



Enhancing the Quality of Life of Senior Tourists through Goals: A Theory

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Presentation Objective

This presentation will report on a theory that sheds more light on senior tourist behavior. The theory is based on concepts from research on senior tourism, the goal theory of leisure travel satisfaction, and socio-emotional selectivity theory. The theory involves four central principles:

- Selecting leisure travel goals that have high levels of positive valence,
- Selecting leisure travel goals that are very likely to be attained,
- Engaging in actions that would implement those leisure travel goals, and
- Engaging in actions that would allow tourists to recognize goal attainment.





Background

- Kim, H., Sirgy, M. J., Uysal, M., & Kim, S-E. (in press). Enhancing the quality of life of senior tourists: A theoretical perspective. *Anatolia*.
- Sirgy, M. Joseph (2010). Toward a quality-of-life theory of leisure travel satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(2), 246-260.
- Carstensen, L. L., Isaacowitz, D. M., & Charles, S. T. (1999). Taking time seriously: A theory of socio-emotional selectivity. *American Psychologist*, 54(3), 165-180.



Towards a New Quality- of-Life Theory of Senior Tourism

- The goal valence principle
- The goal expectancy principle
- The goal implementation principle
- The goal attainment principle

Goal Theoretic Principles

- **The goal valence principle**
- The goal expectancy principle
- The goal implementation principle
- The goal attainment principle





1. The Goal Valence Principle

Leisure travel satisfaction among senior tourists can be enhanced by selecting to pursue leisure travel goals in which goal attainment is likely to induce high levels of positive affect in social life.



The pursuit of pleasure must be
the goal of every rational person.

Voltaire

1. Goal Valence

- The intrinsicness principle of goal selection
- The abstractness principle of goal selection
- The basic needs principle of goal selection
- The flow principle of goal selection
- The autonomy principle in goal selection



1.a. The Intrinsicness Principle in Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals that are directly related to socializing experiences. Attaining these leisure travel goals induces significantly more positive affect in their social lives than experiences not involving social interaction. Doing so is likely to significantly contribute to subjective well-being.

1.b. The Abstractness Principle in Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals directly related to more abstract (rather than less abstract) socializing experiences. Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in a senior's social life than similar socializing experiences involving goals that are less abstract. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.



1.c. The Basic Needs Principle of Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased by selecting both leisure travel goals directly related to socializing experiences and goals related to basic needs, not growth needs. Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life and to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.



1.d. The Flow Principle of Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals directly related to socializing experiences as well as other goals related to competitive social activities. Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar socializing experiences lacking competitive social activities.

1.e. The Autonomy Principle of Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by autonomously selecting leisure travel goals directly related to socializing experiences. Attaining these autonomously selected leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in their social lives than similar experiences that are not autonomously selected. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.



Goal Theoretic Principles

- The goal valence principle
- The goal expectancy principle
- The goal implementation principle
- The goal attainment principle





SETTING *REALISTIC* GOALS

2. The Goal Expectancy Principle

Leisure travel satisfaction among senior tourists can be enhanced by selecting to pursue leisure travel goals that are likely to be attained; thus, goal attainment would ensure the experience of high levels of positive affect in social life.



2. Goal Expectancy

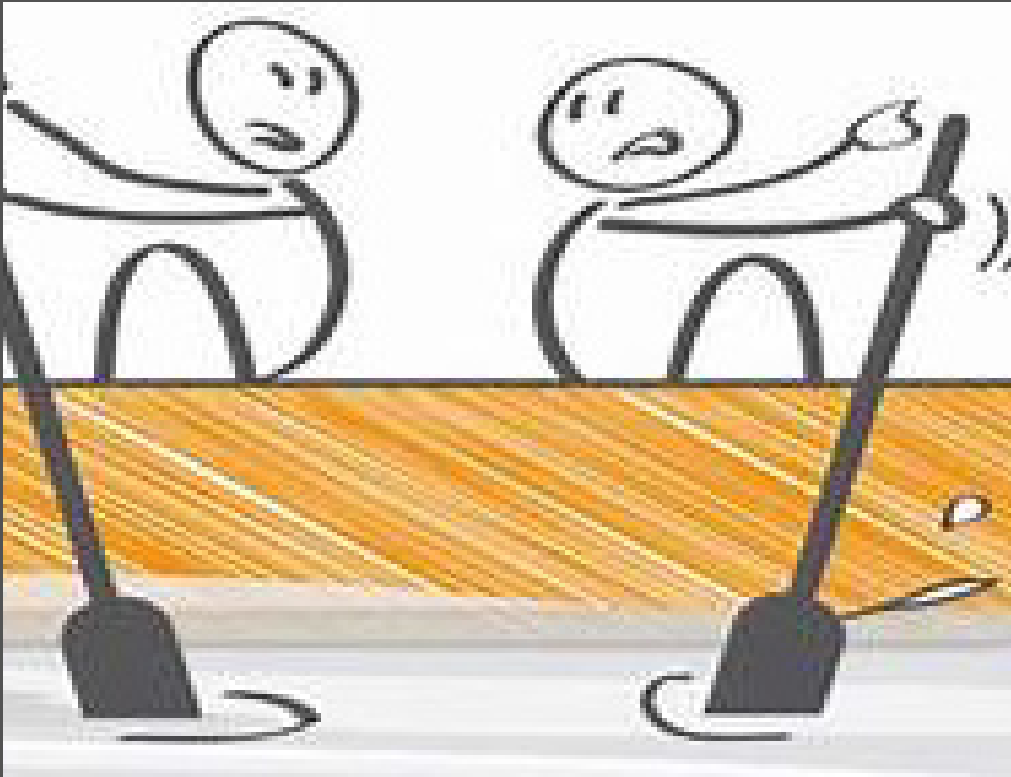
- The goal-resource congruence principle of goal selection
- The goal-conflict principle of goal selection
- The goal-cultural value congruence principle of goal selection



2.a. The Goal-Resource Congruence Principle of Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals (directly related to socializing experiences) supported by an explicit budget. Attaining these leisure travel goals supported by a budget is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences unsupported by a budget. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

2.b. The Goal-Conflict Principle of Goal Selection



Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals (directly related to socializing experiences) that do not conflict with other important goals. Attaining leisure travel goals that do not conflict with other goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences that involve goal conflict. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.



2.c. The Goal-Cultural Value Congruence Principle of Goal Selection

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by selecting leisure travel goals (directly related to socializing experiences with family and friends) on trips to host communities with congruent cultural values. Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences involving travel to host communities with incongruent cultural values. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

Goal Theoretic Principles

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3. The Goal Implementation Principle

Leisure travel satisfaction among senior tourists can be enhanced by taking action to implement leisure travel goals; thus, goal implementation increases the likelihood of goal attainment and the experience of positive affect in social life.



3. Goal Implementation

- The goal-concreteness principle of goal implementation
- The goal-commitment principle of goal implementation



BE
CONCRETE

3.a. The Goal-Concreteness Principle of Goal Implementation

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by successfully implementing leisure travel goals (concrete goals directly related to socializing experiences with family and friends throughout the trip). Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences in which abstract travel goals are not successfully implemented. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.



3.b. The Goal-Commitment Principle of Goal Implementation

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by staying committed to leisure travel goals (abstract goals directly related to socializing experiences with family and friends throughout the trip). Attaining them is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences that lack goal commitment and doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

The Goal Theoretic Aspects of the Proposed QOL Theory

- The goal valence principle
- The goal expectancy principle
- The goal implementation principle
- The goal attainment principle



4. The Goal Attainment Principle

Leisure travel satisfaction among senior tourists can be enhanced through the attainment of leisure travel goals, thus ensuring the experience of positive affect in social life.





4.a. The Recognition Principle of Goal Attainment

Life satisfaction of seniors can be increased (and dissatisfaction decreased) by engaging in efforts to recognize the attainment of leisure travel goals (goals directly related to socializing experiences with family and friends throughout the trip). Attaining these leisure travel goals is likely to induce significantly more positive affect in one's social life than similar experiences not involving efforts to recognize goal attainment. Doing so is likely to contribute significantly to subjective well-being.

Goal Theoretic Principles

- *The goal valence principle*
- *The goal expectancy principle*
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THANK
YOU!

Thank You

If any would like a copy of this presentation, do not hesitate to contact me (sirgy@vt.edu), and I'll be more than happy to e-mail you the slides.