

## **CHAPTER FIVE- DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

Chapter 5 discusses the findings which include results and submits conclusions drawn from the analysis of the data. The role of marginality predictors (income, education, occupation and residence), and travel behavior variables (type of trip selected, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel) in travel behavior of black and white Americans is appraised. Implications for tourism planning, development, and marketing are discussed, the contribution of this study are considered and finally recommendations for further tourism studies focusing on black travelers are discussed.

### **FINDINGS**

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which marginality (income, education, occupation and residence), type of trip, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel is a useful predictor of travel behavior of black and white Americans. This study was designed to address the three questions: (1) Are there differences between black and white Americans with respect to travel behavior due to marginality? (2) Is travel behavior influenced by marginality? (3) Is marginality effective in explaining the travel behavior or differences in travel behavior of black and white Americans?

Relationships between race, marginality predictors, type of trip selected, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel were investigated. The hypothesized relationships were: length of stay during leisure travel is a function of marginality, selecting trips is a function of marginality, travelers will participate in different activities during leisure travel as a function of marginality and black travelers will differ from white travelers as a function of marginality. These hypotheses were evaluated by employing chi-square tests of independence for categorical variables to determine associations, t-tests for continuous variables and log linear modeling in order to control for covariates. For all of the relationships, the hypotheses were partially accepted. There appeared to be (in some instances) variations between black and white travelers in their travel

behavior. When the research results are examined, several relatively conclusive findings are evident.

Finding associated with hypothesis 1, length of stay is a function of marginality suggest that travelers do differ in their length of stay during leisure travel as a function of marginality. Results of analysis associated with this hypothesis confirm that income and occupation are significantly associated with length of stay. While length of stay is a function of income, travelers with the lower income did not stay shorter on pleasure trips as hypothesized. This study revealed that there is a significant difference between income and length of stay and that income does predict length of stay. The analysis was done to determine the influence of race as a function of the length of stay. This analysis indicates that race and income combined is associated. Although race alone is not significantly associated with length of stay, the interactive effects of race and income does have a significant association with length of stay. Therefore, in this study, the length of time one stays on a leisure trip is not influenced by their race alone but by income as well as a combination of income and race. Although almost 60 percent of the respondents with income in the range of  $\leq \$20,000$  stayed 1-4 days, on their leisure trip, travelers with income in the range of \$50,001-\$75,000 responded to staying the shorter length of time, of 1-4 days at the rate of 63.29 percent. This is the highest rate in the study for length of stay. It appears that travelers with this amount of income may only be able to take long weekend trips because of their work schedules and or lifestyle. The type of trip selected may also play a role in examining the length of stay of these 2 groups and their travel behavior. White travelers averaged longer vacation time than blacks for each trip type except visiting family and relatives. Respondents in the higher income range preferred cruises and resorts as their trip choice, while respondents in the lowest income range preferred visiting family and relatives. When these choices (type of trip) are compared to length of stay in this study, it further confirms the interaction between income and race in length of stay during leisure travel. Increased income does not appear to be a factor in increasing the length of stay of respondents in this study but it is a factor in determining the trip type.

Analysis of respondents with higher income suggest they are perhaps taking shorter, more expensive trip types such as cruises, specialty trips, weekend packages and several mini-vacations. On the other hand travelers in the lower income range selected visiting family and relatives at a higher rate than other respondents in this study. Travelers with what may be considered lower to middle income, stayed more than eight days at a higher rate than any other respondents. Perhaps this is their one trip of the year. This leisure time may be a result of accumulated leave time and monthly vacation savings which makes this annual trip more affordable rather than several mini-vacations or specialty trips. The amount of time spent on a trip is not only related to income but it is also related to the type of employment. For this study, length of stay or the amount of time one stays on a leisure trip is also a function of the marginality predictor of occupation. According to the analysis of 1960 and 1970 U.S. Census samples, blacks made employment gains in blue and white collar occupations in several sectors of the economy (Hayword and Coverman, 1987). This growth proved to be beneficial for the advancement of blacks. However, LaGory and Magnani, (1979), research supported the idea that inspite of the substantial benefits for blacks, that occupational opportunities for blacks decrease as the black population increases. Bonachich, (1972) and Bech et al., (1978) both agree that different races are channeled to different occupations based on the race and not qualifications. As a result, blacks are disproportional represented in the blue collar occupations( Brown and Fuguitt, 1992; Spilerman and Miller, 1977). The findings in this study are in agreement with Brown and Fuguitt and Spilerman. Although blacks represented 45 percent of the total respondents in this study, 43.39 percent of those blacks had blue collar occupations, while whites represented 55 percent of the total study population, 35.84 percent of them had blue collar jobs. Almost 40 percent of the whites in this study reported having a white collar occupation and slightly more than 25 percent of the blacks had white collar occupations. This finding is contrary to Evans, 1992, who contended that because of opportunities made available to the middle class, blacks had a greater amount of social mobility due to the increased amount of white collar occupations available. However, this

finding is consistent with Brown and Fuguitt, 1992 and Spilerman and Miller, 1977. They state that blacks are disproportionately represented in the lower status blue collar service positions. More blue collar workers staying a shorter length of time during pleasure trips than travelers with white collar occupations is in agreement with the fact that they have lower income available which influences not only the type of trip but how long they can afford to stay on that trip. This short trip stay may also be due to limited time available because of job obligations. For the most part, laborer type (blue collar) occupations, require a 5-7 day work week with breaks during holiday weekends or as a result of accumulated sick or vacation leave. As it relates to leisure and occupation, the study done by Semkus and Peterman, (1990), found that occupational properties influences patterns of leisure behavior. In this study, blue collar workers who stayed the shortest amount of time represented the highest percentage of workers for any length of stay. Further analysis revealed that when race is combined with occupation, the association is significant. The majority of blacks in this study stayed more than 8 days while the majority of white travelers stayed 1-4 days. This difference in the amount of days spent by blacks and whites may be due to the difference in job types and disposable income or income dedicated to travel. Although there is no significant difference between blacks and whites as it relates to length of stay, they do differ in the number of days spent on each trip type. The findings in this study, indicate that occupation is a factor in the length of stay of travelers, however, the interactive influence of race and type of trip should be further investigated. Overall the examination of the analysis for length of stay and marginality predictors support the conclusion that length of stay is a function of or is influenced by income and occupation but not race alone.

Length of stay and education is not significant. However, the respondents who had high school or less education stayed the shorter length of time at the highest rate. This is in line with the occupation type and length of stay, in that individuals with only a high school education would probably have a blue collar occupation. On the other hand, respondents with the highest education level in this study also stayed 1-4 days at a high rate (46.94%). This may be a result of the

type of trip selected and job type rather than the amount of money available. When race alone and length of stay is analyzed, the findings indicate that there is no significant difference between black and white travelers as it relates to length of stay. Although the average length of stay for blacks in this study was 6.67 days, the majority of them stayed more than 8 days on a leisure trip as compared to an average of 6.72 days for white travelers, whose majority of respondents stayed 1-4 days.

Findings associated with hypothesis 2, selecting trips is a function of marginality, suggest that travelers' selection of different trips is influenced by income, occupation and residence. Although, overall, income and trip types selected is associated, the nature of some of the relationships is not as anticipated. When touring vacations and income is examined, respondents with income in the range of  $\leq \$20,000$  did not select touring vacations at a higher rate than those with higher incomes. The extent of touring vacations for participants in this study may be due to time constraints, income available, and occupation. Considering the definition of touring vacation for this study, the time needed to complete a planned travel schedule as well as varying trip costs, differing tour packages, respondents with higher level job positions may allow for flexible schedules and perhaps be more inclined to participate in this trip type. Surprisingly, overall, the rate of selection for theme parks was the lowest rate that any trip was selected in the study. A total of 32 respondents in this study selected theme parks. Blacks ranked theme parks as their fifth choice of trip types and whites ranked theme parks as their sixth choice. This is an interesting result in that theme parks may be viewed as family type trips and would be included if children are involved. However, this study did not investigate the role of children in travel behavior. The largest representation for any trip type in this study was visiting family and relatives by respondents in the lowest income category. Perhaps there are two reasons for this response rate. First, visiting family and relatives is usually a very inexpensive trip in that while residing with family and relatives, they do not have usual lodging and dining expenses. As a guest in family and relatives' homes, expenses are taken care of by their family and relatives. The second premise is

the desire for cultural kin. Although there is a significant difference between black and white travelers, they both ranked visiting family and relatives as their first choice was visiting family and relatives. Both races in this study appear to favor strengthening family ties. Blacks as well as whites have distinct attitudes, styles and preferences which influence travel behavior. Even though black Americans are no longer uncomfortable with working with whites, the idea of being on vacation with and among white “strangers” can make the travel experience disquieting. To decrease possible anxiety, travelers associate with those of “cultural kin.” This increases the comfortability level among visitors and allows the traveler to be in familiar surroundings with familiar behaviors, styles, attitudes, actions, etc. Other selections of trip types differed in percentage and ranking. White travelers preferred cruises and resorts after visiting family and relatives and black travelers preferred city trips as their second choice. When race was added to the equation of income and trip type as a main effect, the associations remained the same indicating that separately race and income is significantly associated with type of trip, however there is no three way interaction. Overall occupation and type of trip is associated, however, for the trip type touring vacations, the nature of that relationship with occupation was not as expected. Participants with White Collar occupations selected touring vacations at a higher rate than travelers with blue collar occupations. Touring Vacations, a vacation by car, bus, or train through scenic areas, is usually a trip that takes more than an hour or two and may very well be longer than a weekend. Since white collar workers would probably have job types which would allow them to take time away from their job to participate in a touring trip, it stands to reason that those with white collar occupations select this trip type at a higher rate than those with blue collar occupations. The nature of this relationship is in line with white collar workers and those with higher income selecting this trip type. For this reason, Blue Collar workers’ (laborers) work schedule may not allow the time needed to take this trip type. White Collar workers ranked cruises and resorts as their first choice. This ranking is different from the general population in this study. Cruises and resorts may be considered as trips of status. For travelers who

feel they have “arrived,” their selection of specialty cruises and visiting certain resorts may be their way of expressing this to their fellow workers, neighbors, etc. This choice may also be a result of the type of job and available income. The results of the Log Linear analysis for race by occupation by type of trip revealed that the combination of race and occupation had no additional effect on type of trip selected. Race alone is significant in determining the type of trip selected and occupation alone is significant in the type of trip selected. The analysis of this study also indicates that residence and type of trip selected is associated. However among the types of trip to select, the nature of the relationship between city trips and touring vacations and residence was not as expected. Respondents who resided in a mostly all black neighborhood selected city trips at a higher rate than travelers who resided in a mostly all white neighborhood. City trip is defined as a trip to a city where you may shop, enjoy entertainment, dine, visit museums, attend theater, and/or just enjoy the city. City trips may also be visits to the inner city where all of these attractions are available. This finding is in agreement with Dwyer and Hutchinson's, (1988) study which indicates a preference among Black Americans for urban activities in developed settings. Participants in city trips can easily control what they participate in and how much (if any) they spend. Some of the local city attractions such as museums may have free admission as well as free guided tours of the city. Therefore range of expense for a city trip can vary with activities selected during the city trip. Craig's (1988) study confirmed this finding in that his study revealed that suburban residents of a southern city indicated that Black Americans tend to participate in inexpensive leisure due to a lack of discretionary income. For touring vacations, travelers who resided in a mostly all white neighborhood selected this trip type at a higher rate than those who reside in a mostly all black neighborhood. Again, as with income and type of trip and occupation and type of trip, visiting family and relatives was selected at the highest rate by those who resided in a mostly all black neighborhood. The greater percentage of both groups who resided in their preferred neighborhood selected the trip visiting family and relatives. Overall for this study, visiting

family and relatives was the trip most selected and apparently the trip assumed most affordable.

Findings for hypothesis 3, travelers will participate in different activities during leisure travel as a function of marginality, suggest that travelers do differ in the activities participated in during leisure travel. Outdoor activities, hunting and fishing, fine arts, camping and hiking, mobile activities, golf, risk skill activities, and boating and skiing were all significantly associated with income. The activities for which there is a significant association with income are varied. The income category for the higher percentage of respondents for each of these activities was  $\geq \$75,001$  except for camping and hiking. Respondents in the \$50,000-75k income category participated in camping and hiking at a rate higher than anyone else for this activity. When these same activities were controlled for income, using Log Linear analysis, race became a main effect in the influence of participation in camping and hiking. This was the only activity when controlled for income that race made a significant difference in the rate of participation. For race and camping and hiking, the association is significantly different. Whites participated in this activity almost three times the rate of blacks. Blacks are .31 times less likely to participate in camping and hiking than whites. The actual activity of camping and hiking does not appear to be an activity of choice for black respondents in this study. Due to low participation in risk skill activities, the study did not control for this activity. It appears that participation in activities during leisure travel is varied based on interest rather than income or affordability alone. The activities examined are not all considered “status” activities and may be participated in by all income levels. Race did not make a difference in the participation rate of outdoor activities, hunting and fishing, fine arts, mobile activities, golf, risk skill activities, and boating and skiing.

A significant relationship between education and exercise-health, hunting and fishing, fine arts, camping and hiking, golf, risk skill activities and boating and skiing existed in this study. When these activities were controlled for education, race became a main effect in the participation rate of hunting and fishing. Hunting and fishing with race alone was not significant but education

and hunting and fishing is significantly associated in this study. However when race is combine simultaneously with education it strengthens the association for participation by respondents who had a 4 year degree. As it relates to hunting and fishing, the higher the income, the higher the rate of participation. This is a surprising result in that this study hypothesized the opposite. Although there appears to be no difference in participation by race, perhaps participation in this activity may be due to showmanship and sport. Apparently hunting and fishing is perceived by those in the higher income category as a “leisure vacation” rather than an activity of “necessity or survival.” Camping and hiking and boating and water skiing and race are significantly associated. Also combined with education, there is a 3 way interaction. Respondents participating in camping and hiking and boating and water skiing at the highest rate had 4 year degrees. However, there was a difference between the respondents of these activities. Race and camping and hiking and boating and skiing associated. Blacks are .31 times less likely to participate in camping and hiking than whites and .40 times less likely to participate in boating and water skiing than whites. Race did not appear to make a difference in the participated rate of a difference in participation rate of exercise-health, fine arts, golf and risk-skill activities. The activities which are significantly associated with education also appear to defy reason. The only additional activity that was not included in the income and activity associated is exercise-health. All of the respondents who participated in this analysis had either a 4 year degree or had post graduate education.

In analyzing occupation travelers differed in participated in, outdoor activities and games. In comparing blue collar and white collar workers, travelers who participated in the activities in which there was a significant association with occupation had white collar occupations. Race was not a main effect in the participation rate of any of these activities. These activities were varied and did not appear to be limited to specific types.

Immobile activities, camping and hiking, golf, risk skill activities and boating and water skiing were all significantly associated with residence in this study. Several of the activities in this study were participated in across

marginality lines but at different rates. Respondents' level of participation in these specific activities while compared to location of residence, does not necessarily agree with Edwards(1981) who concluded that Black Americans living in predominately white neighborhoods had the same activities as white travelers. Although Black travelers may reside in an "advantage" neighborhood they may not have chosen to become totally assimilated to the majority culture and life style. When all of the 14 activities for each marginality predictor are compared, popular art and association-sociability activities were not participated in and not a function of any of the predictors of marginality. Lindsay and Ogle(1972), concluded that although all socioeconomic groups may have similar preferences for outdoor recreation, all groups do not have equal financial resources to participate in these activities. Due to small cell frequencies and low participation in some activities, the study did not control for some activities and behavior variables.

The findings for the final hypothesis, black travelers will differ from white travelers as a function of marginality, suggest that there are significant differences between black and white travelers as it relates to travel behavior. Black travelers differed from white travelers in their type of trip selected. Each race ranked trips differently. However, both groups ranked visiting family and relatives as their first selection. More specifically, for each trip type black and white travelers were significantly different in the average number of days spent on each trip. For all trip types, the average stay for white travelers was longer than blacks except visiting family and relatives. Although whites visit family and relatives as do black travelers, whites stay a shorter length of time. This finding may suggest that the family connection or cultural kin may be closer for blacks than whites. As it relates to activities, in this study, blacks and whites differed in participation in immobile activities, popular art, camping and hiking, risk skill activities and boating and water skiing. Almost 82 percent of the black travelers in this study participated in immobile activities. While slightly more than 73 percent of the white respondents participated in the same trip. Although the participation rate was relatively close, there was a significant difference between blacks and whites

for this activity. And blacks were 1.6 times more likely to participate in resting, loafing around, enjoying T.V., radio or other media during leisure travel than whites. Blacks appear to not be involved or participate in any activity during leisure travel which would require work or energy. Perhaps the perception of leisure or vacation among blacks mean little or no “work.” This may be especially true if this is their 1 annual trip. The activities participated in may also be influenced by type of trip. Since blacks selected visiting family and friends at the highest rate, then immobile activities would facilitate quality time with family members during the visit.

Popular art was not significantly associated with any predictors of marginality however it is significantly associated with race. Slightly more than 20 percent of the white travelers in this study participated in popular art versus almost 14 percent of the black travelers. The nature of the overall relationship with popular art is not as expected in that it was hypothesized that blacks would participate in this activity at a higher rate than whites. The results of the analysis indicate that blacks are .61 times less likely to participate in wood working, remodeling, sewing, gardening and cooking during leisure travel. While blacks may participate in these activities at home, this does not appear to be an activity of choice during leisure travel. Black travelers in this study are .31 times less likely to participate in this activity than white travelers. Almost 23 percent of the white respondents in this study participated in camping and hiking, while only slightly more than 8 percent of the black respondents participated in this same activity. Camping and hiking appears to also be an activity of race or cultural preference for participants in this study. Although overall participation in risk skill activities was very low in this study, blacks and whites still significantly differed in participation rate in this activity. Less than 1 percent of the black travelers in this study participated in risk skill activities and were .16 times less likely to participate in these activities than white travelers. Only 5 percent of the white travelers participated in the risk skill activities. For boating and water skiing, the rate of participation by White travelers is over 2 times the rate of

black travelers in this study thus Blacks were .40 times less likely to participate in this activity than whites.

Black and white travelers participated in different activities during leisure travel. These variations in recreational behavior may be due to differences in socio-economic factors such as lower or different income status, lower educational level, lower occupational level or segregated housing. In this study black and white travelers are significantly different at the .05 probability level or better, for income, education, occupation, residence, marital status, race and type of trip, race and immobile activities, popular art, camping and hiking, risk skill activities and boating and water skiing.

Overall black and white travelers do differ in their travel behavior and these differences may be attributed to income, education, occupation and residence and in some instances race.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR TOURISM PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **Tourism Planning and Development**

To better understand and effectively serve the black and white leisure traveler, the tourism industry must identify the marginality predictors responsible for affecting travel behavior, especially as it relates to types of trip selected, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel. It is important that the marketer understand what influences the behavior of the consumer and how to serve the consumer more effectively. The tourism company that takes time to understand the consumer and focus on the customer by developing marketing strategies that are in the best interest of the customer will have an advantage over its competitor.

In marketing a destination, it is essential to understand what motivates individuals to purchase or select a particular product and participate in specific activities. The data derived from this study would be useful in assisting the tourism industry in developing race specific (black and/or white) marketing strategies. Developing an appropriate marketing mix is essential in developing a

successful marketing plan. The marketing mix which consists of promotion, product, price and place (distribution) would be invaluable in developing the product, fairly pricing it, properly distributing it, and effectively promoting it, and making sure it fits the targeted customer, then the result will be a satisfied, repeat customer (Kothler, Bowen and Makens, (1996).

The significant contribution of this study was the discovery that black and white leisure travelers differ in their travel behavior such as type of trip selected, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel and that these differences are due to marginality predictors income, education, occupation and residence. The study was able to extract the type of trips blacks prefer for leisure travel as compared to the type of trips white travelers selected. The study also examined a comparative analysis of the average length of stay for each trip type between the races, and finally the actual activities participated in during leisure travel by each group was discovered. The interactive affect of variables in the study and the role of each variable in the travel behavior of respondents is also discovered. As a result of this information culture/race specific vacation packages can be developed, based on specific group interests as for as type of trips preferred, the average length of stay during leisure travel and preferred activities to participate while vacationing. This information will also be of importance to tour operators and destination/attraction promoters as they develop their marketing plan.

The finding of this research will aid in the planning and development of strategic marketing programs focused at culturally dissimilar individuals. It will also aid tourism managers and policy makers to understand what is important to individual ethnic groups and describes differences between these groups which would be useful to the tourism industry in developing and designing successful destinations.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Results of this study strongly suggest that black and white travelers do differ in their travel behavior, thus underlying differences in behavior due to racial/cultural

differences. Because of the data used in this research, the relationships could only be inferred. In order to fully understand the role (if any) race/culture has on travel behavior, (as implied by this study) there is a need to explore cultural antecedents of decision making and behavioral variables. The present knowledge of travel behavior patterns of Black American consumers is very limited. Because previous research by Stamps and Stamps (1985) and others concluded that social class and race were inconclusive predictors in explaining leisure participation, further research to investigate the relationships between beliefs, and cultural values which ultimately affect travel behavior would be invaluable to the tourism industry.

A second direction for further research that is suggested and supported by the findings of this research is the more detailed segmentation of the black travel market. The findings of this study suggest diversity within each race as it relates to travel behavior. As a result, further research to identify market segments common to blacks and whites as well as identify or establish markets unique to each racial group is needed. While results of this study identified similarities and differences in the travel behavior of black and white travelers, on going longitudinal research into the nature these groups, especially the black population, would be feasible.

In view of increasing visibility of the Black Traveler in the tourism market, the growth in discretionary income available in the black population, and the importance of cultural tourism, studies focusing on identifying variations between in the travel behavior of Black and White Americans should be done. It would also be pertinent to examine the assimilation theory in relation to travel behavior and values associated with decision making or the extent to which blacks identify with white culture and if so to what extent this assimilation affects travel behavior. Qualitative, on site, in depth focus groups would be useful in obtaining first hand specific information from travelers during specific trips that will be useful in marketing development. Cross cultural studies done by Cheek, et al., (1976); Washburne (1978); Kelly (1980); Edwards (1981); McMillen (1983) Stamps and Stamps (1985) have employed a social aggregate approach and was

used to study ethnic differentiation. Further research investigating travel behavior based on cultural differences and values rather than economic disparities would prove to be important in tourism development. Finally other areas of interest to be investigated are intergenerational studies comparing grandparents or retirees' travel behavior and choices to their grandchildren and investigating the role of children in travel behavior in a family.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of this research provided some explanation for the difference in travel behavior between black and white travelers. It also examined whether these differences in type of trip selected, length of stay and activities participated in during leisure travel were due to the marginality predictors, income, education, occupation and residence. Overall some of the results of this study seem to imply that differences in travel behavior of Black and White travelers is a function of poverty (income) and or discrimination (inaccessibility). This finding is consistent with Washburne's 1978 marginality thesis which suggests that poverty and income and various consequences of discrimination inhibits participation by Black Americans in leisure activities. However, on the other hand, the results of this study also seem to imply that Black and White Americans participate in different activities (controlling for social class) as a result of ethnic differences. These differences in the participation pattern of Black and White travelers in this study continue to exist. However, it is not clear if these differences are due solely to ethnic influences or preferences, marginality (income, education occupation and residence) or a combination of both.

The findings of this study also examine the role of and identify possible directions for further cross-cultural research. Although the research questions of this study were successfully investigated, the results of this study raise a number of important questions for further investigation. It is anticipated that the results of this study will serve as an initiator in encouraging further research into the relationship between travel behavior, race/culture, values and their role in travel behavior and marginality.