

The Relationship between Wanderlust and Discrete Positive Emotions

Andrea P. Gerald Prem Kumar & Eugene Y. J. Tee¹
¹HELP University, Malaysia

Introduction

Wanderlust

a predisposed, impulsive craving to travel that manifests itself in previous leisure travel experiences, current travel attitudes and future travel behaviour (Shields, 2011).

Past Research

- ❖ Travellers tend to experience significant changes positive emotions during leisure travel experiences in that they peak in the middle of trips and decline towards the end of trips (Nawijn, Mitas, Lin, & Kerstetter, 2012).
- ❖ Big Five personality traits were investigated in relation to changes in positive emotions during vacations (Lin, Kerstetter, Nawijn, & Mitas, 2014)
- ❖ Wanderlust as a personality variable has not been investigated in relation to the discrete positive emotions experienced during travel.

Theoretical Framework

Awe: Travelling is characterized by broadening horizons, increasing creativity and novelty (de Bloom, Ritter, Kühnel, Reinders, & Geurts, 2014).

Interest: Complex and unfamiliar characteristics of new places and sights (Bello & Etzel, 1985).

Inspiration: Leisure travel involves insight and seeking out the unseen (de Bloom et al., 2014).

Joy: Travelling is often laced with joy and happiness (Mitas et al., 2012).

Aim: To investigate the relationship between wanderlust and discrete positive emotions experienced during leisure travel experiences.

H1: There is a significant positive correlation between wanderlust and awe.

H2: There is a significant positive correlation between wanderlust and interest.

H3: There is a significant positive correlation between wanderlust and inspiration.

H4: There is a significant positive correlation between wanderlust and joy.

Method

A cross-sectional non-experimental correlational study was conducted amongst 94 participants in Malaysia who were at least 18 years of age.

Measures used:

- **Wanderlust:** 10-item Wanderlust Scale (Shields, 2011).
- **Discrete Positive Emotions:** 10-items corresponding to discrete positive emotions from the modified Differential Emotions Scale (Fredrickson, 2013).
- **Openness to Experience:** 10-items corresponding to the openness to experience factor from the Big Five Inventory (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008).
- **Demographic questionnaire:** 3 items measuring age, number of past leisure travel experiences and gender.

Discussion

Hypotheses 1 and 4 were supported

- Significant correlations between wanderlust and awe and joy after controlling for openness to experience, number of past trips and gender.
- Results resembled past research that discovered that awe and joy were related to leisure travel experiences (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2012, Shields, 2011).

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not supported

- Wanderlust was not significantly correlated with interest and inspiration.
- Inconsistent with past research (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2012) and the present study's theoretical framework illustrating the consistency of the nature of travel with the nature of interest and inspiration.

Alternative explanations: The role of openness to experience

- The nature of interest and inspiration is consistent with the curiosity, originality and creativity aspects of openness to experience.
- Both emotions are elicited by new experiences, much like the trait openness to experience that exemplifies being receptive to new things.

Results

- The hypotheses were tested using 4 ordinal logistic regressions
- Openness to experience, number of past trips and gender were controlled for as covariates.

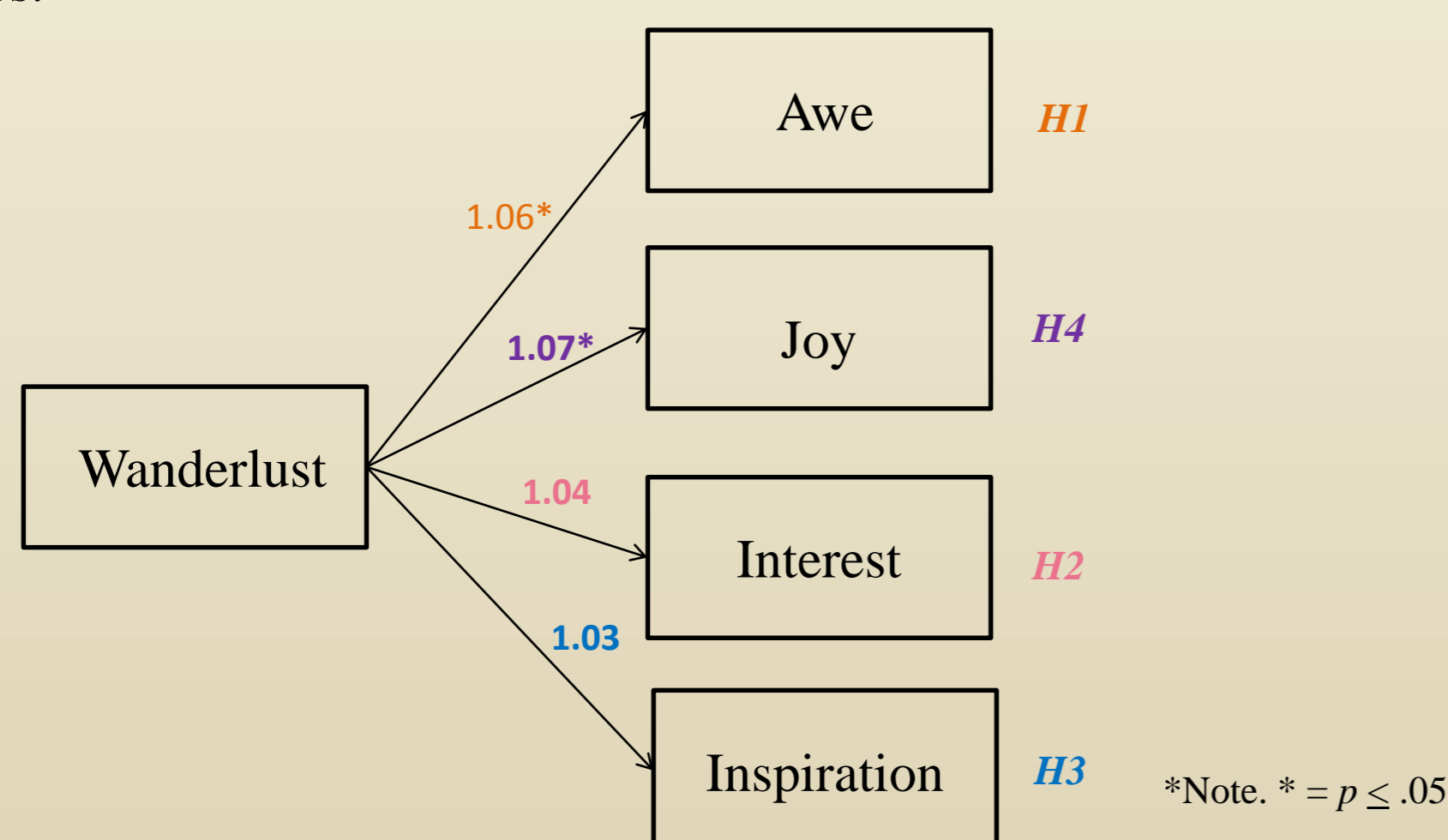


Figure 1: Exp (B) values and significance levels for wanderlust, awe, joy, interest and inspiration

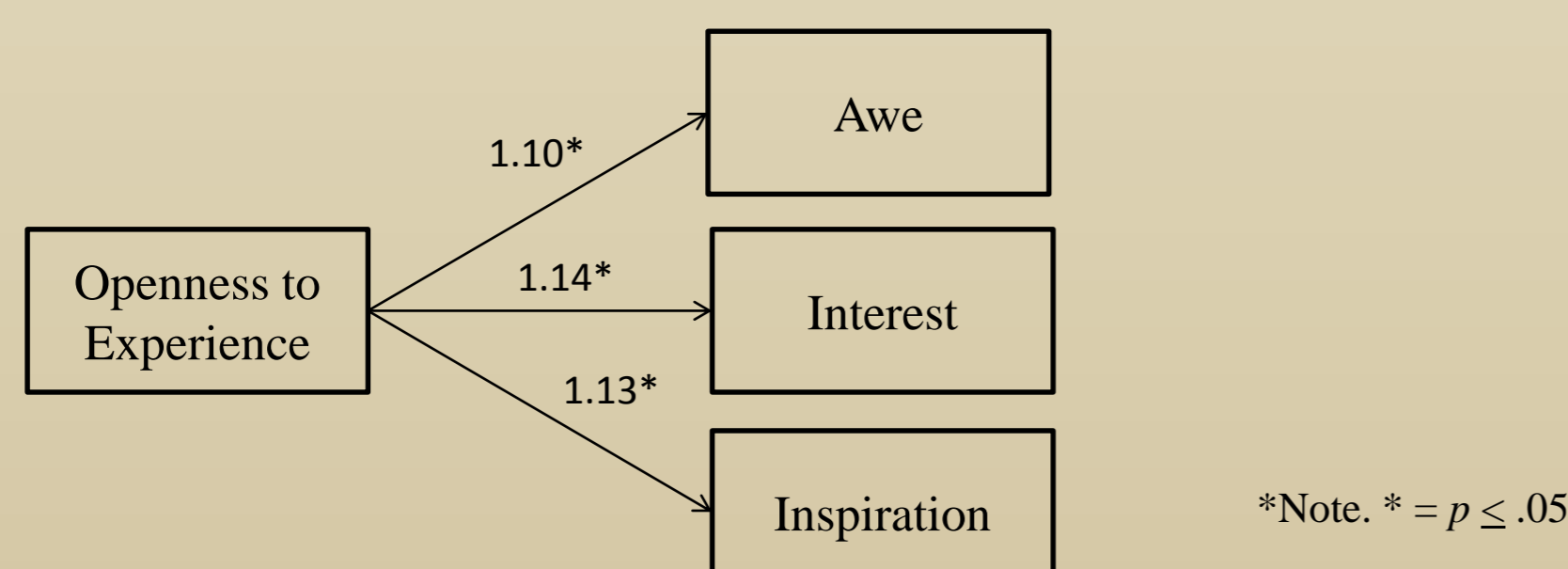


Figure 2: Exp (B) values and significance levels for openness to experience, awe, interest and inspiration

Conclusion

Findings make contributions to the understanding of the discrete emotions travellers with high levels of wanderlust experience. This contributes to literature concerning leisure travel, personality and emotions alongside implications for tourism and mental health fields.

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