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A Psychological Evaluation of How Client Motivation Can Affect the Future of Space Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The growth of space tourism's newest evolvement, of clients traveling to space, has contributed to a narrow sphere of those who are able to participate. The explanation to this trend is client motivation which is represented through multiple variables, chiefly policy and age. Previous research has made note that space tourism, specifically in its current form, has limited research relating to client motivation, but as space tourism is nonetheless gaining popularity it has led to clients and businesses acting in potentially uneducated and harmful ways respectively–due to lack of research on the topic. Data from Cleveland State Law Review was predominantly used to introduce the limbo period that space tourism is in policy-wise based, due to vague legal diction; and data from International E-Journal of Science, Medicine & Education was predominantly used to facilitate the disparity postured to elderly people's opportunities to participate in space tourism. Overall, the findings were that even though space tourism is a type of tourism that is almost exclusively reserved for the younger upper-class, this doesn't limit the profit in such a way, because of the limited participants, that disables the business from thriving and generating enough revenue to continue. Thus, "while client motivation can impact space tourism with it being in its infancy, the industry has not had enough upheavals, and it can still survive" (p. 4).

Introduction

Space tourism. A concept whose future is contested today, came from different beginnings than what the industry is provoking. It initially was birthed by NASA to win the "hearts and wallets" of American taxpayers in the 1960–in the wake of the Cold War, done by Project Apollo (Margolis, 2020). From its beginnings the focus was simpler and space tourism was synonymous with NASA, and its goal was different to that of making its newest evolution a litigious form of business (Performance.gov, 2021). Its newest evolution being that of taking clients up to space. And–with the rise of different companies taking on that idea–the sphere of space centered tourism now flirts with re-establishing itself in its new form, and having several companies compete to maximize the most money out of the medium. With all this being said, the issues of neo-space tourism, unlike those of traveling to Europe or going on a cruise, have led to the question of whether it can succeed and be accepted into the tourism sphere successfully. And, uncertainty has been seen through how space tourism is rooted so heavily on client motivation, and whether it can have enough to generate sustainable money. In this, from the genesis of NASA, space centered tourism has always had issues, one's related to politics, and now age (Margolis, 2020). Therefore, this research study aims, then, to deduce the question: how can client motivation affect the future of space tourism?

Policy and Motivation

How can law and policy affect client motivation? One of the first issues of client motivation that dates back from Project Apollo is politics (Margolis, 2020). However, now instead of the Cold War to worry about, the

issue turns to how potential clients will react to the pressing legal issues of space tourism's new age (Li, 2023). Compared to going to Sicily for the summer, the quantitative research study–of Touring Outer Space by author Alex S. Li, who received a Master of Science in Accountancy–brings to light a chief issue in law of whether space tourists are entitled to the same status as astronauts, as they are, unlike other tourism mediums, leaving the stratosphere. The issue remains contentious as bringing clients into space is in its infancy, however the debate being paired with space tourism already ostriches it. And there is reason for its contention: the body needs extensive training to go into space, the body doesn't normally need extensive training to board a flight to a foreign country. In Li's (2023) research the following is importantly mentioned:

"If space tourists are not considered "astronauts" within the meaning of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 or "personnel of a spacecraft" within the meaning of the Rescue Agreement of 1968, then there is a possibility that space tourists are not entitled to assistance and/or rescue in the event of an emergency. This risk to their safety could disincentivize individuals from going to Outer Space" (p.786).

This ambiguity causes confusion, as the two legal papers that provide some tangibility are unclear in their wording. But if they do imply anything it's that space tourists will probably not, at the present legal time, in space reap the benefits of protection that astronauts. This, therefore, puts the legal status of clients in a "limbo" (Li, 2023). So as legal closure is indefinite, this current status of policies leads presumptions left. An ethos of presumptions can be taken from the Iso- Ahola's Social Psychological Model (Wolfe, Hsu, 2004). From a research study by Dr. Kara Wolfe and Cathy Hsu, who have a PhD in cancer biology and a Master in business respectively, it was importantly deduced that tourism motivation comes from an escape of personal worries–such as work and family problems–to procure change in daily routine (Wolfe, Hsu, 2004). The study then mentioned that people can be overstimulated by work and personal worries, making them try to escape to satisfy their needs (Wolfe, Hsu, 2004). A tenet of tourism, yes, but can relate to the loose strings of legality in space tourism, as clients having uncertainty for their safety can impair their want to take on that venture as it could pose another hindrance in their life than the current hindrances that they are trying to escape. Therefore, until there is concrete policy clarifications space tourism is in murky waters in being comparable to other forms of tourism.

Age and Motivation

How can age affect client motivation? Age can be a potential issue, as because of the preparations the body needs to go to space those of elderly age could miss out on the industry. To narrow the issue and to get a perspective of the average astronaut age the official NASA website deduced that it was 34 (Dean, 2018). Though it has to be taken into account that 34 is after physical training and proper credentials to start going to space (Dean, 2018). And age 60 was documented for the world's first space tourist (Yassa, Chai, Flaherty, 2022). Jack Yassa and Chai Shang, health graduates of the National University of Ireland, wrote an expert article discussing elderly age and space. It cited that the hindrances of years show how space tourism may be tailored to only certain age demographics (Yassa, Chai, Flaherty, 2022). Moreover this expert article cited how the older the space tourist is, the more likely they are to experience a loss of consciousness for a short period of time, as the prolonged stasis associated with travel to low Earth orbit exposes this older traveler to a higher risk of thromboembolism. (Yassa, Chai, Flaherty, 2022). Though, the Federal Aviation Administration reported a low rate of cardiac symptoms and arrhythmias in older subjects with controlled medical comorbidities, so, with good medical history, problems can be avoided. However, there are some limitations, but nonetheless, as the study concluded, "no research exploring the views of the older generation towards the prospect of personal space flight participation has been undertaken", so the future is ambiguous (Yassa, Chai, Flaherty, 2022). But in this limbo period, there have still been healthy elderly people that have gone up to space successfully, even with challenges. But hindrances that are not presented in ecotourism and agritourism are present here, as seen below in Table 1:

Table 1. Physiologic effects of microgravity in older travelers

Body System	Physiologic Effects
Musculoskeletal	• Replacement of skeletal muscle by adipose tissue • Transient decrease in limb volume • Decreased bone density • Decreased skeletal muscle mass • Bone loss-related hypercalciuria causing kidney stones
Neurological	• Impaired visuo-motor tracking • Impaired vestibulo-ocular reflex • Reduced visual acuity • Motion sickness
Cardiovascular	• Decreased plasma volume • Cephalad fluid redistribution • Increased heart rate, maximum at launch and re-entry • Decreased peripheral resistance • Orthostatic hypotension • Increased stroke volume and cardiac output • Increased central venous pressure during launch • Minimal decrease in exercise capacity • Post-flight anaemia caused by reduced haematopoiesis

The article concluded that physicians who specialize in the care of older patients may counsel these clients about the challenges of space travel (Yassa, Chai, Flaherty, 2022). And while for the mostly abled body elder, one that is of the high network demographic, they can participate in the industry, the challenges, specifically that exist for the elder age, are withstanding. And this can potentially hinder client motivation. First, for tourism motivation, wanting to escape from worldly issues, but also space tourism is expensive and is the current market of affluent individuals, many of the older demographic (Wolfe, Hsu, 2004).

Conclusion

Client motivation can affect the future of space tourism–however, that's a statement to be qualified. As seen in the policies perspective, it can lead to miseducated clients. But the takeaway is that these hindrances still have not led to impeded business. This means that while there are issues in space tourism that narrow the pool of those who engage with it, its limited audience is what the business needs: just enough engagement. So while client motivation can impact space tourism with it being in its infancy, the industry has not had enough upheavals, and it can still survive.

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