63
Social Bonding		.71	.50			
SB1	I enjoy discussing camping with my friends			.77	-	.41
SB2	Most of my friends are in some way connected with camping			.71	11.23	.050
SB3	Participating in camping provides me with opportunity to be with friends			.64	9.16	.59
Identity Affirmation		.73	.55			
IA1	When I participate in camping, I can really be myself			.74	-	.45
IA2	I identify with people and image associated with camping			.76	14.00	.42
IA3	When I'm camping, I don't have to be concerned with the way I look			.73	13.02	.47
Identity Expression		.74	.60			
IE1	You can tell a lot about a person by seeing them camping			.69	-	.52
IE2	Participating in camping says a lot about who I am			.88	10.07	.23
IE3	When I participate in camping, other see me the way I want them to see me			.74	9.57	.45

investment in activity. In so doing, the primary attitude object reflected in the item was shifted from the brand level (i.e., service provider) to the product level (i.e., activity). Similar to centrality and Buchanan's (1985) conceptualization of side bets, Pritchard et al.'s resistance dimension examines the degree to which recreationists' attachment to a line of behavior is a function of personal investments (e.g., emotional commitment, social world ties, activity-related expenditures). Lastly, Kyle et al. (2004a) constructed three new items based on the definitions of each of the dimensions of involvement; (a) social bonding, 'participating in camping provides me with an opportunity to be with friends,' and (b) identity affirmation, 'I identify with the image associated

with camping' and 'when I'm camping I don't have to be concerned with the way I look.' All items were measured along a five-point scale where 1=strongly disagree through 5=strongly agree. They used two independent samples to establish the validity (i.e., convergent, discriminant, nomological) and reliability (i.e., internal consistency, composite reliability) of the scale using multiple criteria. As shown in Table 1 and Table 2, results from the confirmatory factor analysis⁵ for the pooled sample demonstrated that the hypothesized factor structure fit the data well as evidenced in factor loadings, AVEs, and measures of internal consistency (i.e., Cronbach's alpha).

⁵Goodness of fit indices: $\chi^2=958.41$, $df=360$, $RMSEA=.062$, $NFI=.94$, $CFI=.96$, $IFI=.96$.

Table 3.—Summary of invariance tests

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	IFI
H1: Invariant structure	2033.24	1131			.066	.90	.95	.95
H2: Invariant loadings	2107.89	1171	74.65***	40	.067	.90	.95	.95
(model with unconstrained loadings)	2077.98	1163	44.74	32	.066	.90	.95	.95
H3: Invariant beta weights	2104.16	1179	26.18	16	.066	.90	.95	.95

*** $p < .001$

4.0 Analyses, Findings and Discussion

4.1 Testing for Variation Across Settings: Structure, Measurement, and Effects

We tested a structural model using LISREL (version 8.54) where each dimension of enduring involvement was hypothesized to be positively influenced by each dimension of motivation. Because past research has demonstrated that the nature of motivation and enduring involvement is subject to variation across activities and settings, we also tested the model independently across the three settings from which respondents were sampled using multigroup CFA (Bollen 1989). The procedure we used involved comparing the factor structure of our conceptualization of motivation and involvement, factor loadings, and beta coefficients across the three groups. Group comparisons are made by constraining elements of the model to be equal. Equivalence across groups is assessed by examining the effect of the imposed constraint on model fit. Equivalent factor structures infer that our multidimensional conceptualization of the constructs is consistent across settings. Equivalence in factor loadings across the three setting contexts would indicate that our measures of motivation and involvement are operating equivalently among each of the groups. Lastly, equivalence among beta weights would indicate that the effect of motivation on involvement is consistent across the three settings.

Bollen (1989) noted that testing for model comparability across groups is a matter of degree in that the researcher decides which parameters should be tested for equality and in what order these tests should be made. Using the chi-square difference test (Byrne 1998) to gauge the effect of the imposed constraint, the hierarchy of invariance⁶ (i.e., tests for equality) that we tested in this

study included: (a) equality of structure (H1), which examines the suitability of the five factor solution for motivation and the five factor solution for enduring involvement across groups; (b) equality of scaling (H2), which examines the similarity in the pattern of factor loadings across groups; and (c) the equality of structural coefficient estimates (H3), which examines the similarity of the beta weights for each of the groups.

In the first test, H1, the models were hypothesized to have the same pattern of fixed and free values in the matrices containing factor loadings, structural coefficients, and the variance/covariance matrices. The fit of this unconstrained model, shown in Table 3, was considered adequate ($\chi^2=2033.24$, $df=1131$, $RMSEA=.066$, $NFI=.90$, $CFI=.95$, $IFI=.95$). This unconstrained model served as a point of comparison for the second test.

Results from the second test (H2) indicated that there was some variation among the three groups with regard to the pattern of factor loadings ($\Delta\chi^2=74.65$, $\Delta df=40$, $p < .001$). Constraints on individual factor loadings illustrated that three elements were contributing to the matrix inequality; E_2 , SB_2 , and IE_2 . This finding suggests that the degree to which the latent construct accounted for variation in the manifest item varied across sites. For E_2 , loadings ranged from .58 at Ellicott Rock to .91 at Burrell's Ford. For SB_2 , loadings ranged from .53 at Ellicott Rock to .82 at Cherry Hill. Lastly, for IE_2 , loadings ranged from .64 at Ellicott Rock to .91 at Cherry Hill. Beyond these items, the remaining indicators performed similarly across the three sites.

⁶For a more detailed discussion of invariance testing, see Bollen (1989) or Byrne (1998).

The final test (H_3), which examined the equality of the beta weights across the three settings, indicated that the imposition of this constraint did not significantly effect model fit ($\Delta\chi^2=26.18$, $\Delta df=16$, $p > .05$). This finding indicates that the beta weights were not influenced by “setting type.”

In summary, the proceeding tests of invariance indicate that the factor structure, the performance of the indicators, and the effect of the dimensions of motivation on the dimensions of involvement were, for the most part, equivalent among the three groups.

4.2 Summary of Effects

Table 4 depicts the statistically significant effects of the dimensions of motivation on the dimensions of enduring involvement. These findings offer partial support for our hypothesized model suggesting that each dimensions of enduring involvement would be positively influenced by each dimension of motivation. Specifically, the following relationships were observed in the final model:

- a. *Attraction* was positively influenced by escape only ($\beta=.36$, $t\text{-value}=6.53$). This finding suggests that the importance and pleasure respondents’ associated with camping was a product of their desire to escape routine and crowds and to enjoy privacy.
- b. *Centrality* was positively influenced by learning only ($\beta=.27$, $t\text{-value}=5.47$). Thus, as respondents’ desire to learn about the natural environment increased, so too did their propensity to indicate that camping occupied an important place in their lives.
- c. *Social bonding* was predicted by escape ($\beta=.16$, $t\text{-value}=2.86$) and social ($\beta=.20$, $t\text{-value}=4.07$). The effect of escape on social bonding implies that escaping the presence of others and the quest for solitude is acceptable with close family and friends. Alternately, respondents desiring the company of others were also inclined to indicate that much of their social world was structured around camping.

Table 4.—Structural model analysis

Dependent Variable	Predictor	β	t-value	R^2		
				A	B	C
Attraction	Escape	.36	6.53	.16	.14	.09
Centrality	Learning	.27	5.47	.08	.07	.07
Social Bonding	Escape	.16	2.86	.10	.10	.05
	Social	.20	4.07			
Identity Affirmation	Nature	.15	2.37	.24	.29	.17
	Bonding	.12	2.62			
	Learning	.32	4.84			
Identity Expression	Learning	.45	6.87	.20	.27	.16

A = Cherry Hill, B = Burrell’s Ford, and C = Ellicott Rock

- d. *Identity affirmation* was positively influenced by nature ($\beta=.15$, $t\text{-value}=2.37$), bonding ($\beta=.12$, $t\text{-value}=2.62$), and learning ($\beta=.32$, $t\text{-value}=4.84$). These findings indicate that respondents’ engagement in camping reaffirms their own sense of self. The activity attributes that drove the affirmation processes touched upon opportunities to interact with and learn about the natural environment along with the relationships they shared with close family and friends.
- e. *Identity expression* was predicted by learning only ($\beta=.45$, $t\text{-value}=6.87$). Thus, the opportunity to learn about the natural environment through the activity enables respondents to express their identities (i.e., the self to others).

While we constrained the regression paths to be equal across the three groups, there remained variation in the variance accounted for by motivation in the dimensions of enduring involvement (see Table 8). Overall, the strength of association (as reflected in the R^2 values) between the dimensions of motivation and enduring involvement was most apparent in the Cherry Hill and Burrell’s Ford samples. For all dimensions of involvement, motivation accounted for a greater percentage of the variance in the Cherry Hill and Burrell’s Ford samples than was accounted for in the Ellicott Rock sample.

Further, the strongest effects were reflected in the identity affirmation and identity expression models with the percent of variance accounted for ranging between 17 to 29 percent for identity affirmation and 16 to 27 percent for identity expression.

Finally, the purpose of this investigation was to explore the nature of the relationship between motivation and enduring involvement among a sample of campers drawn from a southeastern National Forest. Our findings support the contention that motivation is an antecedent of enduring involvement. All significant relationships demonstrated that the dimensions of motivation were positive predictors of the dimensions of enduring involvement. Our multidimensional conceptualization of each construct, however, illustrated that the relationships among each of the dimensions was not uniform; not all effects were statistically significant and not all effects were of equal valence. We also observed that setting type did not influence the strength of these effects. The strength of the effect of motivation on enduring involvement was consistent across all three settings.

These findings also provide further support for Kyle et al.'s (2004a) conceptualization and measure of enduring involvement. Their measure, the MIS, was an extension of McIntyre and Pigram's (1992) measure of enduring involvement. We would recommend continued testing in varied contexts.

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