EXTENDED ABSTRACT

SLOW TOURISM: TOURIST MOTIVATIONS BASED ON PERSONALITY TRAITS AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on slow tourism, which consists of living a unique experience on each trip and that is suggested as an alternative to mass tourism, trying at the same time to prevent the local traditions of the destinations from disappearing (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010). This modality offers experiences that have an impact on the tourist and that are characterized by being unique of the place visited. The aim is to attract travelers looking for greater freedom, different experiences, new cultures, local gastronomy, opportunities to get to know oneself, personal sports, contact with nature, etc. (Guapi-Guamán *et al*., 2020). The goal of becoming more human is pursued, that is, trying to recover the sense of enjoyment of free time and rest (De Luis, 2011) and this experiential dimension of tourism is linked to the psychological well-being of the tourist. The slow tourist represents a subject open to cultural interactions, who seeks feeling like a participant in the system and recognizes himself as a temporary member of the destination and not so much as a tourist (Portelas, 2021). Therefore, from a psychosocial view, it seeks authentic experiences that are not constructed for this purpose. In relation with sociodemographic characteristics, this modality is usually chosen by unmarried people without children, with a medium or high economic level and an age range between 25 and 65 years.

From a psychosocial analysis perspective, emphasis has been placed on the assessment of tourism as a subjective experience and its benefits for quality of life, mental and physical health, self-concept, as well as individual and social well-being (San Martín, 1997). Regarding the study of tourist motivations and destination choice based on personality variables, García and Moral (2022) show that evidence has been obtained about the possible associations between the personality traits of an individual and their tourist behavior and their own choice of tourist leisure activities. From the Five Factor Personality

Model, the multiple personality traits are grouped into five dimensions: 1) Neuroticism, 2) Extraversion, 3) Openness to experience, 4) Kindness, and 5) Responsibility. Extroverted people show greater motivation to travel associated with the search of new experiences and utilitarian and convenience factors, just as the openness factor is related to the search for new experiences and the responsible profile is linked to a low value of gastronomic and monumental motivations (García and Moral, 2022).

Regarding related sociodemographic variables, according to Hidalgo-Alcázar *et al*. (2015), the perception and, therefore, the choice of a tourist destination can change depending on gender. Women generate a more affective and cognitive image based on the information received about it, by informing themselves in a more exhaustive way they have more elaborated opinions about the destinations. On the other hand, according to Crespo and Soria (2019), the purchasing level of the person is also shown as an important factor in the tourist profile. Another important variable for motivation towards this tourism has to do with age. Differences are obtained depending on age in socio-relational motivation and the search for new experiences, as Gil *et al*. (2012) verified, in their thirties certain changes in tourist motivations begin to be noticed and other interests and priorities come into play (Conde-Ruiz and González, 2021).

Currently, it is confirmed that slow tourism is gaining relevance in the tourism area and there is an increasing interest in using psychology to predict the choice and satisfaction of destinations, but no studies have been found on this specific form of tourism related to the different personality traits, hence the interest of this article.

2. OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between personality and tourist motivations towards slow tourism. As secondary objectives, it is proposed to analyze possible changes in destination choice preferences after the pandemic, and on the other hand the differences in these attitudes depending on gender, occupation and income level will also be analyzed.

3. METHODOLOGY

The initial sample consisted of a total of 202 participants, of which 10 were eliminated since they were the only ones who belonged to the age range over 65 years old and it was decided to limit the age levels. The subjects have been selected through non-probabilistic intentional opinion sampling. According to sex, 62% (n = 119) are women and 38% are men (n = 73). About the age range, 24.5% (n = 47) are between 23 and 32 years old, 31.8% (n = 61) are between 33 and 49 years old and 43.8% (n = 84) between 50 and 65 years old. Therefore, the age range is between 23 and 65 years (X = 44.49; SD = 13.24).

To assess personality, the NEO-FFI, reduced version of the NEO PI-R, was applied (Costa and McCrae, 2008). This version of the scale consists of 60 items measured using a Likert scale with 5 response options: from 1 "totally agree" to 5 "totally disagree". Regarding slow tourism, as a relatively new concept, no specific evaluation scales have been found for it, instead the participants motivations to travel have been measured

using the Visit Motivation Scale (Fernández *et al*., 2010). It consists of 17 items with a Likert-type measurement scale adapted to 5 points: from 1 "totally agree" to 5 "totally disagree". These 17 items are classified into 5 factors: Hedonistic and rest motivations; Relational social motivation; Monumental and gastronomic motivations; Search for new experiences; and, finally, Convenience and utilitarian factors. Finally, a series of *ad hoc* questions with dichotomous answers were created regarding the possible effects of the pandemic on destination choices.

A questionnaire developed on the Google Forms online platform was used to collect data. It was spread through WhatsApp to close relatives and friends, asking them to forward it to their contacts. The survey begins with an informed consent that declares that by answering it you agree to participate in the study, acknowledging that you have been informed of the conditions. These conditions obey the ethical research principles considered by the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and by the APA (2010).

4. RESULTS

Firstly, the existence of statistically significant differences in the hedonistic, monumental, and utilitarian factors has been confirmed. In both the hedonistic and monumental factors, a higher rank has been obtained for women compared to men, while in the utilitarian factor, men reached a higher rank. When focusing on the effect sizes we observe that, although the differences are significant, the difference between the groups is small or moderate.

If we refer to the differences in motivations depending on age, significant differences have been obtained in the hedonistic and monumental factors (Kruskal-Wallis test). When performing the multiple comparisons in pairs, we observed that more specifically in the hedonistic factor there are differences between the 23-32 and the 50-65 year old groups, while in the monumental factor they are concentrated not only in the 50-65 and 23-32 age ranges, but also between 50-65 and 33-49 year old groups. We found that the range is greater for the 23-32 age group in hedonistic motivation, but that in the monumental factor it is greater for 50-65 regarding both.

Being an object of interest the analysis of the differences in tourist motivations depending on the income level, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used, obtaining significant differences in the hedonistic, monumental and experiential factor. When making pairwise comparisons, it is observed that in hedonistic motivations there are significant differences between groups 1 and 2 with the lowest income and group 3, which is the one with the highest annual income.

To study the differences in tourist motivations after the pandemic, a series of questions created *ad hoc* were used, and analyzed with the Mann-Whitney U test. Differences were obtained in the social and monumental factor in the questions "Do you think that the pandemic has increased the trend towards more sustainable and environmentally aware tourism?" and "Have the things you look for in a trip changed after the pandemic? (Tranquility, gastronomy, distance to travel, size of the destination, etc.)." In the question "Has the economic situation after the pandemic affected your way of traveling?" Significant differences were found in the monumental and experiential factor. The effect sizes of all these significant comparisons are indicative that the magnitude of difference is small.

Finally, significant, and positive correlations have been obtained between the traits of Neuroticism and Agreeableness with hedonistic and rest motivation. Positive correlations are also found between socio-relational, monumental motivations and the search for new experiences with the traits Extraversion, Responsibility and Agreeableness. Similarly, a positive correlation of the utilitarian factor with the traits of Extraversion, Openness and Responsibility has been found. It should be noted that the correlations with the highest values, greater than .30, have been obtained between: the search for new experiences and the traits of Extraversion and Openness; socio-relational motivation and the Extraversion trait; and the monumental motivation and the Openness trait.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the effect of different variables on the tourist motivations of the participants has been analyzed with the aim of discovering which factors are significant when choosing slow tourism. Thus, statistically significant differences have been identified depending on age, income level and personality traits.

Slow tourism is related to hedonistic motivations, since it is about recovering the importance of enjoying free time and rest, being able to relax, concentrate on obtaining well-being, searching for oneself and personal satisfaction, in addition, within the hedonistic motivations enjoying the natural environment and caring for the environment are included (De Luis, 2011; Garcês *et al*., 2018; Mateos, 2013). On the other hand, it is related to the socio-relational motivation when trying to appreciate the culture of the destination, the social environment and the interactional processes with the local population (Andrade, 2012) and with the monumental and gastronomic motivations (Guapi-Guamán *et al*., 2020) since it focuses on the importance of the gastronomy of the destinations and the landscape, the monuments, the art and the identity. Finally, we also find the search for new experiences reflected in this type of tourism.

Regarding the differences in tourist motivations based on gender, it is observed that there are significant differences in hedonistic and rest motivations, the monumental factor, and the utilitarian factor, but low effect sizes. These results are in line with the findings of García and Moral (2022) but in contradiction with the results of Hidalgo-Alcázar *et al*. (2015) on the determination of gender in destination choice.

In relation to age, in general terms it can be stated that such differences in tourist motivations were confirmed depending on the age of the tourists. Regarding the hedonistic factor, it is observed that the youngest age range (23-32) showed higher levels than the oldest age group (50-65), which initially does not match with the statement about older people giving more value to rest and caring for the environment (Barrera and Bahamondes, 2012). Regarding monumental and gastronomic motivation, it is confirmed that older tourists show higher levels than the two younger groups.

When referring to the level of income, it is observed that there is greater monumental and gastronomic motivation in choosing a tourist destination in the group with the highest income level and, in terms of the search for new experiences, the middle-income group presented greater motivation than the group with the highest economic level. These results show that, as Portela (2021) confirmed, the slow tourist profile corresponds to people with

a medium and high socioeconomic level. On the other hand, the two lower-income groups have greater hedonistic and rest motivation than the high-income group.

When we focus on the analysis of the relationship between tourist motivations and personality traits, we find multiple significant relations. It is observed that the most extraverted tourists with greater intellectual openness show motivations to travel associated with the search for new experiences, as well as the extraversion factor is related to socio-relational motivations, matching what was collected in the research of García and Moral (2022). On the other hand, the Openness trait presents a relationship with monumental and gastronomic motivation, equivalent to the results of McCrae and Sutin (2009).

It´s important to point out the limitations of this study, the first one is related to the subject selection, as well as the sample size, which can affect its representativeness and heterogeneity. It is necessary to point out that the cross-sectional nature of the study prevents from making causal inferences between the variables, and that the object of study is multi-determined so it would be convenient to analyze other variables of social, economic, and cultural nature. Finally, it must be added that this type of tourism is new, and, at the moment, we do not have more specific scales or questionnaires to analyze it and carry out more in-depth studies.

Despite these limitations, the results of this and other studies on tourist behavior are of interest for the design of tourism products adapted to the psychological and psycho-social profile of potential travelers. The motivational disposition is important to discover destinations that are considered as experiences, as well as the link with socio-relational motivations and the search for new experiences. Therefore, other services related to this type of tourism should be promoted.