

# INFLUENCES OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ON TRAVEL MOTIVES OF SLOVAK WOMEN ABROAD

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Received: November, 2024  
1st Revision: December,  
2024  
Accepted: December, 2024

**ABSTRACT. Background:** The sustainability of tourist destinations and tourism businesses relies on identifying markets supporting long-term growth. Success depends on understanding the needs of potential consumers and adapting to trends and shifts in source market conditions. This adaptability is key to ensuring continued development and competitiveness. **Aims:** This paper aims to find which motives are important to Slovak women when traveling abroad and which characteristics of women cause differences in the perceived importance of motives when traveling abroad. **Methods:** We use the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test to verify three hypotheses. We consider generation, parental status, and marital status as group characteristics. **Sample:** The research sample consists of 232 Slovak women. **Results:** The results showed differences between groups for some motives. **Conclusions:** The study reveals that age, parental status, and marital status significantly influence women's travel motivations, offering valuable insights for the travel industry to develop tailored, generation-specific, and life-stage-sensitive marketing strategies to enhance the travel experience. **Implications:** Understanding these differences can help cater to diverse needs, ensuring more personalized and satisfying travel experiences.

**Keywords:** motivation, women, tourism

**JEL Classification:** L83

**DOI:** 10.54933/jmbrp-2024-16-2-8

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*Melnyk, K., & Vašaničová, P. (2024). Key Aspects of Women's Motivators in Tourism. Journal of Management and Business: Research and Practice, 16(2), doi: 10.54933/jmbrp-2024-16-2-8*

## Introduction

Tourism is one of the most promising and dynamic industries in the world (Streimikiene et al., 2020). Travel and tourism activities essentially involve individuals moving from one place to another or moving from one destination to another, from familiar surroundings to a newer and more refreshing atmosphere, from one country to another, from psychological/self-stress factors to opportunities for relaxation, from desires to fulfillment, and then from different expectations to frustration (Beeton, 2015). Tourism practitioners and scholars have always been interested in the motivational forces that drive tourism consumption (Khalilzadeh, Kozak & Chiappa, 2024). Crompton (1979) noted that it is possible to describe who, when, where, and how of tourism, but it is more difficult to answer the question Why?

The motive to travel is caused by the satisfaction of emotional and cognitive needs (Ab Dulhamid et al., 2022). Motivation in tourism is only one of the variables that explain tourist behavior, but it is considered one of the most important factors (Katsikari et al., 2020) because it is the driving force or activator of any behavior or tourist activities (Zhang et al., 2023).

The motives of tourism participants are diverse because they are the result of different needs and interests arising from their social context. The general categories of tourism participants' motives can be derived by identifying the more general goals towards which their tendencies are directed (Vašaničová, 2018).

This paper aims to find which motives are important to Slovak women when traveling abroad and which characteristics of women cause differences in the perceived importance of motives when traveling abroad.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we provide a theoretical background. Next, we present methodology, i.e., research intent, methods and material. The presentation of the results and a discussion follow. The final section summarizes our findings, the limitations of our research, and possibilities for future research.

## Theoretical background

Tourism must cope with various tourist behaviors and internal or external forces that significantly influence these behaviors. The industry is considered to be very vibrant and includes travel for pleasure, leisure, visiting friends and family, pilgrimages, and other related activities. The needs of tourists are constantly evolving and vary considerably between individuals. Therefore, planners must continually adapt their offerings to tourists' needs, wants, and expectations according to age, gender, lifestyle, education, and income. As society evolves and the use of technology evolves, so do the needs of consumers (Yousaf et al., 2018).

Levytska (2019) states that human travel needs are the sum of human conditions that trigger ideas of active leisure and willingness to travel to different regions or countries. A person's travel needs can be divided into primary, secondary, and additional needs. Primary needs are related to satisfying the desire to realize the main objective of travel, e.g., to get ideas about new places, to have fun, to use resort services, to get to know historical sites, to be part of conference activities, etc. Secondary needs for the tourism participant are associated with the delivery to leisure places and the creation of activities for a person during travel. The additional needs of the tourist participant are limited to the possibility of buying souvenirs, indirect household services, personal transport services, etc.

Tourist attractions must have four key components known as the 4A's: Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary services. Attraction refers to things that can attract the tourist's interest in visiting a destination, i.e., natural, cultural, and man-made features. Accessibility refers to the means of reaching the tourist attraction, including land, sea, and air transport, as well as telephone and internet networks that must be available at the tourist destination. Amenities refer to accommodation establishments. Ancillary services refer to the additional services that support tourism activities in a tourist destination, including management institutions and tourist information centers (Mohamad & Som, 2010).

Motivation comes from the Latin word "movere," meaning to move or propel. Motivation is a key component because it supports human behavior, acting as a cause, channel, and driver of actions (Wikantini, Puspa & Perbowosari, 2024).

The relationship between travel needs and motivation demonstrates that when individuals identify a desire to travel, they first recognize their travel needs, expectations, and perceptions of attractive destinations. It initiates a process where they seek and gather information through various

sources, such as newspapers, magazines, websites, or service vendors, which leads to the formation of travel motivation. Ultimately, this motivation drives them to act on their travel plans, fulfilling psychological satisfaction and addressing their needs (Swain & Mishra, 2011).

The motives for travel can be categorized into several factors, each reflecting different aspects of human desires and needs. Pearce (2005) identified fourteen tourist motivation factors associated with different motives. According to Vašaničová (2018), they can be described as follows:

1. Novelty involves the pursuit of fun, discovering new experiences, enjoying unique atmospheres, and visiting places that match personal interests.
2. Strengthening relationships focuses on spending quality time with family, friends, and colleagues, fostering connections with loved ones, and maintaining relationships with people living in other places.
3. The relationship (security) factor emphasizes feeling safe, being surrounded by respected individuals, meeting like-minded people, and experiencing a sense of belonging.
4. Autonomy highlights the desire to act independently and follow one's own ideas.
5. Stimulation reflects the thrill of exploring the unknown, experiencing excitement and risk, and engaging in adventurous and spontaneous activities.
6. Self-development (host involvement) includes learning new things, experiencing different cultures, meeting new people, expanding knowledge about a destination, and interacting with locals.
7. Self-development (personal involvement) focuses on developing personal interests, discovering abilities, building self-confidence, and improving talents.
8. Self-actualization involves gaining a new perspective on life, achieving inner harmony, understanding oneself better, expressing creativity, and working on personal or spiritual values.
9. Nature is a factor for those who admire scenic beauty, seek closeness to nature, and desire to live in harmony with the natural world.
10. Escape and relaxation encompass the need for rest, escaping daily stress, breaking routines, and letting the mind unwind.
11. Isolation provides peace, personal space, freedom from pressure, and an opportunity to enjoy solitude away from crowds.
12. Nostalgia involves reflecting on cherished memories and remembering the past with a sense of fondness.
13. Romance focuses on fostering romantic relationships and spending time with a partner.
14. Recognition involves sharing experiences and knowledge with others, demonstrating skills, gaining recognition, and leading or influencing others.

Ab Dulhamid et al. (2022) divide tourist motivation into four main categories: cultural motivation, which reflects personal desire; physical motivation, which pertains to physical ability; interpersonal motivation, which involves seeking new experiences; and learning and prestige motivation, which relates to self-development.

Many motivation theories have been proposed to understand better the psychological reasons for engaging in tourism. The push and pull dimension of tourism motivation is the one that researchers have explored most extensively (Pestana et al., 2020). Push and pull factors of travel motivation are among the most researched topics to understand the drivers of travel intentions (Pektaş, 2022).

Two factors act as the main components of the tourism sector: tourist and destination. To act as a tourist, one must have some motivation to travel. On the other hand, the destination that the tourist intends to visit should have natural or man-made attributes. The tourist's motivation to visit the destination acts as a push factor for tourism, and the destination's attributes act as a pull factor for tourism (Sandeep 2019).

Push motivators are factors motivating or creating an intangible or intrinsic desire of individual travelers to go on vacation. On the other hand, pull motivators are resources and tourists' actual perceptions and expectations of certain features, attractions, or attributes. Therefore, they play an important role in destination selection after the decision to travel has been made (Susanti, 2021).

Gautam (2021) describes push and pull motivators in greater detail. Push factors refer to natural or intrinsic desires or needs that prompt individuals to travel. These are social and psychological in nature, arising from within the individual, and are associated with the desire for rest, leisure, recreation, spending time with family and friends, or even taking weekend trips. Psychological and physiological imbalances play a significant role in driving these motivations. Pull factors, on the other hand, are based on the destination's attractiveness, particularly the facilities and amenities it provides to tourists, such as suitable accommodation, restaurants, and entertainment options. While pull factors largely depend on external forces and objectives, they can also stimulate and activate push factors.

The push and pull factors coincide with the final decision and travel experience.

## Methodology

### Research Intent

The paper aims to find which motives are important to Slovak women when traveling abroad and which characteristics of women cause differences in the perceived importance of motives when traveling abroad. Based on the aim, we formulate three research hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant difference among generations in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad within at least one of the motives.
- Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant difference between childless women and women with at least one child in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad within at least one of the motives.
- Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant difference among women by marital status in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad within at least one of the motives.

### Method

We tested the hypotheses using non-parametric statistical methods, specifically the Kruskal-Wallis test and the Mann-Whitney U test. The Kruskal-Wallis test was employed to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between more than two independent groups, as this test is particularly suitable when the assumption of normality is not met. Following this, we used the Mann-Whitney U test for pairwise comparisons between groups to identify where the differences occurred. This test is appropriate for comparing two independent groups when the data do not follow a normal distribution. Both tests were chosen for their ability to provide reliable results without requiring strict parametric assumptions. In addition to inductive statistical methods, we employed descriptive statistics to summarize and characterize the data. Descriptive statistics provided a clear overview of the distribution of variables. The statistical software Statistica 14 is used to perform the mentioned tests and other calculations.

### Material

Data were obtained using an unstructured questionnaire, which was distributed electronically among Slovak women from October 2023 to December 2023. The questions asked in the questionnaire necessary to verify the research hypotheses were: "On a scale from 1 (the least) to 5 (the most), indicate to what extent the given motives (relaxation and free time, getting to know a new culture, fun and entertainment, visit to relatives and friends, sport, education, pilgrimage, treatment and healthcare, business) are important to you when traveling abroad".

Only women who prefer outbound (foreign) tourism to inbound (domestic) tourism were included in the research. The research sample consists of 232 Slovak women. Their average age was 33 (median was 33, standard deviation was 10.963), the youngest participant was 18 years old, and the oldest woman was 57 years old. According to the variable "generation", 25.00% of the respondents belonged to Generation X (*X*), 37.50% to Generation Y (*Y*), and 37.50% to Generation Z (*Z*).

According to the variable "marital status", 32.33% of single women (*Sin*), 25.43% of women in a relationship (*Rel*), 34.91% of married women (*Mar*), and 7.33% of divorced women (*Div*) participated in the research. According to the variable "parental status", 63.36% of women were childless, and 36.64% had at least one child. The representation of women by Slovak regions (according to NUTS III) is as follows: 8.19% from Banská Bystrica Region, 23.28% from Bratislava Region, 8.62% from Košice Region, 8.62% from Nitra Region, 16.38% from Prešov Region, 8.19% from Trnava Region, 13.79% from Trenčín Region, and 12.936% from Žilina Region.

## Results

Research participants were asked to indicate, on a scale from 1 (the least) to 5 (the most), to what extent the given motives are important to them when traveling abroad. The results showed (see Table 1) that relaxation is the most important motive. If we consider the designation of options 5 and 4 in the questionnaire, this motive is important for more than 87% of women. Culture (getting to know a new culture) is another important motive (for more than 84% of women). The motive of fun and entertainment also plays an important role (for more than 53% of women). On the other hand, when traveling abroad, women gave the lowest weight to motives of pilgrimage (more than 81%), treatment (healthcare) (more than 82%), and business (more than 85%). We also see low values for motives of education, sport, and visits to relatives and friends. In Table 1, we also present descriptive characteristics computed from the answers to questions on individual motives.

Table 1. Motives important when traveling abroad

Motive	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Median	S.D.
Relax, free time	1.29%	0.86%	10.78%	23.71%	63.36%	4.47	5	0.821
Fun, entertainment	5.60%	11.64%	29.31%	25.86%	27.59%	3.58	4	1.170
Sport	37.50%	23.28%	21.98%	10.78%	6.47%	2.25	2	1.245
Pilgrimage	70.69%	10.34%	10.78%	3.88%	4.31%	1.61	1	1.100
Business	66.38%	18.97%	10.78%	2.59%	1.29%	1.53	1	0.882
Treatment, healthcare	63.36%	18.97%	12.50%	2.59%	2.59%	1.62	1	0.977
Education	46.55%	23.71%	18.97%	5.60%	5.17%	1.99	2	1.162
Culture	0.86%	3.02%	11.64%	30.60%	53.88%	4.34	5	0.862
Relatives, friends	34.48%	18.10%	17.24%	13.79%	16.38%	2.60	2	1.483

Note: S.D. denotes standard deviation, column headings from 1 to 5 indicate a scale from 1 (the least) to 5 (the most).

Next, we verify the research hypotheses.

Results in Table 2 show that differences among generations in the level of women's motivation to travel abroad were found for two motives (p-values lower than 0.05 are highlighted in bold). The Kruskal-Wallis test did not tell exactly where those differences lie. Therefore, we run Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test to find which specific group's means (compared with each other) are different.

Table 2. Hypothesis 1 testing (Generation) – Kruskal-Wallis test

Motive	MR X	MR Y	MR Z	H	p-value
Relax, free time	119.2	115.2	116.0	0.179	0.9143
Fun, entertainment	85.0	115.9	138.1	23.354	<b>0.0000</b>
Sport	118.9	118.0	113.4	0.338	0.8444
Pilgrimage	101.4	121.9	121.2	6.072	0.0501
Business	113.9	110.5	124.3	2.784	0.2485
Treatment, healthcare	117.0	116.8	115.9	0.017	0.9916
Education	106.8	108.4	131.0	7.422	<b>0.0245</b>
Culture	111.0	114.2	122.4	1.427	0.4899
Relatives, friends	103.5	114.9	126.8	4.555	0.1025

Note: MR means Mean Rank; X, Y, and Z denotes generations X, Y, and Z; H denotes test statistics.

Results in Table 3 show that considering the motive "fun, entertainment", the differences in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad are between generation X and Z, X, and Y. Considering the motive "education", the differences in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad are between generation Y and Z. We confirm hypothesis 1.

We report descriptive statistics for each generation for two significant motives in Table 4. The results showed that Generation Z considers the mentioned motives (fun, entertainment and education) the most important. On the other hand, these motives are the least important for Generation X.



Table 3. Hypothesis 1 testing (Generation) – Tukey's HSD test

Generation	Fun, entertainment			Education		
	Generation			Generation		
	X	Y	Z	X	Y	Z
X		<b>0.0168</b>	<b>0.0000</b>		0.9856	0.0522
Y	<b>0.0168</b>		0.0762	0.9856		<b>0.0219</b>
Z	<b>0.0000</b>	0.0762		0.0522	<b>0.0219</b>	

Note: X, Y, and Z denote generations X, Y, and Z.

Table 4. Hypothesis 1 testing (Generation) – Descriptive statistics

Generation	Fun, entertainment			Education		
	Mean	Median	S.D.	Mean	Median	S.D.
X	3.0172	3	1.1621	1.7931	1	1.0218
Y	3.5862	4	1.0843	1.8276	1	1.0478
Z	3.9540	4	1.1197	2.2874	2	1.3021

Note: X, Y, and Z denote generations X, Y, and Z; S.D. denotes standard deviation.

Results in Table 5 show that statistically significant differences between childless women and women in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad were found for four motives (p-values lower than 0.05 are highlighted in bold), specifically, the motive of pilgrimage, business, education, and visits to relatives and friends. We confirm hypothesis 2.

Table 5. Hypothesis 2 testing (Parental status) – Mann-Whitney U test

Motive	RS Childless	RS With Child	U	Z-adjusted	p-value
Relax, free time	17815.5	9212.5	5557.5	1.6372	0.1016
Fun, entertainment	17929.0	9099.0	5444.0	1.6862	0.0918
Sport	17040.5	9987.5	6162.5	-0.1786	0.8582
Pilgrimage	17931.0	9097.0	5442.0	2.0361	<b>0.0417</b>
Business	17984.5	9043.5	5388.5	2.0841	<b>0.0372</b>
Treatment, healthcare	17441.5	9586.5	5931.5	0.7462	0.4555
Education	18596.0	8432.0	4777.0	3.1838	<b>0.0015</b>
Culture	17793.5	9234.5	5579.5	1.5027	0.1329
Relatives, friends	18465.5	8562.5	4907.5	2.8035	<b>0.0051</b>

Source: own calculations.

We can assess the specific differences considering the mean values in Table 6. For given motives, when we compare mean values between groups, a higher mean value indicates a higher level of motivation. For each of the motives considered (pilgrimage, business, education, and visit to relatives and friends), we see a higher value for the group of childless women. Moreover, we see that the importance of these motives is low.

Table 6. Significant differences related to parental status – Descriptive statistics

Gender	Pilgrimage		Business		Education		Relatives, friends	
	Childless	Child	Childless	Child	Childless	Child	Childless	Child
Mean	1.7007	1.4471	1.6054	1.4118	2.1769	1.6706	2.8027	2.2353
Median	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2

Source: own calculations.

Results in Table 7 show that differences among women by marital status in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad were found for four motives (p-values lower than 0.05 are highlighted in bold). We confirm hypothesis 3. The Kruskal-Wallis test did not tell exactly where those differences lie. Therefore, we run Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test to find which specific group's means (compared with each other) are different.

Table 7. Hypothesis 3 testing (Marital status) – Kruskal-Wallis test

Motive	MR Sin	MR Rel	MR Mar	MR Div	H	p-value
Relax, free time	117.8	113.9	112.5	138.8	3.1183	0.3737
Fun, entertainment	125.0	129.8	102.6	99.4	8.6584	<b>0.0342</b>
Sport	129.2	93.6	125.0	99.3	12.9835	<b>0.0047</b>
Pilgrimage	126.8	110.6	113.8	104.5	4.4970	0.2126
Business	126.5	111.7	112.9	106.0	3.7415	0.2908
Treatment, healthcare	125.7	100.4	118.7	121.1	6.7245	0.0812
Education	143.8	97.4	105.7	114.1	21.9524	<b>0.0001</b>
Culture	123.3	112.4	110.5	129.6	2.8319	0.4183
Relatives, friends	138.6	103.3	107.2	109.1	12.9903	<b>0.0047</b>

Note: MR means Mean Rank; Sin, Rel, Mar, and Div denote marital status Single, in Relationship, Married, and Divorced; H denotes test statistics.

Results in Table 8 show that considering the motive of "fun and entertainment", the differences in the level of women's motivation when traveling abroad were observed between single women and those who are married, in a relationship, or divorced. Regarding the "sport" motive, differences in motivation levels were found between single women and those in a relationship. For the "education" motive, differences in motivation levels were noted between single women and those who are in a relationship, as well as between single women and those who are married. Lastly, when considering the motive of "relatives and friends", differences in motivation were observed between single women and those in a relationship, as well as between single women and married women. We report descriptive statistics for each marital status for four significant motives in Table 9.

Table 8. Hypothesis 3 testing (Marital status) – Tukey's HSD test

Marital status	Fun, entertainment				Sport			
	Marital status				Marital status			
	Sin	Rel	Mar	Div	Sin	Rel	Mar	Div
Sin		0.5835	<b>0.0381</b>	0.1718		<b>0.0214</b>	0.9608	0.5521
Rel	0.5835		<b>0.0127</b>	<b>0.0934</b>	<b>0.0214</b>		0.0710	0.9961
Mar	<b>0.0381</b>	<b>0.0127</b>		0.8990	0.9608	0.0710		0.7002
Div	0.1718	<b>0.0934</b>	0.8990		0.5521	0.9961	0.7002	
Marital status	Education				Relatives, friends			
	Marital status				Marital status			
	Sin	Rel	Mar	Div	Sin	Rel	Mar	Div
Sin		<b>0.0008</b>	<b>0.0010</b>	0.6168		<b>0.0335</b>	<b>0.0209</b>	0.5555
Rel	<b>0.0008</b>		0.9626	0.8359	<b>0.0335</b>		0.9984	0.9989
Mar	<b>0.0010</b>	0.9626		0.9384	<b>0.0209</b>	0.9985		0.9999
Div	0.6168	0.8359	0.9384		0.5555	0.9989	0.9999	

Note: Sin, Rel, Mar, and Div denote marital status Single, in Relationship, Married, and Divorced.

Table 9. Hypothesis 3 testing (Marital status) – Descriptive statistics

Marital status	Fun, entertainment			Sport		
	Mean	Median	S.D.	Mean	Median	S.D.
Sin	3.7200	4	1.1690	2.4933	2	1.2774
Rel	3.8305	4	1.1010	1.8475	1	1.1569
Mar	3.3333	3	1.1832	2.3951	2	1.2215
Div	3.2941	3	1.1600	1.9412	2	1.1974
Marital status	Education			Relatives, friends		
	Mean	Median	S.D.	Mean	Median	S.D.
Sin	2.4667	2	1.2339	3.0667	3	1.3590
Rel	1.6780	1	1.0412	2.3390	2	1.5493
Mar	1.7778	1	1.0124	2.3827	2	1.4626
Div	2.0000	2	1.3229	2.4118	2	1.5024

Note: Sin, Rel, Mar, and Div denote marital status Single, in Relationship, Married, and Divorced. S.D. denotes standard deviation.

The results showed that of the significant motives listed above, fun entertainment is the most important motive for women in a relationship when traveling abroad. Sports, education, and visiting relatives and friends are the most important motives for single women when traveling abroad. These three motives are the least important for women in a relationship.

## Discussion

Our results highlight that women prioritize relaxation, cultural exploration, and entertainment when traveling abroad, while practical or purpose-driven motives like business, healthcare, or education are less influential.

The analysis related to hypothesis 1 reveals generational differences in women's travel motivations, with significant findings for the motives of "fun and entertainment" and "education". The level of motivation for "fun and entertainment" differs significantly between Generation X and Generation Z, as well as between Generation X and Generation Y. This finding suggests that Generation X women may prioritize this motive less than younger generations, potentially due to differing lifestyle preferences, responsibilities, or travel expectations. Differences were observed between Generation Y and Generation Z regarding the motivation for education. This may indicate that Generation Z women place a higher or lower emphasis on education-related travel compared to Generation Y, potentially reflecting shifts in how education is pursued or valued across generations.

Understanding the motivation and behavior of tourists in relation to different generations has been a topic of interest in pre-existing studies, e.g., Dotson, Clark, and Dave (2008); Rita, Brochado, and Dimova (2019); Kim and Kim (2020); Krishnapillai and Kwok (2020); Octaviany and Mardiyana (2024). These studies provide a foundation for examining the nuanced ways in which age-related factors shape tourism behaviors.

The analysis related to hypothesis 2 shows significant differences in travel motivations between childless women and women with children for four specific motives:

- Pilgrimage: The greater motivation for pilgrimage among childless women could indicate a stronger focus on self-discovery or spiritual exploration, which may be deprioritized by women with children due to family-centered travel demands.
- Business: Childless women may be more likely to engage in business travel, perhaps because they can accommodate work-related travel more efficiently without the responsibilities associated with childcare.
- Education: The difference in educational motives could reflect the ability of childless women to invest time and resources in personal growth through travel, contrasting with women with children who might prioritize their children's education over their own.
- Visiting relatives and friends: While this motive is generally low in importance, the higher value for childless women might suggest that they have greater flexibility to maintain social connections through travel, whereas women with children may focus on immediate family needs.

The higher mean values for childless women across these motives suggest they are more inclined to prioritize these aspects when traveling abroad. This may reflect greater autonomy and fewer logistical constraints, allowing them to pursue personal, professional, or educational interests. Despite these differences, the low mean values for these motives indicate that they are not primary drivers of travel for either group.

Previous research has explored how parental status affects tourists' motivations and behaviors, shedding light on parents' travel preferences and decisions compared to those without children, e.g., Aziz et al. (2018); Tseng, Chien, and Shen (2023). These studies have investigated how being a parent influences travel preferences, priorities, and decision-making, offering insights into travelers' unique needs and expectations with and without children.

The analysis related to hypothesis 3 confirms that women's travel motivations differ significantly by marital status for four specific motives:

- Fun and entertainment: Differences exist between single and married, in a relationship and married, and in a relationship and divorced women. Among these groups, women in a relationship prioritize fun and entertainment the most when traveling abroad, possibly reflecting a desire to bond with their partner or enjoy recreational activities together. In contrast, married and divorced women may focus on other aspects of travel, influenced by family responsibilities or individual preferences.
- Sport: Differences are noted between single women and those in a relationship. Single women prioritize sports activities the most, which may reflect greater independence and



personal interest in active or adventure-based travel compared to women in relationships, who may plan trips with shared activities in mind.

- Education: Significant differences are observed between single and in a relationship as well as single and married women. Education is most important for single women, potentially highlighting their focus on self-improvement and learning opportunities during travel. For married women and those in relationships, educational motives might take a backseat to other priorities.
- Visiting relatives and friends: Differences are identified between single and in a relationship, as well as single and married women. Single women value visiting relatives and friends more highly, possibly as a way to maintain social connections. Married women and those in relationships may have less flexibility or focus more on family-oriented travel.

Among the significant motives, fun and entertainment are the most important for women in relationships, reflecting their inclination for leisure-focused trips. Conversely, sports, education, and visiting relatives and friends are most important for single women and least important for women in relationships, possibly due to differing travel priorities and social dynamics.

Several prior studies have focused on examining if and how marital status influences tourists' motivations and behaviors, e.g., Sung, Chang, and Sung (2016); Dey et al. (2020); Kim and Kim (2020); Wambani, Ogunjinmi, and Oladeji (2020). Such research provides valuable insights into the ways personal relationships shape tourism behaviors.

## Conclusion

This paper aimed to find which motives are important to Slovak women when traveling abroad and which characteristics of women cause differences in the perceived importance of motives when traveling abroad.

We demonstrated that Slovak women traveling abroad tend to prioritize relaxation, cultural enrichment, and entertainment, whereas practical or goal-oriented motives such as business, healthcare, or education hold comparatively less significance.

The results highlight how age-related factors, cultural shifts, and evolving priorities may shape travel preferences. This has implications for travel industry stakeholders, suggesting the need for tailored marketing strategies that align with the distinct values and expectations of each generation.

Moreover, our findings underscore the role of personal circumstances, particularly parental status, in shaping travel preferences and priorities. These findings highlight how life stage and family dynamics influence travel motivations. Travel providers and marketers can use these insights to design targeted offerings, such as family-friendly packages or educational and business-focused travel options for childless individuals. Understanding these nuanced preferences helps cater to diverse needs and enhances the travel experience for both groups.

Finally, our findings suggest that marital status significantly shapes women's travel motivations. Understanding these differences can help cater to diverse needs, ensuring more personalized and satisfying travel experiences.

The findings offer several important managerial and practical implications for the travel industry. First, generation-specific marketing strategies can be employed to cater to the unique travel preferences of different age groups. Younger travelers may be drawn to campaigns emphasizing cultural exploration and entertainment, while older generations might prefer messaging focused on relaxation and leisure. Utilizing platforms such as social media for younger audiences and traditional advertising for older demographics can enhance engagement and reach.

Second, family-friendly offerings can be designed to meet the needs of women with children. These could include packages with kid-friendly accommodations, activities, and flexible itineraries, as well as services like childcare or family-oriented guided tours that make traveling more convenient for mothers. At the same time, travel providers should also address the needs of childless women by offering packages focused on educational or professional enrichment, such as study-abroad programs, wellness retreats, or business-oriented travel opportunities. Highlighting adventurous and leisure-driven experiences can further appeal to this group's flexibility and independence.

Marital status also plays a key role in shaping travel motivations, suggesting the need for customized offerings. Single women may prioritize educational travel, sports activities, and opportunities to visit friends and relatives, while married or partnered women might seek romantic getaways and couple-oriented experiences centered around relaxation and entertainment. Tailored messaging in promotional materials should reflect these diverse life stages, such as emphasizing solo travel benefits for single women or family bonding opportunities for mothers.

In addition to marketing, enhancing customer experiences through staff training can ensure that employees are equipped to meet the varied needs of women travelers. Offering personalized recommendations and gathering feedback to adapt services to evolving preferences will further enhance satisfaction. Collaborations with educational institutions, businesses, and wellness centers can help attract travelers with specific motives, while partnerships with local attractions and cultural organizations can create unique travel packages for women seeking cultural enrichment.

A key limitation of this study is that it focuses exclusively on a sample of Slovak women traveling abroad, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations. Future research could address this limitation by including travelers from other countries to explore potential cultural or regional differences in travel motivations. Additionally, expanding the scope to include male travelers could provide a more comprehensive understanding of gender-based differences in travel preferences. Another valuable direction for future studies would be to investigate travel motivations for domestic trips, offering insights into how travel preferences may vary between international and local travel contexts.

## Acknowledgement

This paper was supported by the research grant VEGA no. 1/0241/25 "Prediction of Development and Competitiveness in Tourism".

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