

PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS AS DETERMINANTS OF ENGAGEMENT IN SPORTS TOURISM

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Abstract

This paper examines the human needs that predict the preference of sports tourism in Greece; explores the tourist typology and emphasise at sport tourist roles. The sample was 269 sports tourists who visited Greece in summer. The questionnaire is based on the “Tourist Roles Preference Scale” of Gibson and Yiannakis (2002), and was translated in Greek, German and Russian. This survey suggests promoting sports tourism especially to women and also to create and promote sports events for ages over 40, because there is a lack of participation in those groups and a lack of events that match to these ages and gender. Furthermore, this exploratory research has revealed that in the future tourist behaviour is suggested to be described by only 8 tourist roles.

Keywords: sports tourism, needs, motivation, behaviour

Introduction

Greece is a tourist destination, which is advertised as a place with lots of sun and beautiful coastlines. Therefore tourists visit Greece mainly in summer and all sports activities are developed for this season, although there are a lot of mountains, rivers and lakes that are suitable for trekking, climbing, rafting, sailing, etc. The percentage of the sports tourists is quite low. Therefore, a lot need to be done to increase sports tourism and Greece must face the challenge of the global importance of sports (Yfantidou, Costa, & Michalopoulos, 2008). The motive for this research is the need for development of sports tourism in Greece and the lack of knowledge of who sport tourists are and why they do it. Research has shown that sports tourism is broadly defined as “leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities” (Gibson, 1998). Furthermore, according to Weed & Bull (2004), there is a tendency to focus at one dimension of sports tourism that is vacation which includes sport activities for tourists either as participants or as spectators. They point out

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that there are two types of sports tourism: a) sports tourism that develops a tourist profile and b) sports tourism which spontaneously arises as a result of a sport activity. But, why do sport tourists behave like that and what are their motives? The answer derives from the core (fundamental) human needs and is defined by the motives, which have their roots in deep core psychological and social needs that support the whole behaviour.

Sport events represent the most fast developing sector of tourism market and the research of Funk and Bruun (2007), underline the importance of social-psychological motives concerning sport event and the cultural-educational motives concerning international travel. More specifically in order to increase tourism we should study ways of handling with respect the important experience of tourists, which is the behaviour that reflects the original motives (Foo, Mcguiggan, & Yiannakis, 2004; Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002).

According to Kurtzman and Zauhar (2005), the motive for someone in order to travel or to participate in tourism can be determined as a total of needs and attitudes that predispose an individual to act with a concrete way. The motives that determine sports tourism are: a) the immense tendency to escape from the everyday routine, b) the sentiments, c) the wish for participation and d) the need for reward, the recognition and the prestige. Also, the decision to travel or to participate or to watch an athletic activity can be also influenced by other, exterior factors such as the family, friends, the socially similar group, as well as the television advertising campaign of companies of athletic activity.

The needs are not static, they increase or decrease and that explains why the same person adopts different kinds of behaviour at different time periods. If this idea is connected to the preference of tourist role, then the needs which are related to roles will provide a better knowledge of tourist behaviour and choices at sports tourism (Gibson, 2006). Gibson (2006), also reports the opinions of Pearce and Caltabiano concerning motives for sports tourism. According to them the satisfaction at vacation is related to satisfaction of core needs and this is an unbreakable relation. Gibson and Yiannakis (2002), described in a research about tourist behaviour that by 15 tourists roles the 3 concerned sports tourism: active sports tourist, explorer and thrill seeker. The purpose of this study was to determine which of the human needs predict the preference of sports tourism in Greece. The examination of needs that bring to attitudes and lastly to behaviour that basically reflect motives of sports tourists is very important.

Method

The data was consisted of a stratified sample by age and gender of 269 sports tourists who visited Greece in summer (June-July-August 2007). This method was used in order to have as many men as women at each age group. The majority was 17-39 years old 69,14%. The gender of the participants was 142 men and 118 women (missing values 9). Roughly half were married (39,41%), while singles/never married were (49,44%). The majority were employed full time (59,11%), while 23,05% were students. As far as education is concerned, the majority were graduates of university or college (36,43%). Annual family income varied from 20.000-60.000€ for 35,69% of the participants.

The questionnaire is based on the "Tourist Roles Preference Scale" of Gibson and Yiannakis (2002), and was translated in Greek, German and Russian (control of cross-cultural validity) by Yfantidou, Costa & Michalopoulos, (2007) as Geisinger (1994) and Sperber (2004) proposed. Having the questionnaire in four languages covered the majority of tourists who visited Greece. The questionnaire included 89 Likert Questions (5-scale) or closed-ended questions that recorded: (1) a description of tourist's activities, (2) a description of vacation destination, (3) an examination of major human needs, (4) demographical and personal data and, (5) certain destination preference.

The questionnaires were distributed at the two main airports of Greece: “Eleftherios Venizelos” in the city of Athens and “Macedonia” airport in the city of Thessaloniki. The questionnaires were distributed to the foreign tourists after check in at the airport when departing from Greece, and for Greek tourists in transit to their final destination in Greece after their vacation. The delimitation of this research is that the sample was collected only during summer as security regulations at the airports did not allow the continuation of the research during other time periods and the sample was taken only from tourists who preferred air transport for their travel.

The Statistical Methods

A principal component analysis (PCA) and multidimensional scaling (MDS) were the exploratory analysis that was used to verify the tourist roles and tourists’ major human needs. Logistic regression was used for the prediction of tourist role preference through gender, age and psychological needs.

Results

Reliability and exploratory analysis

Cronbach α was used to examine the reliability of the questionnaire, in particular for the part of tourist roles $\alpha = .81$ and for the part of human needs $\alpha = .85$. A principal component analysis (PCA) and multidimensional scaling (MDS) were the exploratory analysis used to verify the tourist behavioural roles. PCA and quartimax rotation was used to verify the validity of TRPS questionnaire of the 34 variables of the tourist roles, for the specific sample. Quartimax rotation was selected because behaviour differs and variables do not correlate significant. The analysis identified 8 factors (Table 1), which explain the 57.69% of the total variance: 1) Active Sports Tourist, 2) Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist, 3) Sun Lover, 4) Escapist, 5) High Class Tourist, 6) Independent Mass Tourist, 7) Organized Mass Tourist and 8) Seeker. Furthermore, to verify the validity of the TRPS, a multi-dimensional scaling model was developed for the entire sample both for males and females, and it revealed that the tourists’ roles typology was according to the distances between them at three dimensional spaces. The pair of variables that presented high loading at principal component analysis and logical proximity (grouping together) at dimensional space, and also belonged at the same factor was accepted for measuring the same tourist role. The variables which satisfied the above criteria were sustained and the new 8 variables – tourist roles were created. This typology differs from Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) results, but statistically it cannot be disregarded that the 15 tourist roles could be considered as 8 tourist roles. From the 8 roles the 2 concerned sports tourist: 1) Active Sports Tourist and 2) Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist.

Table1
Factor analysis of tourist role preference scale

New Tourist Role	Tourist Roles	Questions TRPS	Factors								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Outdoor Sport and Knowledge Tourist	Thrill Seeker	(6)	0,837								
		(23)	0,799								
	Explorer	(7)	0,735								
		(24)	0,658								
Educational Tourist		(34)	0,640								
		(33)	0,428								
Seeker	Seeker	(16)	0,510								
		(9)		0,822							
		(10)		0,791							
	Anthropologist	(26)		0,661							
(3)			0,421								
High Class Tourist	Archaeologist Tourist	(20)		-							
		(21)		0,426							
	High Class Tourist		(21)		0,519						
			(4)		0,402						
Sun Lover	Jetsetter	(28)			0,851						
		(12)			0,804						
	Sun Lover		(25)			0,747					
			(8)			0,647					
Independent Mass Tourist	Sun Lover	(17)				0,734					
		(1)				0,732					
		(18)				0,464					
	Escapist I	(14)				0,509					
Escapist	Independent Mass Tourist I	(11)				0,561					
		(19)				-					
	Action Seeker		(2)				0,517				
			(2)				-				
Active Sport Tourist	Drifter	(29)					0,599				
		(13)					0,438				
	Escapist II		(30)					0,522			
			(27)					0,511			
Organized Mass Tourist	Active Sport Tourist	(31)							0,680		
		(15)							0,621		
		(32)							0,548		
Organized Mass Tourist	Organized Mass Tourist	(22)								0,822	
		(5)								0,696	
Eigenvalue			3,60	3,02	2,85	2,20	2,18	2,07	2,04	1,67	
% of Variance			10,58	8,87	8,39	6,46	6,42	6,08	5,99	4,91	
Cumulative %			57,69								

Psychological needs as determinants of engagement in sports tourism

PCA and oblimin rotation was used for the 22 psychological needs of the questionnaire, for the specific sample. Oblimin rotation was used because of high correlation of need variables. The analysis identified 6 factors (Table 2), which explain the 57.74% of the total variance: 1) Self Esteem, 2) Physiological, 3) Love and Belongingness, 4) Self Actualization, 5) Safety and Security and 6) The External Environment. Maslow (1970) has provided the same hierarchy of needs that influence behaviour.

Table 2
Factor analysis of tourists' major human needs

Psychological Needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
The need for creativity, self expression	.767					
The need to have control over events and circumstances in your life	.592					
The need to have clear goals, a direction in life	.523					
The need to feel good about yourself	.493					
The need for growth, self discovery, self actualization	.490					
The need for esteem, prestige, status	.472					
The need to feel connected with one's history, roots, the past	.461					
The need to just get away from everything		-.686				
The need for freedom, autonomy, independence		-.653				
The need for health and well being		-.595				
The need to play and have a good time		-.592				
Sexual needs			-.808			
Companionship needs			-.706			
The need for love and affection			-.651			
The need for solitude, privacy				.703		
The need to be occasionally taken care by someone else				.627		
Financial security needs					.760	
Safety and personal security needs					.751	
The need to feel competent, accomplished, successful					.430	
The need for home and/or family					.403	
The need for variety, excitement, stimulation						-.747
The need for exploration, novelty, discovery, change						-.731
Eigenvalue	5,921	1,632	1,488	1,317	1,180	1,164
% of Variance	26,91	7,42	6,76	5,99	5,36	5,29
Cumulative %			57,74			

Binary logistic regression was used to predict sports tourist role preference by gender, age and 6 psychological needs of Active Sports Tourist “AST” (Table 3) and of Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist “OSKT” (Table 4). As it is revealed in Greece there is a lack of men and women over 60 at AST and also there is a small number of women 40-59 that select this role. As far as OSKT there is also a small number of men over 60 and a lack of women of this age, but there are few women 40-59 that select this role.

Table 3

Significant needs that motive men and women to select Active Sports Tourist. Values of B, $p < 0,05$

Needs	Active Sports Tourist					
	Men			Women		
	17-39	40-59	60+	17-39	40-59	60+
Self Esteem	1,384	-1,970		1,900	-	
Physiological	-	-		-	-	
Love and Belongingness	-0,438	-	No tourist at this age	-0,550	-	No tourist at this age
Self Actualization	-	-		-	-	
Safety and Security	-	-		-	-	
The External Environment	-0,543	1,548		-	-	

Table 4

Significant needs that motive men and women to select Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist. Values of B, $p < 0,05$

Needs	Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist					
	Men			Women		
	17-39	40-59	60+	17-39	40-59	60+
Self Esteem	-	-	-	-	1,859	
Physiological	-	-1,974	-	0,804	-	
Love and Belongingness	-	-	-	-0,576	-	No tourist at this age
Self Actualization	-	-	-	-0,827	-	
Safety and Security	-	-1,511	-	0,820	-2,426	
The External Environment	-	-	-	-	-	

Discussion

Active Sports Tourist is the tourist whose primary emphasis while on vacation is to remain active engaging in favorite sports. The need that determine this tourist role preference for men 17 to 39 years of age is the factor Self Esteem. But the need of Love and Belongingness and the need of External Environment deter men 17 to 39 years of age from selecting this role. For men 40 to 59 years of age is the factor External Environment. But, the need of Self Esteem keeps back men 40 to 59 years of age from this role. As far as men 60 years and over is concerned there were not any tourists at this age at this role (Figure 1).

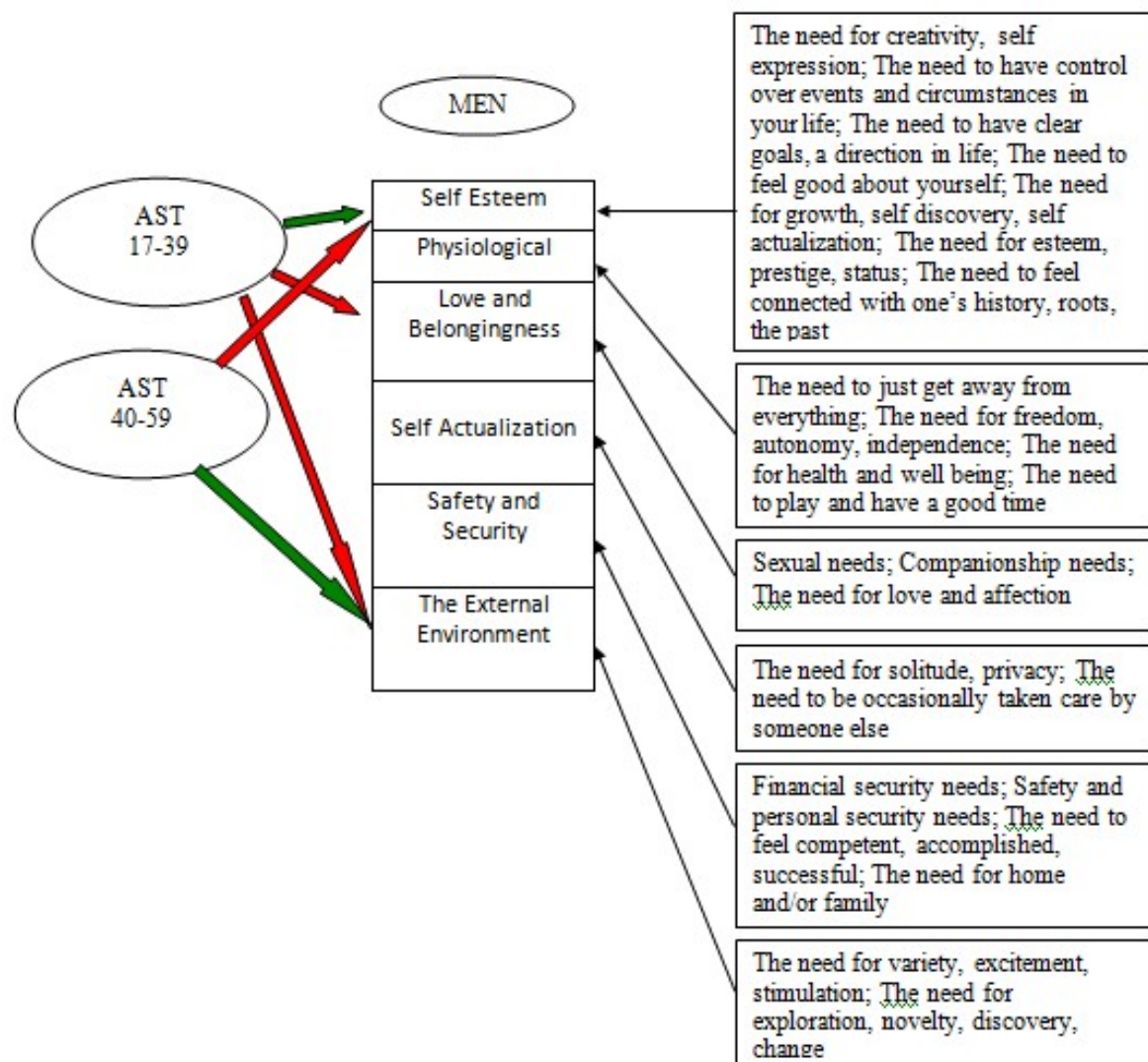


Figure 1. The needs that determine tourist role preference for AST (green) and needs that force men back (red) from selecting AST.

The need that determine this tourist role preference for women 17 to 39 years of age is the factor Self Esteem. Love and Belongingness push women 17 to 39 years of age off from selecting this role. For women 40 to 59 years of age no need seemed to contribute in predicting significant active sports tourist at this age. As far as women 60 years and over is concerned there were not any tourists at this age at this role (Figure 2).

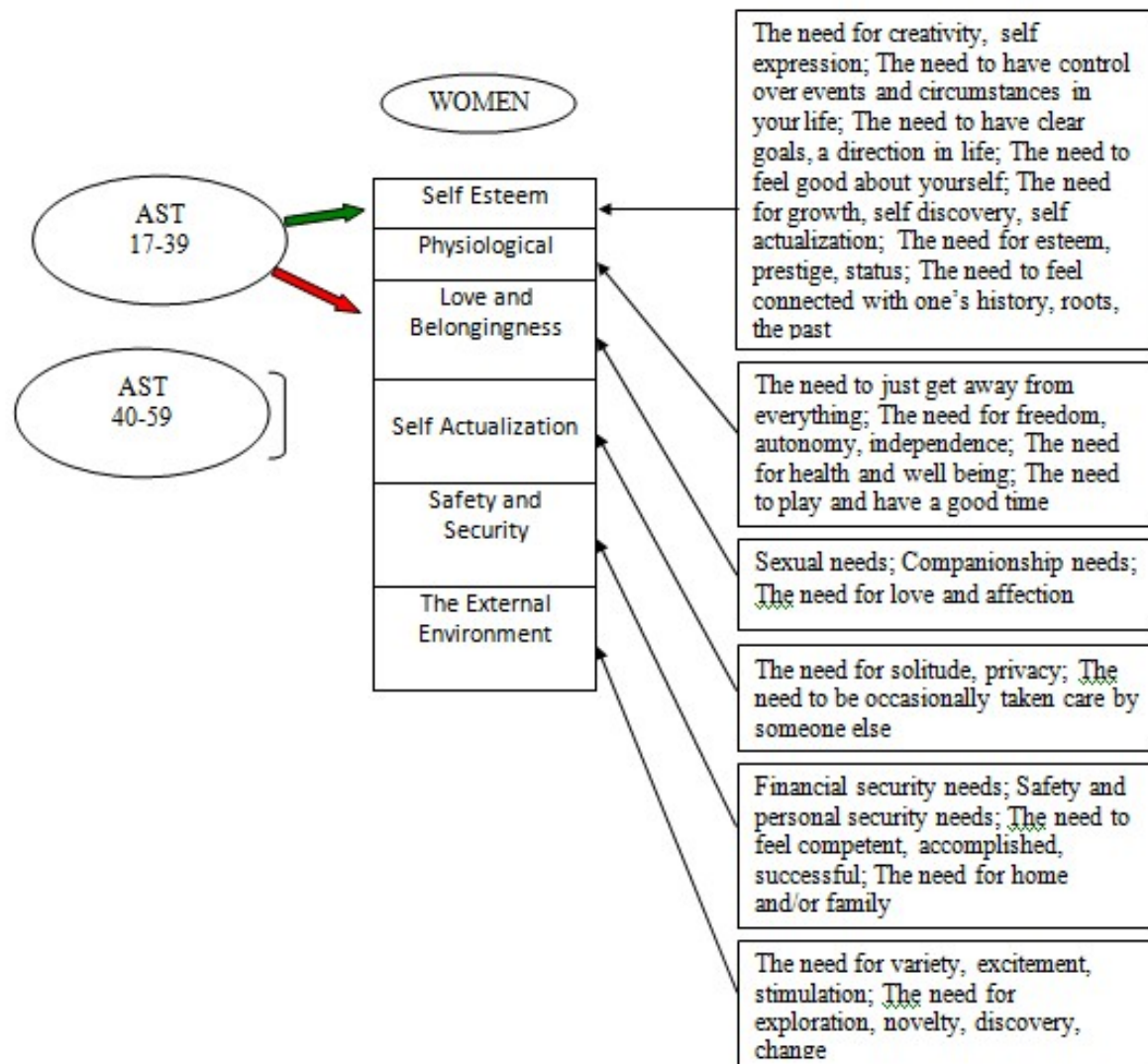


Figure 2. The needs that determine tourist role preference for AST (green) and needs that force women back (red) from selecting AST.

Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist is the tourist, who prefers adventure travel, exploring out-of-the-way places and enjoys challenges involved in getting there, also is the one who is interested in risky, exhilarating activities, which provide emotional highs and/or participates in planned study programs or education oriented vacations, primarily for study and/or acquiring new skills and knowledge. For men 17 to 39 years of age no need seemed to contribute in predicting significant this role at this age. For men 40 to 59 years of age the needs that keep back from this tourist role is the factors: a) Physiological and b) Safety and Security. For men 60 years and over no need seemed to contribute in predicting significant Outdoor Sports and Knowledge Tourist at this age (Figure 3).

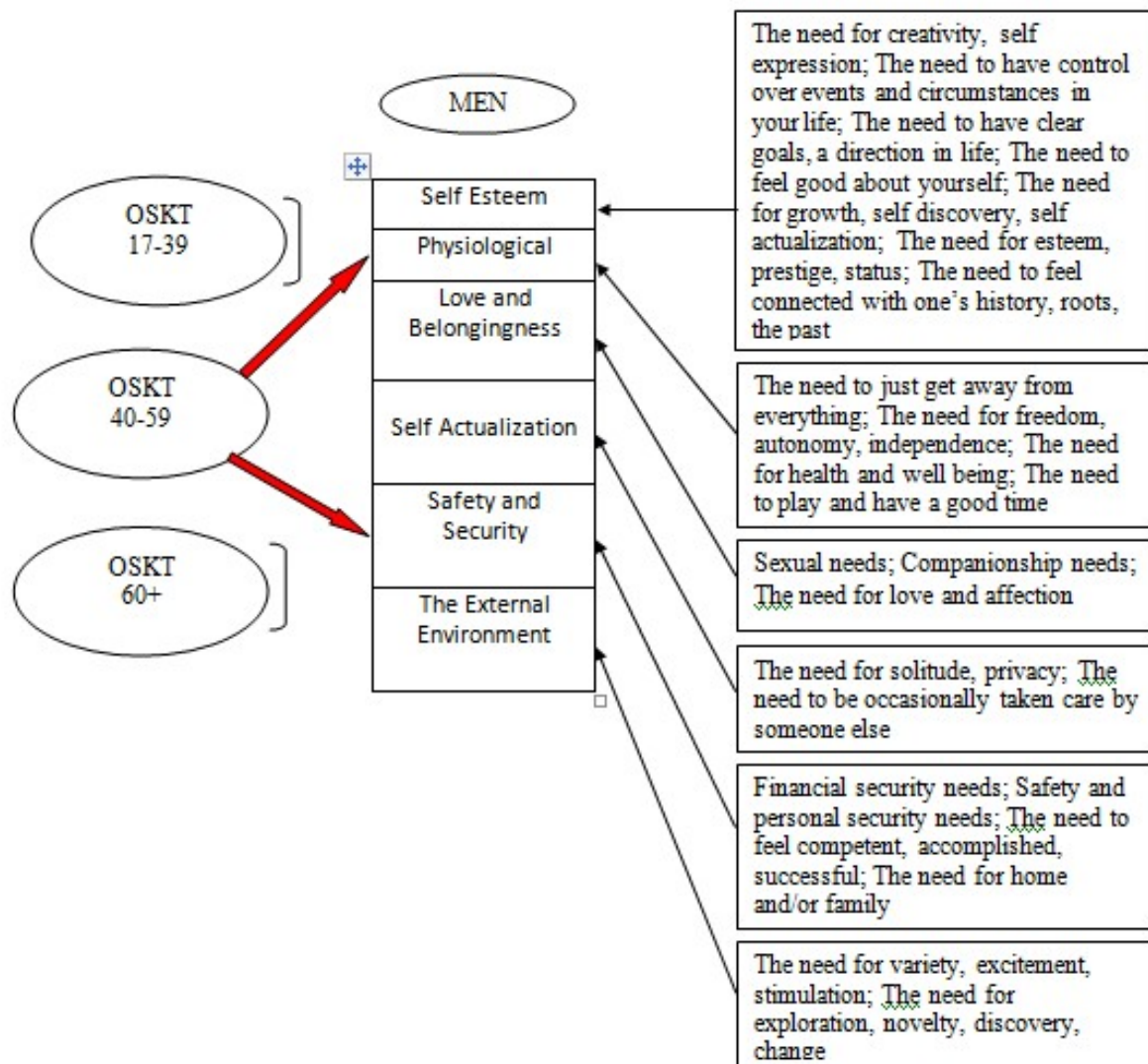


Figure 3. The needs that determine tourist role preference for OSKT (green) and needs that force men back (red) from selecting OSKT.

The needs that determine this tourist role preference for women 17 to 39 years of age are the factors: a) Physiological and b) Safety and Security. But, the needs: a) Love and Belongingness and b) Self Actualization keep women 17 to 39 years of age back from selecting this role. For women 40 to 59 years of age the need that determine this tourist role preference is Self Esteem. But, the need Safety and Security force women 40 to 59 years of age back from selecting this role. As far as women 60 years and over is concerned there were not any tourists at this age at this role (Figure 4).

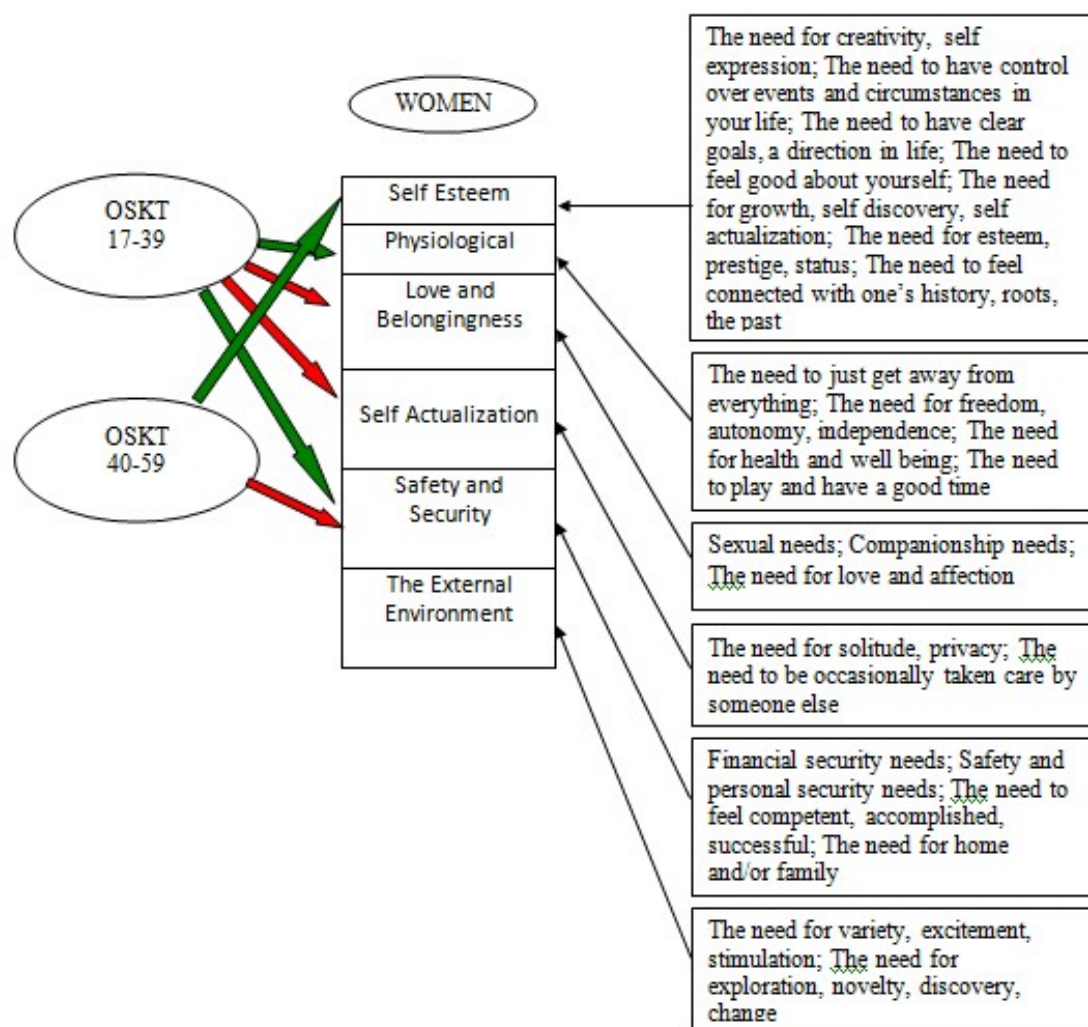


Figure 4. The needs that determine tourist role preference for OSKT (green) and needs that force women back (red) from selecting OSKT.

The examination of motives of sports tourists was also studied by Cassidy (2005), who investigated motive theories and associated them to three specific types of tourists: those who participate at a sports event, those who watch a sports event and also the simple tourists. Also, Yoon and Uysal (2005) wanted to measure tourist motives and they created a questionnaire based on previous researches and relative bibliography, suitably structured for the population of northern Cyprus. In this questionnaire they used the variables: motive of attraction and motive of impulse. The motive of attraction contained 28 questions and the motive of impulse contained 24 questions 4degree Likert scale. McGehee, Loker-Murphy, and Uysal (1996) adopted an approach that is based on the difference of gender and they explored the effect of gender on motives for tourism. They found out that it is more likely for women to be prompted by culture and civilization, from family tying occasions and prestige, while men attach importance to sports and adventure.

It is very important to promote sports tourism especially to women and also to create and promote sports events for ages over 40, because there is a lack of participation in those groups and a lack of events that match to these ages and gender. The target group of 17 to 39 years of age is very important and it must be maintained but also, sports tourism could occupy a bigger share of the total tourism industry.

However, insights that will possibly emerge from this research are to acquire a fuller understanding of sports tourists, their behaviour that reflect their motivations and the needs that determine their intentions to be sports tourists. This exploratory research has revealed that in the future tourist behaviour is suggested to be described by only 8 tourist roles.

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