



The Impact of Institutional Trust and Self Efficacy on Travel Choices of Outbound Tourists

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Received date: 22 August, 2022, Manuscript No. JTRH-22-72517;

Editor assigned date: 25 August, 2022, PreQC No. JTRH-22-72517 (PQ);

Reviewed date: 08 September, 2022, QC No. JTRH-22-72517;

Revised date: 03 January, 2023, Manuscript No. JTRH-22-72517 (R);

Published date: 16 January, 2023, DOI: 10.4172/2324-8807.10001006

Abstract

With the advent of the experience economy, consumers are more willing to choose services tailored to their personalized preferences, which makes the provision of customized tourism services a promising niche market. Particularly, with the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, visitors' travel motivations and choices have become even more complicated than ever. Nevertheless, scarce attention has been paid to understanding tourists' outbound travelling decision making. Through two studies consisted of a survey (N=497) and an experiment (N=429), we find that outbound tourists' travel choices and preferences vary by intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation significantly, while self-efficacy plays a mediating role. Tourists' trust in the institutional environment is found to significantly moderate the impact of travel motivation on traveling preferences during the pandemic. This research extends the theory of dual motivation and provides timely practical insights for destination marketers that can help the international tourism industry better respond to and recover from the crisis.

Keywords: Outbound travel; Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation; Institutional environment trust; Perceived self efficacy; COVID-19

Introduction

Due to the constantly accelerating growth of the world economy, the consumption level of developing countries has been rising rapidly, especially coupled with the rapid expansion of middle income groups, generating huge demand for outbound tourism [1]. Nevertheless, the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has initiated an unprecedented era destined to embrace high degrees of uncertainties and social, economic and political challenges at the global scale [2]. Foreseeably, the pandemic will exist for a long period of time, which may result in lasting pressure for economies and disrupt social

order [3]. The tourism industry has been affected at varying degrees and will continue to be affected [4]. For example, Bali's tourism industry has experienced a sharp decline in the number of tourists from China and Europe, as Indonesia has imposed travel restrictions due to the pandemic [5]. The Chinese government has mandated a 14 days compulsory quarantine and 7 days home quarantine measures for travelers from aboard. Similar mandates exist in the US, UK, Australia etc., substantially changing tourists' choices for overseas travel. Such drastic shift in the context of global tourism undoubtedly calls for in-depth understanding toward tourists' decision making during COVID-19. Even prior to the pandemic, profound changes pertaining to tourists' preferences for travelling have occurred as the experience economy has prospered worldwide. As the traditional standardized provision of travel services can't effectively adapt to the accelerating transformation in the demand side, travel choices have become more diversified and personalized than ever [6]. Particularly, customized service marketing that stresses on personalized demand is considered as a new model of service provision and operation for tourism enterprises [7]. Found that compared with group tours, customized tours can better meet the specific travel needs of tourists in pursuing customized, personalized and differentiated tourism products and increase customer satisfaction. Suggested that customized tours that can result in a profit rate of 10%-15% will become a gold mine in future tourism industry. China, the world's second largest economy, has become an important source of global outbound tourism, contributing 154.63 million outbound tourists in 2019 that exceeds that of any other countries [8]. In China, outbound travel business has undergone a rapid transformation, shifting from providing homogenous and low quality trips to offering more diversified travel options. Currently, Chinese tourists' outbound travel choices are prevalently dominated by group tours, which account for 55.24% of all the travel modes, followed by self-help tours (26.40%) and customized tours (18.36%) [9]. Given the relatively small share of customized tours, it is necessary to identify factors that hinder Chinese tourists' demand for customized services when it comes to outbound travel. To date, research into customization is concentrated in the B2B market pertaining to the manufacturing, industrial and logistics services sectors [10]. Large scale customization has become a key competitive advantage for industrial and manufacturing companies, many of which have benefited from customized models [11]. The advantages of customized services have been proven in the food industry [12], the electronics industry [13], as well as mass engineering and mobile phone manufacturing [14]. Extant studies have primarily examined the contributions of customized model to the B2B market, including the supply chain planning in the large scale customized logistics service and the decision making of Customer Order Decoupling Point (CODP) and large scale customized services [15]. Scant attention has been paid to understanding the impact of customized service on the B2C market, while limited findings are largely concentrated on the impact of customization on consumers' satisfaction, price sensitivity and loyalty. In particular, little efforts has been devoted to understanding the customization of overseas travel in the B2C market, as well as the underlying mechanism of tourists' choices for customized tours. As points out, the existing research on overseas travel motivation, visitor psychology and behavior is largely fragmented and many studies fail to provide insights into why certain travel behaviors exist and how certain travel choices are made.

Therefore, in the context of overseas travel during the pandemic, it is of great theoretical and practical value to explore the psychological mechanism underlying tourists' choices of customized travel services, particularly the motivations. Travel motivation is a critical determinant of tourism behaviors, which is believed to play a significant role in tourism marketing by both scholars and practitioners. For instance, identifying and understanding tourists' travel motivation is considered crucial for the survival of tourism providers in a highly competitive market. A clear understanding of the unique needs, desires, motivations, aspirations and characteristics of each market segment can also facilitate tourism marketers' creation, design and development of tailored promotion messages targeting at unique segments of tourists [16]. However, few studies have in depth explored the impact of tourists' travel motivation on their preferences for customized tour, particularly under the context of outbound travel. Since motivation and decision making behavior are intertwined, the latter of which is influenced by external factors and individual characteristics, the destination marketers should consider a broad set of factors to fully capture the mechanisms of the destination related decision making. The decision making for outbound travel is a complicated decision that also involves many factors other than motivations. A recent study suggests that consumption is perceived as a debate on consumers' responsibilities and meanings.

Materials and Methods

This has become even more salient when it comes to COVID-19, as studies show that the pandemic has amplified travelers' tendency to seek safety in travel decision making and individual trust in destination authority and its COVID-19 policies was positively associated with one's intention of outbound travel. For instance, certain destination's strict social distancing rules may help create a safe environment that tourists perceive trustworthy to visit. We speculate that the trust that tourists place in destination's institutional environment may affect their travel motivations during COVID-19. Overall, built upon the "motivation drive attitude norm ability" framework of TBP theory, this empirical research consisted of two studies will systematically examine tourists' decision making for outbound travel during COVID-19, by revealing the impact of travel motivation and institutional environmental trust on their preferences for customized tours versus group tours. Our findings will help illustrate how international tourism practitioners should develop tailored marketing strategies to motivate and attract heterogeneous tourists after the pandemic and demonstrate why it is critical that destination authorities must effectively communicate COVID-19 policies to ensure potential tourists' trust in the institutional environment.

Theoretical background and hypotheses

Travel motivation theory: Motivation, consisted of needs, emotions and desires, is an important factor in the decision making process that affects the direction and intensity of the behavior. Pizam, Neumann and described travel motivation as a need to encourage people to travel prior to the visits. Crompton and argued travel motivation is a dynamic process that internal psychological factors create tension or imbalance within an individual. Tourists choose a destination to best meet their inherent needs. The motivations that incentivize tourists to make travel decisions (e.g., whether they will travel or not and where they will travel) are multifaceted. Prior studies identified an array of core travel motivation, for instance, novelty, rest

and relaxation, social/family relationships, self-satisfaction, emotion, seeking reality, social interaction and new experience, anxiety and escapement from everyday life. Generally, motivations can be divided into internally or externally oriented. Accordingly, proposed a classification of internal versus external travel motive in terms of motivations attributed to travel decisions. Alternately, identified two types of motivations in the decision making process for tourists to escape (e.g., from an ordinary family or work environment) and to seek (e.g., a pleasant new experience). On balance, the dichotomized categorization of travel motivation as internal vs. external has been widely accepted and applied by the majority of tourism researchers [17]. Travel motivations may vary widely across heterogeneous segments of outbound tourists, calling for research to explore fundamental drivers that influence their travel motivations suggested that distinguishing the motivations of different tourist groups may enhance our understanding of the motivational process behind the destination choices. Identifying motivational differences across tourists is a prerequisite for effective and successful destination marketing, including tourist segmentation, product development, quality assessment and promotion. A stream of research is devoted to understand the impact of travel motivations. For instance, suggested that the existence of different motivational patterns for a particular destination affects the expectations of visitors and thus their overall satisfaction. Found that travel motivation can affect tourists' willingness to revisit. In sum, motivations dominate the decision making and choices of travel, driving tourists to travel and then stimulate, direct and integrate their subsequent behaviors. It is critical to uncover how different motivations may influence tourists' destination choices, in order to accurately predict their future travel patterns.

Motivations and outbound travel choices

Choosing between group tour and customized tour are an important component of tourists' outbound travel decisions. Group tours refer to an all-inclusive form of travel service where the travel agency plans, organizes and arranges tourism activities, covering all related services. In terms of group tours, the destination, itinerary, transportation, accommodation, food, activities and services are generally fixed, with a lump sum fee charged for each tourist. Due to the fixed itinerary, the duration of the visit in each attraction is limited, which may not be sufficient enough to meet the expectations of individuals with different needs and interests who participate in the group package tours. As opposed to group tours, customized tours allow tourists to personalize their itineraries according to their preferences and needs, providing visitors the most personalized service. More specifically, customized tours differ from group tours in three ways the individualized vs. standardized production of tourism products, demand vs. supply oriented and high vs. low control of tourists and high vs. low tourists' involvement. As a result, customized tours can better integrate tourists' preferences with the beneficial properties of tourism products, to maximize tourists' benefits. The flow experience theory provides a supplemental perspective to understand the customized travel motives, which posits that motivations of gaining inner pleasure and self enhancement play a dominating role in the new socio economic environment. Tourists choose customized travel mode for overseas trips mainly to satisfy the following motivations a sense of tacit understanding toward interaction between humans and the natural environment; a heartfelt pleasure; an improvement of one's own learning ability, exploratory behaviors and subjective experience. Hence, the flow theory implies that businesses should endeavor to

create a strong enjoyable experience to enhance customer loyalty. Motivations that underlie tourists' choices between group tour and customized tour are likely to vary significantly. Extrinsic motivations are found positively correlated with tourists' performance goals, while intrinsically motivated tourists primarily emphasize the realization of intrinsic needs or personal values and care less for cost and social recognition. Along this line, found that the choice of group tours is usually driven by external motivations related to material and financial incentives, such as low cost, convenience, gift rewards, shopping discounts, etc., while the choice of customized tours is usually driven by internal motivations associated with psychological factors, such as self-realization, social communication, seeking pleasure, escape, etc. Furthermore, prior literature argued that extrinsic motivations of outbound travel include materials and recognition, while intrinsic motivations are primarily consisted of affect. Therefore, while both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can significantly influence one's preference regardless of the customized versus the group tour, we propose the following hypotheses that may reveal the key distinction between the roles of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in outbound tourism choices:

H₁: Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are associated with tourists' preferences for group vs. customized tour.

H_{1a}: For tourists dominated by intrinsic motivations, the customized tour is significantly preferred over the group tour.

H_{1b}: For tourists dominated by extrinsic motivations, the group tour is significantly preferred over the customized tour.

The mediating role of self efficacy

Self efficacy, defined as an assessment of the individual's perceptions of his/her own abilities, is a core concept in social cognition theory. Generally, the theory of planned behavior [18], value belief norm theory and social cognitive theory all consider self efficacy a pivotal construct that links behavioral motivations and engagement. More specifically, self efficacy is found to play an important role in the individuals' decision making processes, thinking styles and problem solving approaches argued that individuals with a high level of perceived self efficacy regard themselves as strong enough "to cope" in various scenarios. Perceived self efficacy is suggested to play a mediating role in the impact of motivations on behavioral intentions. For instance, found that the perception of environmental self efficacy mediated the impact of hedonic motivations on individuals' intentions to travel in order to participate ecological restoration projects.

On one hand, abundant evidence suggested that motivations are associated with perceived self efficacy. For instance, students intrinsically motivated to attend class had a higher level of self efficacy than those extrinsically motivated and employees' motivations were associated with their self efficacy and goal setting behaviors. On the other hand, self efficacy is found a critical individual level driver of a wide array of behaviors. For instance, suggested that self efficacy can determine the effectiveness of motivating leader and one's choices of future leadership experiences and challenges. Found that self efficacy is an important driving force of behavioral change suggested that a high level of self efficacy was indispensable for participation in volunteer tourism because a sense of being capable of overcoming obstacles was necessary to activate the change to the status quo.

People with a weaker sense of self efficacy for completing a task tend to either avoid the task as a whole or choose the task with a lower level of difficulty. In contrast, people with higher self efficacy are inclined to choose a more challenging task. Group tours usually involve a lower level of difficulty, which are mostly guided tours with more detailed itinerary, specific schedule and the professional guide, while the choices of customized tours, primarily motivated by intrinsically psychological factors including knowledge seeking, sensational experience and self actualization, are consisted of more difficult tasks. Therefore, tourists with a higher level of self efficacy are more likely to choose customized tours than group tours. We propose the following mediating effect:

H₂: Self efficacy mediates the relationship between outbound travel motivations and the choice of travel mode.

H_{2a}: Self efficacy mediates the relationship between intrinsic motivation and the choice of travel mode.

H_{2b}: Self efficacy mediates the relationship between extrinsic motivations and the choice of travel mode.

The moderating role of institutional environment trust

Trust in institutional environment, defined as perceived government's ability to provide effective policies that can benefit the general population through implementing tourism friendly policies and delivering safety management for tourists, has long received attention in the international tourism research domain. Institutional environment trust has been widely considered a critical influencer of international travel decisions. For example, trust in politics is an important part of institutional environmental trust, which helps to increase residents' confidence in tourism destinations and promotes cooperation between residents and the government in the tourism practices. By analyzing the institutional environment of popular and unpopular destinations in northeastern Thailand, found that institutional environment trust significantly affects tourists' willingness to travel. A lack of institutional environmental trust will undermine regional identity and tourists' interest to visit. Some travel risks reported in Africa such as high crime rates, unhealthy food and unfriendly hotels have seriously damaged the destination image of entire Africa. After the Fukushima nuclear disaster, the issue of radiation exposure and contaminated food, water and air has caused significant damages on Japan's image as a tourist destination. Presumably, the lack of institutional environmental trust resulted from the pandemic is likely to decrease visitors' willingness to travel outbound. However, little attention has paid to understanding the changes in visitors' travel motivations and choices who decide to travel abroad during the pandemic. When making decisions for outbound travel during the COVID-19, visitors may unprecedentedly value the indicator of trust in the institutional environment of the destinations. The policies, measures and capacities of the destination government that target the pandemic can affect both visitors' motivations and their choices for outbound travel. In the prior literature, institutional environment trust was mainly regarded as a precursor of behavioral outcomes and nearly none has examined the moderating role of institutional environmental trust in the impact of motivations on tourism decision making. Some studies in the non tourism context have examined the role of trust as a moderator. For example, proved that during the international trades, institutional environmental trust moderates the relationship between cooperative motivations and cooperative behaviors of business partners. In the field of tourism, represented a cognition emotion model about tourism

satisfaction, which support that the formation of travel attitudes is moderated by specific situations such as perception of the destination environment. Built upon the above findings, the present study argues that environmental factors such as institutional environment trust in, for instance, destination governments' regulations toward COVID-19 could be an important boundary condition for the relationship between tourists' motivations and their outbound travel choices. We speculate that higher (vs. lower) institutional environment trust would strengthen (vs. inhibit) visitors' intention of customized travel driven by intrinsic motivation. By contrast, since extrinsic motivation such as material incentives (e.g., low price) is the core driver of choosing group tours, higher (vs. lower) institutional environment trust would strengthen (vs. inhibit) the impact of visitors' extrinsic motivation on their intention of group tours. We propose the following hypotheses:

H_{3a}: Institutional environment trust moderates the impact of the intrinsic motivation on outbound tourists' intention of group tour.

H_{3b}: Institutional environment trust moderates the impact of the intrinsic motivation on outbound tourists' intention of customized tour.

H_{3c}: Institutional environment trust moderates the impact of the extrinsic motivation on outbound tourists' intention of group tour.

H_{3d}: Institutional environment trust moderates the impact of the extrinsic motivation on outbound tourists' intention of customized tour.

Overall, the theoretical framework of our study is illustrated in Figure 1.

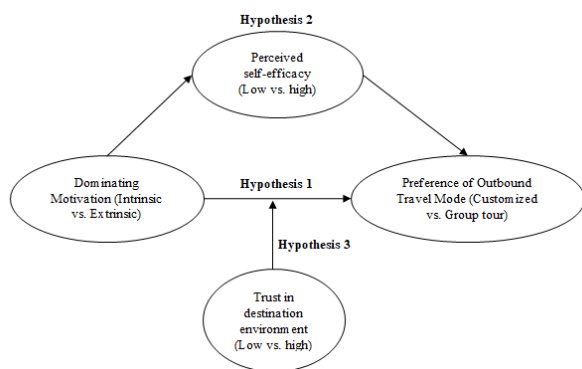


Figure 1: Theoretical framework of tourists' choices of outbound travel intention.

Results

This research is consisted of two studies. In study 1, a collection of Chinese tourists who traveled to Thailand during November or December in 2018 were sampled and invited to fill out a survey questionnaire. The purpose of Study 1 is to gauge the differences in preferences of tourists with different travel motives for the travel mode and examine the mediating effect of self efficacy. In study 2, to further verify the robustness of the main effect and to explore the moderating effect of tourists' institutional environment trust in destination in the impact of motivations on outbound travel choices, we designed an experiment to manipulate the level of institutional environment trust that potential tourists place in the destination who intended to visit Thailand from March to August 2020.

Study 1: The impact of motivation on outbound travel choices

Study design: Survey instrument all the scales were adapted from the literature and then translated into Chinese. Three experts in the tourism field have repeatedly modified and fine tuned the expressions of the scales. All items were measured with a 7 point Likert scale (e.g., 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree). The scale of intrinsic motivation was adapted from Lee, consisted of 12 items that measure escape, event attraction and self improvement (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.953$, AVE=0.630, CR=0.953, Factor loading of items ranges from 0.740 to 0.834). The scale of extrinsic motivation was adapted from Voss, consisted of 7 items that measure low cost, external temptation and accessibility (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.936$, AVE=0.675, CR=0.936, Factor loading of items ranges from 0.796 to 0.860). The intention of outbound travel choice was adapted from consisted of 4 items to measure preference for group tour (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.863$, AVE=0.622, CR=0.868, Factor loading of items ranges from 0.702 to 0.826) and another 4 items to measure preference for customized tour (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.850$, AVE=0.589, CR=0.851, Factor loading of items ranges from 0.742 to 0.815).

Self efficacy was adapted from the general self efficacy scale proposed by Gilad Chen, consisted of 8 items (e.g., I think I can accomplish the goals I set even if things are tricky, I can perform well). This scale is appropriate for measuring the perception of self efficacy of both Chinese and Western tourists (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.941$, AVE=0.666, CR=0.941, factor loading of items ranges from 0.781 to 0.840). The study controlled demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education level, monthly income and outbound travel experience, which have been shown to significantly affect tourists' outbound travel choice. Pre-test. Prior to the pre test, 6 researchers were asked to proofread the questionnaires, based on whose suggestions, necessary modifications on items were made. A pre-test was then conducted on 59 MBA students (47.46% males, Mage=26.84) in order to validate the measurement items. The reliability and validity of the measurements were tested on the basis of the Cronbach's α , discriminant validity and convergent validity. The results showed that all the measurements had satisfactory validity and reliability. Sample and data collection. Thailand is among the top ten countries popularized by Chinese tourists as outbound travel destinations. As a result, we partnered with three major travel agencies in China to sample respondents from their customers who intended to visit Phuket, Thailand. The survey questionnaires were administered between November and December in 2018. 18 assistants were hired to administer the questionnaires in 9 branches of the travel agencies mentioned above. 550 subjects agreed to participate in the survey anonymously. A total of 497 (48.49% male, Mage=28.37) valid questionnaires were collected, with the response rate being 90.36%. SPSS 26.0 was used to test the reliability of sample data. The assessment suggested that intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, outbound travel choices all had Cronbach's α coefficients greater than .800, showing satisfactory validity. The demographic information of the sample is illustrated in the Table 1, in line with the observation of outbound tourists in the real world. After the survey, exquisite souvenirs worth 20 RMB were distributed to each subject as compensation.

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	241	48.49%
	Female	256	51.51%
Age	20 or Blow	74	14.89%
	21~30	225	45.27%
	31~50	129	25.96%
	51 and above	69	13.88%
Education	High school or below	60	12.07%
	Diploma	107	21.53%
	Bachelor	248	49.90%
	Postgraduate or above	82	16.50%
Monthly income	Below 5000RMB	95	19.11%
	5000-8000 RMB	214	43.06%
	8001-10000 RMB	87	17.51%
	Above 10000 RMB	101	20.32%
Outbound travel experience	None	266	53.52%
	Once or twice	122	24.55%
	More than twice	109	21.93%

Table 1: The demographic profile of survey sample in study 1 (N=497).

Results of study 1

Common method biases test. Harman's one factor test method was used to test the biases of the common method. First, the measurement items of all variables were put together for exploratory factor analysis. The KMO value was 955, the approximate χ^2 of Bartlett's spherical test was 13322.96 ($p < .001$). The results of principal component factor analysis without rotation showed 5 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, with the total cumulative explained variation of 69.834%. The total explained variation of the first factor was 39.55%, indicating that no single dominant factor that could explain most of the variation. Second, the results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the fitting of the 5-factor model set in this study is ideal ($\chi^2/df=2.226$; CFI=0.948; TLI=0.944; IFI=0.949; RMSEA=0.050). Thus we confirmed that study 1 was not subject to common method biases.

Descriptive statistics and correlations. Table 2 summarizes the results of descriptive statistical analyses. Correlation analysis showed a positive correlation between variables such as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, self efficacy, outbound travel choices, with correlation coefficients were all significant at the level of 0.05, indicating that tourists' outbound travel choices were positively correlated with intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and self efficacy. Intrinsic motivation was found positively related to customers' intention to choose both group tour ($\beta=0.310$, $p < .001$) and customized tour ($\beta=0.471$, $p < .001$). Similarly, extrinsic motivation was positively related to customers' intention to choose both group tours ($\beta=0.492$, $p < .001$) and customized tours ($\beta=0.301$, $p < .001$). As expected, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were positively associated with the intention of outbound travel choices, which preliminarily supported H_1 .

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Intrinsic motivation	0.793									
Extrinsic motivation	.256**	0.822		-						
Self-efficacy	.579**	.479**	0.816							
Group tour	.348**	.440**	.356**	0.789						

Customized tour	.531**	.383**	.503**	.135**	0.767					
Gender	-0.071	-0.078	-.098*	-0.04	-.091*	-				
Age	0.026	0.031	0.011	0.08	.107*	-0.02	-			
Education	0.063	-0.021	.095*	-0.027	0.082	0.008	.259**	-		
Monthly income	0.069	0.014	0.084	-0.062	.125**	-0.071	.264**	.168**	-	
Travel experience	0.059	0.077	.088*	0.069	.104*	-0.001	-0.006	-0.005	0.047	-
Mean	4.523	4.591	4.76	4.792	4.959	1.515	2.388	2.708	2.39	1.684
Standard Deviation	0.939	0.842	0.777	1.125	0.98	0.5	0.903	0.883	1.014	0.81

Note: *p<.05; **p<.01; The square root of AVE is marked in bold on the diagonal.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlations of study 1 (N=497).

The main of travel motivations on outbound travel choices. Statistical analysis was performed to examine whether intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation was more likely to lead to greater intention to choose customized vs. group tour in terms of outbound travel choices. Based on the mean differences between ratings of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, the sample was divided into two groups those who were predominantly intrinsically motivated (N=255) and those who was predominantly extrinsically motivated (N=242). Within the former group, customers’ intrinsic motivation (M=4.999) was significantly greater than their extrinsic motivations (M=4.233, t (254)=20.879, p<.001). Within the latter group, customers’ extrinsic motivations (M=4.969) were significantly greater than their intrinsic motivations (M=4.021, t (242)=-19.614, p<.001). Moreover, customers driven predominantly by extrinsic motivations were more likely to prefer the group tour over the customized tour (M group tour=4.939, Customized tour=4.723, t (242)=2.669, p<.01), while those driven predominantly by intrinsic motivations were more likely to prefer the customized tour over the group tour (M group tour=4.653, Customized tour=5.183, t (254)=-6.002, p<.001). Therefore, both hypothesis 1a and 1b were supported. This suggested that although subjects were driven by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations when making decisions for outbound travel choices, intrinsic motivation was the dominating motivator in the decision making of those who preferred customized

tour, while extrinsic motivation dominated for those who preferred group tour. The mediation effect of self efficacy. Following the method taken by Zhao, Lynch Jr and Chen, we utilized the Bootstrapping analysis for mediation developed by Preacher, Rucker and Hayes. PROCESS macro in SPSS for Model 4 was used to test the mediating role of self efficacy. In this model, travel motivation was the independent variable, self-efficacy was the mediator and preference for outbound travel mode was the dependent variable Table 3. As expected, with regard to the impact of dominance of intrinsic over extrinsic motivation on customers’ preference for group tours, the bootstrapping analysis showed that the indirect effect of self-efficacy as a mediator was significant (Intrinsic motivation: Mediated effect=0.165, SE=0.044, 95% CI=(.082, .254); Extrinsic motivation: Mediated effect=0.129, SE=0.037, 95% CI=(.056, .201)). The results support H_{2a} and H_{2b}. With regard to the impact of dominance of intrinsic over extrinsic motivation on tourists’ preference for customized tours, the Bootstrapping analysis showed that the indirect effect of self efficacy as a mediator was significant (Intrinsic motivation: Mediated effect=0.168, SE=0.036, 95% CI=(.103, .246); Extrinsic motivation: Mediated effect=0.220, SE=0.040, 95% CI=(.149, .340)). H_{2c} and H_{2d} were thus supported. In sum, the impact of travel motivations on tourists’ preference for outbound travel choices was mediated by their perceived self efficacy.

Self-efficacy		Effect	SE	95% confidence interval	
				LLCI	ULCI
Intrinsic motivation→ Group tour	Total effect	.421***	0.05	0.322	0.52

	Direct effect	.256***	0.06	0.138	0.374
	Indirect effect	0.165	0.044	0.082	0.254
Extrinsic motivation→ Group tour	Total effect	.578***	0.054	0.472	0.684
	Direct effect	.449***	0.06	0.33	0.568
	Indirect effect	0.129	0.037	0.056	0.201
Intrinsic motivation→ Customized tour	Total effect	.538***	0.04	0.46	0.616
	Direct effect	.371***	0.047	0.279	0.462
	Indirect effect	0.168	0.036	0.103	0.246
Extrinsic motivation→ Customized tour	Total effect	.432***	0.048	0.338	0.527
	Direct effect	.212***	0.051	0.113	0.311
	Indirect effect	0.22	0.04	0.149	0.304

Table 3: The Bootstrapping results of self-efficacy’s mediation effects=497.

This study provides a basis for the impact of travel motivations on the choice of outbound travel mode. The results support H1a that while intrinsic motivation has a significant impact on tourists’ willingness to choose both the customized and group tour, but tourists dominated by intrinsic motivation are significantly more likely to prefer a customized tour over a group tour. H1b is also supported that while extrinsic motivation is associated with tourists’ willingness to choose both the customized and group tour, those dominated by extrinsic motivation are significantly more likely to prefer a group tour over a customized tour. In addition to the main effect, the results reveal that self efficacy has a significant mediating effect between motivation and travel choices. H_{2a} and H_{2b} are both supported.

Study2:Themoderatingroleofinstitutionalenvironment trust

Study design: The purpose of this study was to examine the moderating effect of institutional environment trust in the impact of travel motivations on the outbound travel choices. Due to the impact of widespread pandemic, we were unable to sample a sizable group of tourists who actually participated in outbound travel. Instead, we carried out a scenario based laboratory experiment in study 2 using a convenience sample consisted of university students and company workers in China. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the two conditions, in which they were asked to read a different description about the institutional environment in a hypothetical tourist destination in Thailand. Such procedure was intended to manipulate participants’ trust in institutional environment. Afterwards, participants were asked to answer several questions regarding their perceived institutional environmental trust of the described destination and their willingness to choose travel mode. It’s worth noting that the data of study 2 were collected during the coronavirus outbreak, in contrast to study 1 that was conducted prior to the outbreak. However, we presume that our findings can generally hold across studies, because travel motivation is an endogenous variable, which in the long run shouldn’t be markedly affected by the short-term fluctuations of the external environment. Taking the achievement motivation as an example, McClelland pointed out that although the achievement motivation varies by individuals, it remains relatively

stable within an individual. More importantly, the existence of pandemic is not supposed to profoundly change the fact that tourists’ outbound traveling decision-making is a function of their motivations.

Measurement instrument The scale of intrinsic motivation (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.951$, AVE=0.618, CR=0.951, Factor loading of items ranges from 0.726 to 0.839) and extrinsic motivation (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.928$, AVE=0.651, CR=0.929, factor loading of items ranges from 0.786 to 0.838), as well as preference for group tour (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.855$, AVE=0.605, CR=0.859, factor loading of items ranges from 0.717 to 0.846) and customized tour (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.851$, AVE=0.590, CR=0.852, factor loading of items ranges from 0.743 to 0.815) were the same as in study 1. The institutional environment trust includes three dimensions: political trust (voice and responsibility and political stability/no violence), economic trust (government effectiveness and regulatory quality) and institutional trust (infection prevention and control of COVID-19). Concerning the measurement of institutional environment trust, no consensus has yet reached on whether objective institutional environment trust (AEU) or perceived institutional environment trust (PEU) should be used. Miles suggested that the perception of trust in the institutional environment has greater validity in measuring institutional environment trust than using archival data such as economic freedom index and marketization process index. Drawing on the research of we used six items to measure the perceived trust in the institutional environment (e.g., I think the tourist destination is politically stable, I think the tourist destination has a sound accountability system, I think the tourist destination has sound infection prevention and control of COVID-19). Li and Fairley suggested that this scale is appropriate for measuring the perception of institutional environment trust of both Chinese and Western tourists (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.919$, AVE=0.655, CR=0.919; Factor loading of items ranges from 0.773 to 0.861).

Pilot test prior to the pre test, 6 researchers were asked to proofread the questionnaires, based on whose suggestions, necessary modifications on items were made. In order to ensure the validity of the stimuli materials and validate the measurement items, we conducted a pilot test on 57 MBA students (43.86% male, Mage=28.54) in a university in Southwestern China. The reliability and validity of the measurements were tested on the basis of the Cronbach’s α , discriminant validity and convergent validity. The results showed that all the measurements had satisfactory validity and

reliability. Therefore, the above stimuli can successfully manipulate the subjects' institutional environment trust, based on which we carried out the following main experiment. Participants and procedures. The survey questionnaires were administered and collected between March and August in 2020. 15 assistants were hired to administer the questionnaires in 7 branches of the travel agencies mentioned above. 500 potential tourists who visited the travel agencies mentioned previously were invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire was ended with demographic and behavioral questions such as gender,

age, education level, monthly income and previous outbound travel experience (Table 4). Each subject received a compensation of 20 RMB. A total of 429 valid questionnaires (49.42% male, Mage=29.18) were collected, with the recovery rate being 85.80%. SPSS 26.0 was used to test the reliability of sample data. The assessment suggested that intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, institutional environment trust, outbound travel choices all had Cronbach's α coefficients greater than .80, revealing satisfactory validity.

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	212	49.42%
	Female	217	50.58%
Age	20 or Below	64	14.92%
	21~30	199	46.39%
	31~50	109	25.41%
	51 and above	57	13.28%
Education	High school or below	49	11.42%
	Diploma	94	21.91%
	Bachelor	217	50.58%
	Postgraduate or above	69	16.09%
Monthly income	Below 5000RMB	83	19.35%
	5000-8000 RMB	185	43.12%
	8001-10000 RMB	69	16.08%
	Above 10000 RMB	92	21.45%
Outbound travel experience	None	228	53.15%
	Once or twice	109	25.41%
	More than twice	92	21.44%

Table 4: The demographic profile of survey sample in study 2 (N=429).

Common method biases test Harman's one factor test method was used to test the biases of the common method. First, the measurement items of all variables were put together for exploratory factor analysis. The KMO value was .943, the approximate χ^2 of Bartlett's spherical test was 10,004.251 ($p < .001$). The results of principal component factor analysis without rotation showed 5 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, with the total cumulative explained variation of 68.818%. The total explained variation of the first factor was 35.043%, which was less than 40%, indicating that there was no single dominant factor that could explain most of the variation. Second, the results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the fitting of the 5-factor

model set in this study is ideal ($\chi^2/df=1.947$; CFI=0.953; TLI=0.949; IFI=0.953; RMSEA=0.047). This confirmed that study 2 was not subject to any serious common method biases.

Results of study 2

Descriptive statistics and correlations. Again, there were positive correlations between variables such as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, institutional environment trust, outbound travel choices and all the correlation coefficients were significant at the level of 05 (Table 5).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Intrinsic motivation	0.786									
Extrinsic motivation	.275**	0.807								

Group tour	.368**	.433**	0.778							
Customized tour	.538**	.381**	.166**	0.768						
Institutional trust	.299**	.331**	.369**	.379**	0.809					
Gender	-0.085	-.118*	-0.082	-.098*	0.011	-				
Age	0.015	0.04	0.085	0.082	0.074	0.019	-			
Education	.102*	-0.02	-0.093	.152**	0.075	-0.004	.242**	-		
Monthly income	0.058	0.007	.100*	-.112*	-0.001	-0.041	.264**	.200**	-	
Travel experience	0.052	0.057	0.08	.130**	0.057	0.005	0.001	0.013	0.028	-
Mean	4.568	4.602	4.859	4.953	4.912	1.506	2.371	2.713	2.396	1.683
Standard Deviation	0.918	0.836	1.064	0.967	0.93	0.501	0.894	0.87	1.028	0.804

Note: *p<.05; **p<.01, Bold data on the diagonal denote the square root of AVE.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics and correlations (N=429).

The moderating effect of institutional environmental trust. To test H₃, hierarchical regression analysis was performed. Institutional environmental trust entered the model as moderator, while gender, age, education, income and outbound travel experience were control variables. Intrinsic motivations, extrinsic motivations and institutional environment trust, as well as the interaction terms all entered as independent variables sequentially. The results of model 3 (Table 6) showed that intrinsic motivation was positively associated with the willingness to choose group tour ($\beta=0.302$, $p<.001$) and extrinsic motivation was positively associated with the willingness to choose group tour ($\beta=0.431$, $p<.001$), which again confirmed that extrinsic motivation had a more significant impact on the willingness to choose

a group tour than their extrinsic motivation. Therefore, both H_{1a} and H_{1b} were once again supported with the data collected after the outbreak, which replicated the main findings of study 1. The interaction terms of institutional environment trust by intrinsic motivation ($\beta=-0.256$, $p<.001$) and by extrinsic motivation ($\beta=0.184$, $p<.001$) were both significant. The change in R square was significant ($\Delta R^2=0.092$, $F=33.162$, $p<.001$), indicating that the institutional environment trusts positively moderated the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the willingness to choose a group tour and negatively moderated the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the willingness to choose a group tour.

Predictive variables	Group tour			Customized tour		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Control variables						
Gender	-0.192	-0.08	-0.061	-.186*	-0.077	-0.113
	-0.101	-0.052	-0.081	-0.091	-0.074	-0.069
Age	.171**	.143**	.115*	0.037	0.021	0.048
	-0.06	-0.051	-0.047	-0.054	-0.043	-0.04

Education	-0.128*	.162**	-.113*	.142*	.092*	0.052
	(-0.06)	(-0.051)	(-0.048)	(-0.055)	(-0.044)	(-0.041)
Monthly income	-.127*	-.128**	-.088*	-0.066	0.058	0.035
	(-0.052)	(-0.027)	(-0.0441)	(-0.047)	(-0.037)	(-0.035)
Travel experience	0.113	0.059	0.079	.153**	.102*	0.076
	(-0.063)	(-0.032)	(-0.05)	(-0.057)	(-0.046)	(-0.042)
Direct effects						
Intrinsic motivation		.281***	.302***		.431***	.426***
		(-0.05)	(-0.047)		(-0.043)	(-0.04)
Extrinsic motivation		.364***	.431***		.232***	.160***
		(-0.056)	(-0.053)		(-0.048)	(-0.045)
Institutional trust		.229***	.185***		.185***	.226***
		(-0.05)	(-0.047)		(-0.043)	(-0.04)
Moderating effects						
Intrinsic motivation×			-.256***			.175***
Institutional trust			(-0.034)			(-0.029)
Extrinsic motivation×			.184***			-.225***
Institutional trust			(-0.037)			(-0.031)
R ²	0.048	0.328	0.42	0.056	0.4	0.486
Adjust R ²	0.037	0.316	0.407	0.045	0.389	0.473
F value	4.304**	25.673***	30.316***	5.036***	35.040***	39.448***
Note: One-tail test for hypothesized effects; standard errors are in parentheses. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001.						

Table 6: The regression results of institutional trust’s moderating effects (N=429).

The results of model 6 in Table 6 showed that intrinsic motivation was positively associated with the willingness to choose customized tour ($\beta=0.426$, $p<.001$), extrinsic motivation was positively associated with the willingness to choose customized tour ($\beta=0.160$, $p<.001$), which again confirmed that intrinsic motivation had a more significant impact on the willingness to choose a customized tour than their intrinsic motivation. The interaction terms of institutional environment

trust by intrinsic motivation ($\beta=0.175$, $p<.001$) and by extrinsic motivation ($\beta=-0.225$, $p<.001$) were both significant. The change in R square was significant ($\Delta R^2=0.085$, $F=34.631$, $p<.001$), indicating that the institutional environment trusts positively moderated the relationship between intrinsic motivation and the willingness to choose a customized tour and negatively moderated the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the willingness to choose a customized tour (Table 7).

Institutional environment trust	Effect	SE	95% confidence interval	
			LLCI	ULCI

Intrinsic motivation →Group tour	3.650(M-1SD)	.593***	0.066	0.463	0.723
	4.568(M)	.366***	0.051	0.267	0.466
	5.486(M+1SD)	.139*	0.059	0.023	0.255
Extrinsic motivation →Group tour	3.765(M-1SD)	.329***	0.067	0.198	0.46
	4.602(M)	.474***	0.057	0.362	0.586
	5.439(M+1SD)	.619***	0.079	0.465	0.774
Intrinsic motivation →Customized tour	3.765(M-1SD)	.323***	0.056	0.213	0.433
	4.602(M)	.467***	0.043	0.383	0.551
	5.439(M+1SD)	.610***	0.05	0.512	0.708
Extrinsic motivation →Customized tour	3.650(M-1SD)	.463***	0.061	0.343	0.584
	4.568(M)	.297***	0.052	0.194	0.4
	5.486(M+1SD)	0.131	0.072	-0.011	0.273

Table 7: The conditional effects of travel motivations at values of the moderator (N=429).

The simple slopes analysis in Table 7 further suggested that, at low level of institutional environment trust (M-1SD), intrinsic motivation had a significantly positive impact on the preference for group tour ($\beta=0.593$, $t=8.240$, $p<.001$); at high level of institutional environment trust (M+1SD), intrinsic motivation had a less positive effect on the preference for group tour ($\beta=0.139$, $t=2.358$, $p=.019$). With an increase in institutional environment trust, intrinsic motivation had an attenuating effect in predicting preference for group tour. By contrast, at low level of institutional environment trust (M-1SD), intrinsic motivation was positively associated with preference for customized tour ($\beta=0.323$, $t=5.781$, $p<.001$); at high level of high institutional environment trust (M+1SD), intrinsic motivation had a stronger positive effect on preference for customized tour ($\beta=0.610$, $t=12.265$, $p<.001$). At low level of institutional environment trust (M-1SD), extrinsic motivation had a significantly positive impact on group tour ($\beta=0.329$, $t=4.937$, $p<.001$) and at level of high institutional environment trust (M+1SD), extrinsic motivation had a stronger positive effect on group tour ($\beta=0.619$, $t=7.877$, $p<.001$). With an increase in institutional environment trust, extrinsic motivation had an ascending positive predicting effect on group tour. In low institutional environment trust (M-1SD), extrinsic motivation was positively associated with preference for customized tour ($\beta=0.463$, $t=7.569$, $p<.001$); in high institutional environment trust (M+1SD), extrinsic motivation was no longer significantly associated with preference for customized tour ($\beta=0.131$, $t=1.811$, $p=.071$), as shown in Figure 2. Thus, H_{3a-d} was supported.

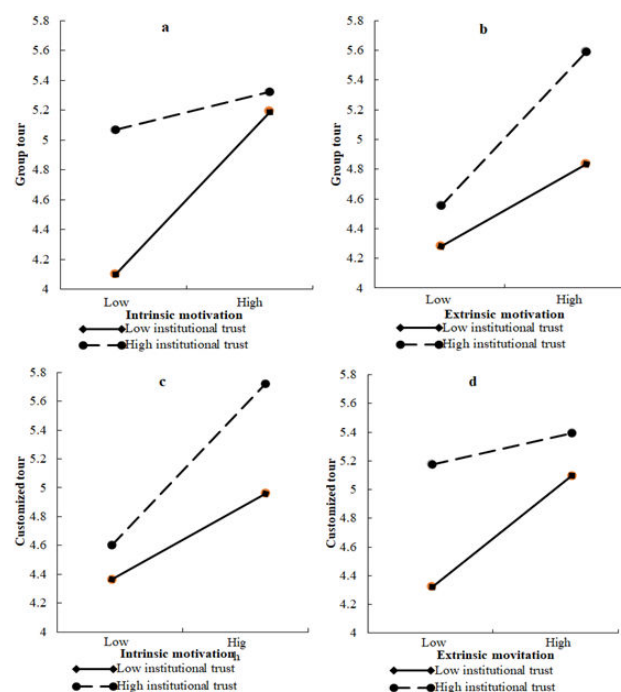


Figure 2: Moderating effects of institutional environment trust.

Discussion

This study provided evidence for the impact of travel motivations on tourists' choice of outbound travel mode after the outbreak, with findings supporting H_{1a} and H_{1b} again. Although both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have a significant impact on tourists' willingness to choose both the customized and group tour, tourists dominated by intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation are significantly more likely to prefer the customized vs. group tour over the group vs. customized tour. In addition, study 2 verified the moderating effect of institutional environment trust. The results of model 3 supported H_{3a} that institutional environment trust plays a negative moderating role in the impact of the intrinsic motivation on tourists' outbound group tour;

relatively, the results of model 6 supported H_{3b} that institutional environment trust plays a positive moderating role in the impact of the extrinsic motivation on tourists' outbound group tour. The results of model 3 supported H_{3c} that institutional environment trust plays a negative moderating role in the impact of the intrinsic motivation on tourists' outbound customized tour; relatively, the results of model 6 supported H_{3d}, institutional environment trust plays a positive moderating role in the impact of the extrinsic motivation on tourists' outbound customized tour.

Conclusion

Understanding tourists' motivations and decision-making of outbound travel choices is both crucial and challenging. Throughout two studies, we examined tourists' preferences for group *vs.* customized tour for outbound travelling when either intrinsic or extrinsic motivations play a dominating role. We found that tourists dominated by intrinsic motivations are more likely to choose customized tour, while those dominated by extrinsic motivations are more likely to choose group tour. Specifically, study 1 demonstrated that self efficacy mediates the relationship between tourists' outbound travel motivations and their choices of travel mode *via* a survey. Through a randomized experiment conducted during COVID-19, study 2 suggested that the trust that tourists place in the tourism destination's institutional environment moderates the impact of motivations on their preferences for the outbound travel modes.

This study has made several important theoretical contributions. First, on the basis of the paradigm so called "motivation driven normative influence attitude and behavior", we propose a new theoretical framework involving crucial tourism specific constructs such as travel motivations and institutional environment trust, in order to comprehensively take into account the complexity of tourists' decision making under outbound travel situations. By doing so, this study can inform tourism marketers of a new perspective for formulating effective market segmentation strategies and improving the performance of tourism marketing.

Second, by synthesizing the flow theory and the social exchange theory, this study comprehensively links travel motivations (intrinsic *vs.* extrinsic) with tourists' preferences for travel mode (group tour *vs.* customized tour), in comparison to other studies that solely focus on tourists' motivations of the group tour choice. While the majority of literature ignores the distinctive role of intrinsic *vs.* extrinsic motivation that play in shaping tourist' travel preferences, this study have filled the gap by illustrating the nuanced psychological mechanism that underlies the decision making of outbound travel. Third, drawing upon social cognition theory, we explored the mediating role of self efficacy in the impact of intrinsic *vs.* extrinsic motivation on travel preferences. Whereas prior studies mostly argue that self efficacy is an antecedent of behavioral motivations [19], this study instead identifies motivations as an antecedent of self efficacy. Our findings not only echo studies that suggest the significant association between motivation and self-efficacy, but also provide first hand evidence that reveals the role of self efficacy in tourists' preference for outbound travel modes.

Lastly, echoing prior literature that suggest institutional environment a crucial factor for multinational companies to successfully conduct overseas business, our study suggests the policies, regulations and capacities of infection prevention and control of COVID-19 in destinations can significantly influence visitors'

outbound travel intention and their choices of travel modes. In line with the findings of, our research supports that the institutional environment trust is a core component of trust that determines the perception of tourism services.

Additionally, this study has shed critical insights for tourism practitioners, especially for destination marketers and international travel enterprises. First of all, international travel enterprises should cultivate and maximize their core competitiveness by developing marketing strategies tailored to tourists' motivations of and preferences for travel that vary greatly across individuals. For example, marketers can devise a segmentation plan according to the heterogeneous travel motivations of potential tourists and then provide customized tourism products and services to satisfy different needs, which will raise the sales significantly.

Second, our finding that high *vs.* low self efficacy tourists are more willing to choose customized tour *vs.* group tour highlights the crucial role of understanding the self efficacy level of individuals who visit OTAs. OTAs could either invite registered users to participate in a simple behavioral test of self-efficacy and motivations, so as to capture heterogeneous preferences in depth. This can enable OTAs to optimize the personalized recommendation algorithm of the websites or Apps, resulting in users' greater satisfaction in travel products presented to them.

Lastly, we illustrate that institutional environment trust moderates the impact of motivations on outbound travel choices, shedding light on the practices of tourism destination image management as well as the design of outbound tourism marketing and advertising strategies. Even in the post COVID era, institutional environment trust seems to continue to play an increasingly crucial role in tourists' evaluations and decision makings of destinations. Hence, tourism destination marketers should be devoted to create a positive and trustworthy image particularly pertaining to the institutional environment of destinations through tourist education and interactive marketing campaigns. On the other hand, international travel companies should keep monitoring the institutional environment trust that visitors attach to various destinations abroad, so that they can efficiently leverage this factor in promoting overseas tour sales in a timely manner.

Limitation

Despite of the above contributions, this study has several limitations that await to be addressed by future research. First of all, the sample size of this study is relatively small, which restricts the generalization of the results. Besides, due to the restrictions of data collection during COVID-19, only Chinese tourists were sampled, which however limits the representativeness of the sample. Future research should take a cross cultural perspective to explore whether there are differences between motivations and outbound travel preference across tourists with varying cultural backgrounds. Second, study 2 set the experiment under the context of a destination in Southeastern Asian. However, the geographic and economic characteristics of such destination may have an impact on the participants' specific travel choices. Future study should study a wide array of destinations that include both developing and developed countries and regions, in order to control such potentially confounding factor. Last but not the least, we must acknowledge that travel motivation is a non static construct, but instead subject to dynamic changes as the travel proceeds over time, as argued by the travel ladder theory. This relationship between motivations and outbound

travel choices is thereby likely to differ with the varying stages of travel. This suggests that future research should fully take into account such dynamics by modeling the decision making of outbound travel choice in a dynamic and interactive way, in order to unbiasedly reveal the underlying mechanism.

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