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Effects of motorcycle group membership on the ride experience and travel motivators: A comparison between the USA, the UK, and Turkey

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Abstract: Due to the global prevalence of motorcycle tourism, this study considers the travel motivators among riders from Turkey, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. This study adds the previously unexplored factor of group membership and its influence on travel motivators. The study used quantitative analysis of a survey that was disseminated via Google forms. The primary factors are: sense of pleasure, passion for adrenaline, and ease of riding and travel activities. Group membership was used to examine the difference among the factors. All motorcyclists ranked the factors as high as travel motivators. There were some differences among riders from different countries. Turkish riders ranked their participation in group activities higher than did the US and UK. While the US and UK and Turkey had significant differences on the sense of pleasure. This study has importance to governments, travel agencies, and businesses that serve motorcyclists.

Keywords: motorcycle tourism, international motorcyclist comparison, motorcycle group membership, motorcycle travel motivators

Many motorcyclists belong to motorcycle groups, however, to date, research is lacking on the influence of group membership on the sentiments of motorcyclists and their travel activities. Additionally, motorcycle tourism has been developing rapidly in recent years and attracts motorcyclists who have disposable income and free time required for tourism (Wu, Ai & Chang, 2019). Motorcycle tourism is

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a niche market of loyal customers (Nickerson, Grau, Sage & Bermingham, 2019; Walker, 2010). Furthermore, motorcyclists engage in risk taking and serious leisure. Thus, tourism marketers can help them fulfill their travel motivations and experience the escape and flow of motorcycle tourism (Frash, Blose, Smith & Scherhag, 2018).

This research, using recent theories on tourism consumer tribes (Pforr, Volgger, and Dowling, 2021), began with a premise that motorcyclists in different countries shared similar experiences in both group membership and travel motivators. However, no international studies were found on motorcycle group membership for mainstream motorcyclists. Thus, there are still questions as to whether there are international applications for marketing messages to motorcycle groups as their interests relate to travel activities. The aim of this research is to examine how motorcycle group membership influences motorcycle travel choices in different countries and cultures. This exploratory study examines the emotions and preferences of motorcyclists in the USA, UK, and Turkey regarding risk, ease of travel, and sense of pleasure and considers the impact of those factors on group travel activities. The research also explores how the sense of pleasure, rush of adrenaline, and ease of riding impact the travel of motorcycle riders. Finally, the research compares the travel motivators and motorcycle group travel activities among riders in Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Historical Perspectives on Motorcycle Tourism

Prior to 2012, the state of motorcycle tourism had not been widely explored. Early research used an applied multidisciplinary approach to examine motorcycle tourism motivators. These initial works led to the concept of a marketing-based theory of motorcycle tourism demand generators (Sykes & Kelly, 2014). Much of the research conducted into motorcycle tourism has been conducted at the behest of tourism agencies who wished to appeal to motorcycle tourists based on the perceived value and size of the market. The marketing profile of motorcycle tourists continues to be utilized by researchers to segment the market (Frash, Blose, Smith, & Scherhag, 2018).

As research expanded, it indicated similar demand generators and similar behaviors among motorcycle tourists including enjoyment of the journey itself as much as the destination, having supporting attractions and diversions (including motorcycle oriented events), basics of travel demands, feeling welcome, and fellowship/camaraderie with other like-minded people (authenticity) (Walker, 2010, Weddell 2014, Sykes & Kelly 2014, Kruger, Viljoen, Saayman 2014, Colarič-Jakše &

Ambrož, 2015). Subsequent researchers confirmed these travel motivators from early studies (Sykes & Kelly, 2016, Cater 2017, Frash, Blose, Smith, & Scherhag, 2018, Frash & Blose, 2019, Kruger & Venter, 2020, Dorockim 2021). There are additional influencers, however, one significant connection remains the aspect of fellowship and camaraderie with like-minded people. Those factors may influence participation in group activities or joining groups.

Subsequent to the initial forays into exploring motorcycle tourism, several researchers have focused on the serious leisure theory to examine the motorcycle lifestyle (Kruger & Venter, 2020, Kruger, 2018). Cicero (2020) questions how to segment motorcycle event attendees in accordance with their reported wanderlust (a motivation factor). She highlights earlier research noting adventure seeking, a collective identity and solidarity, sense of adventure with a tourist gaze, and the desire for authentic experiences that generate spiritual renewal which reinforces the findings of Colarič-Jakše & Ambrož (2015). Serious leisure can be related to a sense of pleasure and the ease of riding, however, whether that pleasure is enhanced by riding with a group is unknown.

Few studies have examined the perceptions of international motorcyclists as to pleasure, risk, and ease of riding and how those impact group activities or are impacted by group membership. Kruger (2018) studied leisure and happiness in motorcyclists in South Africa. When studying a motorcycle tourists' corporeal and spiritual experiences, Colarič-Jakše & Ambrož (2015) considered respondents from several European countries finding that these motorcyclists place high importance on motorcycle travel as a form of escape and as a personal lifestyle and as a spiritual experience that leads to self-development. Kruger & Venter (2020) examine the relationship between lifestyle, leisure life and happiness among South African excursionists finding that leisure participation improves a sense of wellbeing and providing pleasure. Their study aligns the feeling of happiness to a positive feeling of pleasure.

When the works of Cater (2017) and Frash & Blose (2019) and Frash, et al. (2018) and Dolles, Dibben & Hardy (2018), Kruger & Venter (2020), Sykes & Kelly (2014, 2016), and Weddell (2014) are aligned, there seem to be similar motorcycle travel motivators between the Isle of Man, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and the United States. Cater (2017) conducted the study in Ceredigion, UK interviewing members of motorcycle clubs, attendees at a motorcycle show, and motorcycle visitors in the region. Cater (2017) points out the numerous motorcycle related events that occur in Great Britain, the UK, Austria, and France that attract thousands of visitors annually. Cicero (2020) adds that there are international motorcycle events such as the Pinguinos in Spain, the Elefantentreffen in Germany, and the European Bike Week in Austria. As motorcycle touring has become an increas-

ing trend in recent years, motorcycle-themed travel programs are now available in various parts of the world to attract tourists (Wu, Ai & Chang, 2019).

One of the essential points of traveling by motorcycle is the feeling of adventure. It is considered a risky vehicle because there is no protection on motorcycles (Pinch & Reimer, 2012; Ai & Chang, 2019). Motorcyclists try to minimize this risk with special protective clothing during their travels. Similarly, Nickerson, Grau, Sage and Bermingham (2019) state that motorcyclists are adventurous and take their personal safety at risk by traveling by motorcycle. However, while the activity inherently has risk, most motorcyclists ride with concentration and focus on avoiding accidents. This desire for the thrill of riding influences route selections such as riding curvy and hilly roads. Motorcycle riding requires a greater skill set but it is the challenge that leads to pleasure. Jderu (2013) points out the progressive stages of transformation in their riding skills. Although, less experienced motorcyclists may choose to ride with others to cope with the fear of riding in urban traffic (Jderu, 2013). Another study in Turkey found that motorcyclists join motorcycle groups to reduce the risk of riding among drivers who lack awareness of motorcycles as well as to participate in group activities (Ertaş & Aktaş, 2019). There seems to be a difference between the risk taking a motorcyclist takes on by choice whereby they can demonstrate their roadcraft versus the risks imposed by aggressive drivers or congested traffic. Group riding may offset some of the risk given the greater visibility of a group of riders.

While a significant number of motorcycle tourists travel alone, they also traveled with friends and larger groups. Many carried passengers (Nickerson, et al. 2019, Frash & Blöse, 2019). It should be noted that motorcycle group membership is differentiated from the camaraderie found at an event because there is a formal process for joining a motorcycle group. This study did not try to predefine group membership to riders rather leaving it to the riders to determine whether they were members of a riding group. However, the questions did ask if there were a formal process or paid dues for joining a group. At this time, the analysis only focuses on how travel motivators and traveling with a group are connected. While traveling and meeting with people who are like-minded seem to be high motivators, the concepts of pleasure, ease of riding, and the feeling of adrenaline (risk taking) and their impact on group motorcycle activities have yet to be studied internationally.

Therefore, this paper will analyze the similarities and differences among motorcycle riders in the United States, UK, and Turkey within these dimensions. Motorcycle riding is prevalent globally, however, questions remain as to whether motorcyclists from different countries join groups and experience motorcycle riding similarly. In other words, what are the commonalities and differences among travel motivators for motorcyclists in different countries and cultures,

and does group membership play a role? How does group membership affect the sense of pleasure or excitement or the risk-taking behaviors of motorcyclists?

Methodology

This study examines the sentiments attached to riding a motorcycle and the relationship between those sentiments and motorcycle group membership. The aims of the research are to:

1. Reveal how the sense of pleasure, the rush of adrenaline, and ease of riding impact the travel reasons of motorcycle users.
2. Make comparisons between Turkey, United States of America, and United Kingdom motorcyclists on travel motivators and group travel activities.
3. Examine the influence of group membership and group activities on the travel activities of motorcyclists.

Quantitative research on motorcycle users, group membership, and travel was conducted through a structured questionnaire that consisted of five parts that was disseminated through Google forms in both English and Turkish. Respondents were asked about group membership in the same section that collected demographic profile information. This study examines the data from three parts of the structured questionnaire using the factors of: sense of pleasure, ease of riding, and passion for adrenaline on Scale 1 titled “Motivations of traveling by motorcycle.” This scale was developed by Ertaş & Aktaş (2019) and it consists of three dimensions and 12 statements.

An additional 7 questions were added to the scale based on earlier research conducted by Sykes and Kelly (2014, 2016). These questions were founded on the observed phenomena at a motorcycle campground about group travel activities and group behavior. Charmaz (2006, 2014) states that the use of constructivist grounded theory is a flexible method that allows gathering inductive data using a “keen eye, open mind, discerning ear, and steady hand (p. 14)”. The process is based on the shared experiences of the researchers and the study participants (Ratnapalan, 2019). The last part of the questionnaire consists of 17 demographic questions for motorcycle users. These questions are gender, age, education level, interest, etc.

Data was collected from Turkish, US, and UK motorcyclists using a Google Forms survey. In Turkey, motorcycle groups and users were reached through social media. Respondents were asked to share the questionnaire with their group friends. Approximately 1500 individual messages were sent to motorcycle

users on social media. From this, a total of 291 questionnaires were collected from Turkish participants between November 25, 2019 and December 25, 2019.

The US researcher is a motorcycle campground owner and collected data through social media and also emailed it to 35 known visitors to the campground using a convenience sample. Respondents remained anonymous and the data was analyzed by the Turkish researcher, thus, the risks of a conflict of interest are very low. A total of 160 responses were collected in the US from November 19, 2019 – December 30, 2019, of which 157 responses were analyzed. In the UK the survey was sent via a local group Facebook page of a motorcycle rider rights organization – the Motorcycle Action Group (www.mag-uk.org) which been in existence in the UK since 1973 and champions motorcycling issues with policy makers. A total of 50 responses were collected of which 41 were analyzed as non-residents of the UK were excluded.

Norman & Streiner (1998), $(5.152/\sqrt{N-2})$ formula was used to determine the sub-dimensions of the loadings of the factors revealed in the study. Thus, only statements with a factor loading above .23 are included in the study. Consequently, the group travel activities scale consisted of 6 analyzed statements due to the exclusion of one statement that was below the desired level.

The G * Power 3.1 robot was used to determine the sample size in the study and found the sample size to be 153 at 5% confidence interval (Test family: t tests, Statistical test: Linear bivariate regression: Two groups, difference between intercepts). Since the scales used in the study were applied to the samples for the first time, explanatory factor analysis was applied. In addition, descriptive statistics, parallel tests, minimum average partial test, scree pilot, independent sample t-test, correlation, and regression analysis were performed in the study using the SPSS 24 program to conduct the analysis.

Findings

There were five stages in the findings part of the study in addition to the demographic data. The four primary variables are: sense of pleasure, ease of riding, passion for adrenaline, and group travel activities. Each variable has specific sub-dimensions. In this study passion for adrenaline is aligned to risk taking. The variables were analyzed for all respondents and then considered in light of the home country of the respondents. Finally, the impact of group membership and membership in multiple groups were considered as to their effects on the other factors.

First, frequency analysis was used to determine the descriptive characteristics of the participants. The average age of the participants is 42.9, the average

long distance traveled by motorcycle is 11,000 km per year, and the total average travel by motorcycle is 17,400 km per year. More than half of the respondents became interested in motorcycling in childhood affected primarily by curiosity. The majority of respondents were men and had a university or higher education level.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Motorcycle interest started	(n)	%	Motorcycle interest influenced	(n)	%
Childhood	265	54.2	Family influence	120	24.5
Teen years	156	31.9	Interaction with others	145	29.7
Adulthood	62	12.7	Curiosity	202	41.3
Late Adulthood	6	1.2	Caring for other	22	4.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Gender	(n)	%	Education level	(n)	%
Female	67	13.7	Primary school	10	2.0
Male	422	86.3	Secondary school	7	1.4
			High school	159	32.5
			Undergraduate	251	51.3
			Post-graduate	62	12.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>216</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Explanatory factor analysis of the scales was used for the second part of the findings section (Table 2). First, Horn's (1965) Parallel Analysis (HPA), Velicer's (1976) Minimum Average Partial (MAP) and Cattell's (1966) Scree Plot were used to determine the factor number of the scales. The conclusions from conducting all three analyses are that the traveling by motorcycle scale had a three-factors structure and group travel activities scale had a one-factor structure. Therefore, in this analysis, the scale of traveling with motorcycle was restricted to three and the scale of group travel activities with one factor.

Table 2: Traveling by Motorcycle: Factor loadings, eigen-values, variance explained and means: EFA for the scale

Factors and Items	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	Variance Explained	Mean	α
Factor 1 – Sense of Pleasure		3.597	29.972	4,74	,71
I feel free when travelling by motorcycle.	,788			4,84	
I feel nature when travelling by motorcycle.	,746			4,78	
Motorcycling is a passion for me.	,719			4,78	

Table 2 (continued)

Factors and Items	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	Variance Explained	Mean	α
I enjoy travel because I ride a motorcycle.	,595			4,70	
I enjoy listening to the sound of the motorcycle.	,444			7,62	
Factor 2 – Passion for Adrenaline		1.536	12.802	4,26	,67
I enjoy the acceleration of the motorcycle when travelling by motorcycle.	,791			4,46	
I feel adrenaline when traveling by motorcycle.	,717			4,29	
The motorcycle is a fast vehicle compared to other vehicles in traffic	,592			4,11	
I enjoy riding on challenging roads with twists, turns, and hills.	,565			4,21	
Factor 3 – Ease of Riding		1.208	10.067	4,41	,54
I have no problem parking when traveling by motorcycle.	,689			4,61	
I can drive on roads where other vehicles can't.	,688			4,20	
I travel comfortably with a motorcycle in traffic.	,662			4,43	

Extraction Method: Principal Components Factor Analysis

Principal Components Factor Analysis (PCA) was used as factor extraction method (Fabrigar et al., 1999; Fabrigar & Wegener, 2012) and Promax as rotation method in explanatory factor analysis (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014; Mvududu & Sink, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2015). As a result, on the traveling by motorcycle scale, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value used for the validity of the scale was .80. This value has emerged as great based on Kaiser (1974)'s classification for KMO. The value of Cronbach's alpha used for the reliability of the scale was found to be .77 which surpasses the level that Hair et al. (2014) stated as sufficient.

The total explained variance of the travel by motorcycle scale was found to be 52.8 which is at an acceptable level according to Hair et al. (2014) and Tinsley & Tinsley (1987). In this scale, all statements with a factor load of .23 and greater were kept according to the formula of Norman and Streiner (1998). Thus, motorcyclists are motivated to travel because they experience a sense of pleasure (with 5 subdimensions), the passion of adrenaline (with 4 subdimensions), and ease of riding (with 3 subdimensions).

Table 3: Group Travel Activities: Factor loadings, eigen-values, variance explained and means: EFA for the scale

Factor and Items	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	Variance Explained	Mean	α
Factor 1 – Group Travel Activities		3.188	53.131	4,19	,82
I select travel destinations and events to attend because my motorcyclist friends are there.	,775			4,04	
It is important to me to join with other motorcyclists when I travel to events and destinations.	,753			3,84	
I consider other motorcyclists as family when I arrive at an event or destination where there are other motorcyclists.	,752			4,26	
I like to travel to events with my riding group and join with other motorcyclists.	,727			4,40	
I like to travel to events to join in with other motorcyclists.	,696			4,37	
My riding group travels long distances to events and activities.	,664			4,13	

Extraction Method: Principal Components Factor Analysis

As a result of the explanatory factor analysis performed on the group travel activities scale (with 7 subdimensions), the KMO value used for the validity of the scale was found to be .83 classified as great based on Kaiser (1974)'s classification. The value of Cronbach's alpha used for the reliability of the scale was found to be .82 again exceeding the sufficiency level stated by Hair et al. (2014).

The total explained variance of the traveling by motorcycle scale was found to be 53, an acceptable level according to Hair et al. (2014) and Tinsley & Tinsley (1987). In this scale, "I prefer to travel alone or with just a few riders and join groups of other motorcyclists when I arrive at my destination" statement with a factor loading below .23 was excluded in accordance with formula of Norman and Streiner (1998).

In the third part of the analyses, t-test and one-way Anova analyses were conducted to examine the differences between the variables.

Table 4: Independent sample t-test of group membership

Variables	Group Membership	N	Mean	Sd.	Se.	t	Sig
Sense of Pleasure	YES	415	4,76	,36	,01	3,117	<i>p</i> = ,001
	NO	74	4,61	,41	,04		
Ease of Riding	YES	415	4,46	,57	,02	4,674	<i>p</i> = ,001
	NO	74	4,12	,64	,07		
Passion for Adrenaline	YES	415	4,28	,63	,03	1,523	<i>p</i> = ,128
	NO	74	4,16	,64	,07		
Group Travel Activities	YES	415	4,28	,59	,02	7,062	<i>p</i> = ,001
	NO	74	3,73	,71	,08		

The differences between motorcyclists who are group members and motorcyclists who are not group members were analyzed with the t-test (Table 4). The conclusions demonstrated significant differences between motorcyclists who are members of a group and motorcyclists who are not members of a group. Motorcyclists who are members of a group ranked their responses higher in terms of sense of pleasure, ease of riding, and group travel activities than non-members. However, there were no significant differences regarding the passion for adrenaline between group and non-group members. The study revealed that those who are members of a group attach more importance to group travel activities (which is logical).

Table 5: Independent sample t-test of traveling with a non-member group

Variables	Traveling with a non-member group	N	Mean	Sd.	Se.	t	Sig
Sense of Pleasure	YES	305	4,70	,39	,02	-2,697	<i>p</i> = ,001
	NO	184	4,80	,34	,02		
Ease of Riding	YES	305	4,40	,60	,03	-,615	<i>p</i> = ,539
	NO	184	4,43	,58	,04		
Passion for Adrenaline	YES	305	4,26	,61	,03	,034	<i>p</i> = ,973
	NO	184	4,26	,66	,04		
Group Travel Activities	YES	305	4,17	,63	,03	-1,222	<i>p</i> = ,222
	NO	184	4,24	,67	,04		

The differences between motorcyclists traveling with a group that they are not a member of and motorcyclists traveling only with their own group were analyzed with the t-test (Table 5). As a result of the T-test analysis, the only significant difference emerged in the sense of pleasure factor. Motorcyclists that travel with their own member group experience a greater sense of pleasure when riding.

Table 6: Independent sample t-test of member of more than one group

Variables	Member of more than one group	N	Mean	Sd.	Se.	t	Sig
Sense of Pleasure	YES	143	4,67	,40	,03	-2,449	<i>p=,013</i>
	NO	386	4,77	,35	,01		
Ease of Riding	YES	143	4,32	,63	,05	-2,172	<i>p=,030</i>
	NO	386	4,45	,57	,03		
Passion for Adrenaline	YES	143	4,27	,59	,04	,124	<i>p=,901</i>
	NO	386	4,26	,65	,03		
Group Travel Activities	YES	143	4,09	,64	,05	-2,396	<i>p=,017</i>
	NO	386	4,24	,64	,03		

The differences between motorcycle users who are members of multiple groups and motorcycle users who are members of a single group were analyzed with the t-test (Table 6). Single group members ranked their responses higher in the variables of sense of pleasure, ease of riding and group travel activities compared to multi-group members. Interestingly, this study shows that single group members experienced a higher level of enjoyment in both individual and group motorcycle travels than those who were members of multiple groups.

The differences between traveling by motorcycle and group travel activities between Turkish, USA, and UK motorcycle users were conducted with one-way Anova analysis (Table 7).

Table 7: Differences between Turkish, US and UK motorcyclists: Oneway Anova Analysis

Variables	Countries	N	Mean	Sd.	F	Sig
Sense of Pleasure	Turkey	291	4,82	,30	19,889	<i>p=,001</i>
	USA	157	4,66	,42		
	UK	41	4,51	,41		
Ease of Riding	Turkey	291	4,61	,48	42,299	<i>p=,001</i>
	USA	157	4,15	,61		
	UK	41	4,08	,70		
Passion for Adrenaline	Turkey	291	4,34	,63	5,357	<i>p=,005</i>
	USA	157	4,14	,64		
	UK	41	4,22	,54		
Group Travel Activities	Turkey	291	4,41	,57	44,665	<i>p=,001</i>
	USA	157	3,98	,57		
	UK	41	3,66	,70		

The results of the one-way Anova analysis revealed that there are significant differences between Turkish motorcyclists and US and UK motorcyclists in all

factors. For example, Turkish motorcyclists place more importance on issues such as enjoying motorcycle riding, feeling the comfort of motorcycle in traffic, feeling more adrenaline in motorcycle riding and joining group travel activities than USA and UK motorcyclists. Furthermore, Turkish motorcyclists place more importance on both motorcycle travel and group travel activities than US and UK motorcyclists. On the other hand, when comparing the US to the UK, there are significant differences only in the group travel activities. USA motorcyclists care more about group travel activities than UK motorcyclists. Whether or not a motorcyclist was a member of a group did not affect their passion for adrenaline.

In the fourth part of the findings, the correlation analysis between the traveling by motorcycle and group travel activities is included (Table 8).

Table 8: Correlation analysis: Traveling by motorcycle and group travel activities

Variables	1	2	3	4
Sense of Pleasure	1			
Ease of Riding	0.33**	1		
Passion for Adrenaline	0.38**	0.40**	1	
Group Travel Activities	0.50**	0.32**	0.33**	1

****Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

The highest correlation is between sense of pleasure and group travel activities ($r=0.50$). This is a positive and moderately effective correlation relationship. The lowest correlation is between ease of riding and group travel activities ($r=0.32$). This is a positive and small effective correlation relationship. From this analysis, it is concluded that motorcycle users enjoy group travels.

Regression analysis is included in the last part of the analysis (Table 9). With this analysis, the study measures the effects of travel activities on the reasons of traveling by motorcycle.

Table 9: Regression analysis: Effects of travel activities on the reasons of traveling by motorcycle

Variables	Standardized Beta Coefficient	t	Sig T
Sense of Pleasure	,41	9,674	p=,001
Ease of Riding	,14	3,235	p=,001
Passion for Adrenaline	,12	2,822	p=,005

Not: Multiple R: ,54; R Square: ,29; Adjusted R Square: ,29; F: 66,20; Signif F:< ,05

a. Dependent Variable: Group Travel Activities

According to the analysis result, the sense of pleasure affects the group travel activities the most ($p < .001$ ve $\beta = .41$). Then, ease of riding ($p < .001$ ve $\beta = .14$) and passion for adrenaline ($p < .005$ ve $\beta = .12$) affect group travel activities, respectively. This model explains the overall motorcycle users' participation in group travel activities by .29 ($R^2 = .286$). Therefore, this model has a wide effect (Cohen, 1977: 285–287). Durbin-Watson statistics were calculated to test the independence of errors in the model (1,82). This figure is at an acceptable level.

Discussion

Given the growth in motorcycle tourism globally, this study considers the similarities and difference among travel motivators among Turkish, United States of America, and United Kingdom motorcyclists. It also considered the impact of group membership on those travel activities. In accordance with serious leisure theory, motorcyclists travel in their leisure time, prefer scenic rides, attend events, engaging in group travel activities. Earlier studies show that motorcycle tourists and stop at many local food and beverage tourism enterprises and visit local attractions. Therefore, this study provides important contributions to both motorcycle tourism and leisure activities literature.

This study confirms that riders in all three countries like feeling free, experiencing nature and even the sound of the motorcycle. Additionally, this research concluded that the passion for motorcycles and happiness and recreation during the motorcycle experience encouraged the motorcyclists to travel.

Motorcyclists in all three countries gave high responses to the sense of pleasure which increases riding for leisure purposes. However, the analysis also concluded that there are significant differences in the sense of pleasure for motorcycles between Turkey, USA, and UK. Additionally, traveling by motorcycle is a passion for motorcyclists of the three countries.

The current study shows that the passion for adrenaline (aligned to risk taking) plays a part in selecting the route of travel because adrenaline increases by choosing curvy and rugged roads in their route choices. These challenging rides allow riders to exhibit their roadcraft. These findings support earlier studies. Although there were significant differences in the passion for adrenaline between Turkish and USA motorcyclists, no significant differences were found between Turkish and USA motorcyclists or USA and UK motorcyclists. However, motorcyclists of all three countries gave responses that were ranked higher in this dimension.

One of the essential factors for motorcyclists to participate in travels is group motorcycle activities. In both correlation and regression analysis, it was

concluded that the feeling of pleasure affected group travel activities the most. Motorcyclists go to events with their group friends, experience riding together and have fun together. It was also concluded that Turkish motorcyclists attach more importance to group activities than USA and UK motorcyclists in part for safety reasons. Whereas this study showed that USA and UK motorcyclists gave more importance to individual motorcycle riding yet still enjoyed group activities.

From a theoretical perspective, this exploratory research contributes to the body of knowledge on special interest tourism. Recently, some research suggests that perspective has shifted from the idea that tourists are individuals that are similarly motivated to a more collective perspective of consumer tribes (Pforr, Volgger, and Dowling, 2021). This research contributes to that theoretical concept using motorcyclists as the exemplar showing that motorcyclists value travel more in a collective body. The research also contributes to knowledge on special interest tourism in the similarity of travel motivators of motorcyclists in different countries. Additionally, this research finds that the collective identity of motorcyclists crosses cultural and country borders albeit to different degrees.

Practical Application of the Research

Knowing that risk taking and a passion for adrenaline are part of the pleasure of riding a motorcycle, government and safety agencies can conduct safety and awareness campaigns on how riders and drivers can share the road. One specific application of this is to educate drivers on how to share the road with motorcyclists and how to interact with groups of riders. For example, riders need to open space for vehicles to change lanes, and car drivers should not try to break into groups of bikes riding together. Governments have a vested interest in keeping roads safe and this research indicates that the government could reach out to riding groups to discover and disseminate safe riding techniques.

Motorcycle groups are also important for tourism enterprises. Cater (2017) emphasizes the importance of tourism enterprises that only serve motorcyclists and states that motorcyclists take a break in these enterprises and fulfill their needs. Similarly, businesses need to develop motorcycle-friendly policies (Frash & Blose, 2019; Quadri-Felitti, Sykes & Chen 2019). For example, businesses may post “welcome motorcyclists” on their signs. Businesses that want to attract motorcyclists can reach out directly to motorcycle groups which can increase income. Businesses can also form alliances to share a network of motorcycle friendly businesses.

Due to the influence of their group membership, tourism agencies can also reach out to motorcycle group leaders to advertise the natural appeal of their region. This would increase income from tourism for states and counties. Generally, motorcycles do not increase pressure on the existing infrastructure, and thus, this is a cost-effective expansion of tourism.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study revealed some interesting differences among U.S., UK, and Turkish motorcyclists but questions remain as to whether these differences are cultural or if there are other aspects to the findings. For example, does the type of bike ridden make a difference (larger cruising motorcycles versus smaller or sports types of motorcycles)? Likewise, this study did not consider the driving habits of vehicle drivers among the different countries. There may also be some cultural differences such as whether Turkey is a more collectivist country while the UK and US may be more individualistic. Those differences might affect the desire to join a group although this study indicated that motorcyclists from all three countries enjoyed being a member of a group. Of note is that this survey was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic, thus, there would be questions as to whether the survey responses would be different today.

The sample size of this survey was small and was primarily a convenience sample. Future studies could include random sampling of all motorcyclists to see the difference that group membership makes. Future researchers could also randomly sample only motorcyclists that belong to riding groups. Finally, this study focuses solely on the differences in travel experiences of motorcycle users between the three countries (Turkey, UK, and the US). Comparisons should be made among more countries.

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