TOURISTS’ USE OF EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGIES
AND ITS IMPACT ON WELL-BEING

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by
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ABSTRACT

Researchers have explored emotions in the travel context and have attempted to link emotions to well-being, yet they have done so with the underlying belief that emotions are static. According to emotion regulation theory, emotions are variable and can be regulated during their generative process. To test this notion, I examined: (1) what emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) tourists used during their vacations; (2) patterns of change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation; (3) the interaction between patterns of change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics; and (4) the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being.

The results are presented in three chapters (i.e., Chapters 2, 3 and 4), each of which was written as a separate manuscript. In the first manuscript (Chapter 2) I documented what ERSs tourists used during their travel experiences. Guided by the construct of emotion regulation, 11 key themes comprising 3 overarching categories of ERSs (i.e., self-focused, situation-focused and travel-member-focused) were uncovered. All results validated the appropriateness of using emotion regulation theory in the tourism context and contributed to tourism research by documenting the transient, dynamic, and variable nature of emotions.

The second manuscript (Chapter 3) focused on examining patterns of change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation as well as whether there were significant interactions between the patterns of change and socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics. Using an on-line survey and travel diaries, 152 tourists exhibited significant patterns of change when using 6 ERSs with positive emotions and two ERSs with negative emotions over time during their vacations. Some socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics were found to play a
significant role in explaining the patterns of change associated with using ERSs with positive and negative emotions over time.

In the third manuscript (Chapter 4) I explored the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being. Tourists’ use of ERSs was recorded daily while their perceived well-being was measured one day before and after their vacation. Results indicated that tourists’ perceived well-being differ before and after a vacation. In general, they had significantly higher perceptions of well-being after a vacation than before a vacation. The results also revealed that tourists who used ERSs were more likely to perceive a higher sense of post-travel well-being compared with those who didn’t use ERSs.

As a whole, the findings have significant theoretical and managerial implications. This dissertation introduced the construct of emotion regulation theory to the tourism field. By accounting for the generative process of an emotional response, this study takes the study of emotions a step further. Instead of recording and examining the status of emotions at a certain point in time, this study presents the possibility for tourists to manipulate their short-lived, subjective feeling, and how to regulate that feeling into positivity. This study also showcases how to extend emotion regulation research in tourism by using a longitudinal perspective through the use of daily diaries. In addition, the results provide a glimpse into how tourism and hospitality professionals should modify programs/experiences in response to tourists’ ERSs.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The travel and tourism industry operates on the premise that traveling is good for people and everyone should travel to experience its multiple benefits (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). Theoretically, traveling provides escape, freedom, problem solving, energy, new lifeblood, positive emotions, happiness, and more (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Krippendorf, 1987; Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, & Ram, 2012). Empirically, however, little evidence of these positive benefits of traveling exists (Gretzel, Fesenmaier, Formica, & O’Leary, 2006).

One of the benefits—positive emotions—has been linked to increased satisfaction, a modified destination image, positive word-of-mouth, repeat travel, even improved well-being (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Milman, 1998; Nawijn, 2011a, 2011b; Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, & Vingerhoets, 2010; Sirgy, Kruger, Lee, & Yu, 2011), but deserves more attention. Previously, researchers studied emotions with the underlying belief that they are static. Evidence suggests, however, that emotions are variable and can be regulated during their generative process (Gross & Barrett, 2011; Gross & John, 2003). This notion has been addressed through emotion regulation theory, which indicates that emotion regulation involves initiating, inhibiting or modulating one’s state of mind in a given situation (Gross & John, 2003). It requires individuals to use their cognitive resources to appraise emotional stimuli, and move the emotional transformation of the response in a more positive direction by successfully using regulation strategies (Gross, 2013). Given that emotions are short-lived (Beedie, Teery, & Lane, 2005), and such transformation is momentary, it is very likely that tourists are using emotion regulation strategies to cope with the negative or less positive emotional responses to the travel experience. Few tourism researchers have studied emotions from this dynamic perspective.
In addition, most researchers who have examined emotions experienced during travel have done so by asking individuals to recall their emotions after their travel experience (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Sirakaya, Petrick, & Choi, 2004). This approach has failed to account for the transient, dynamic, and variable nature of emotions, leaving the validity of the findings in question. It has also limited our knowledge of how tourists regulate their emotions or the potentially positive outcomes of such regulation (e.g., satisfaction, positive post travel behaviors, improved health). According to Gross and John (2003), regulation strategies lead to positive outcomes such as enhanced psychological well-being and good social relationships.

Documenting a similar relationship in a travel context would be groundbreaking! Hence, the primary purpose of this study is to more holistically understand tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs), and the impact of using them on well-being during the travel experience. Specifically, the objectives of this dissertation are:

1. To discover what ERSs tourists use during their vacations;
2. To examine the patterns of change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation;
3. To assess the interactions between patterns of change in tourists’ use of ERSs and socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics;
4. To document the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being.

Chapter 2 addresses the first objective; Chapter 3 focuses on the second and third objectives; and Chapter 4 addresses the fourth objective. The results of this interdisciplinary study are expected to be the first to link emotion regulation to the travel context. Introducing emotion regulation theory to the travel and tourism literature is important for a number of
reasons. First, utilizing emotion regulation theory as a guiding conceptual framework challenges the existing view of (i.e., treating emotions as a static response) and approach to studying (i.e., post-hoc assessment) emotions, which, according to Gross and John (2003), may be incorrect. Second, the novel social structure that accompanies pleasure travel may potentially increase individuals' reappraisal of their emotions. Gross and John (2003) suggest that reappraisal may lead to a more positive perception of well-being. Third, since much of the existing research on emotion regulation is lab-based and/or retrospective, collecting data on emotion regulation during individuals' travel experience contributes to existing knowledge about strategies being used to manage emotional responses. And, fourth, from a practical perspective, studying emotion regulation in a pleasure travel context: (a) provides insight on how management might be able to effectively manage tourists’ emotions during a trip; (b) helps the industry to maximize its potential to increase tourists’ well-being; and (c) helps travel providers better target consumers, develop products that respond to their health-related needs, and more.

**Literature Review**

In this section I first review the general literature on emotions in the tourism context, and then review tourism literature specifically focusing on emotions and well-being. I follow up with a review of the process model of emotion regulation, ERSs, and how they relate to health and well-being, which not only account for the important nature of emotions, but establish how a person can manipulate different strategies to regulate their emotions during the generative process. In an effort to showcase how a similar construct has been applied in the field, I close with a review of the leisure stress and coping literature, including the parallels and distinctions between emotion regulation and leisure stress-coping.
Emotion research in tourism

Researchers have used the terms mood, affect and emotions interchangeably to examine emotions and their link to tourist satisfaction. Mattila (2001) investigated the effect of mood on service quality and satisfaction with two types of hospitality service encounters. She found that the effect of mood is limited to brief and routine types of service interactions. Sirakaya et al. (2004) documented a significant relationship between mood states during evaluation and satisfaction with a travel-related product or service. De Rojas and Camarero (2008) examined the moderator role of moods on the relationship between expectations and satisfaction in the context of cultural tourism. They found that a more positive mood makes the disconfirmation of expectations reinforce the satisfaction of the visitor. Jang Bai, Hu, and Wu (2009) employed an affect scale to measure positive and negative affective states of Taiwanese seniors.

More recently, researchers have studied emotions role in tourists’ experiences (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2013; Mitas et al., 2012) because they are more direct, intense reactions to events that happen in an individual’s environment (Beedie, Terry, & Lane, 2005) and they dramatically effect individuals’ thinking and behavior, which leads to long-term consequences for quality of life (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Mitas et al., 2012). Nawijn and his colleagues (2010, 2013) were some of the first researchers to study emotions and emotion change over the course of a vacation. Their perspective on emotions in a vacation context was different from previous researchers who treated emotions as static and an entire experience as a simple point in time (Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2011b). For example, Nawijn (2010) proposed a holiday happiness curve based on data indicating that tourists felt relatively worse during the first couple of days of their holiday, best during 70% of the holiday time, and slightly worse and then more positive during the last part of the holiday. Later (i.e., 2013), Nawijn and his colleagues tracked
vacationers’ daily emotions during their vacation using a daily dairy. Their findings indicated that fluctuations in emotions are related to length of vacation: vacationers on an 8- to 13-day trip experienced significant changes in the balance of their emotions over the course of their trip.

Lin et al. (2014) examined changes in specific positive and negative emotions during a vacation, as well as their interactions with personality. They found that travelers were high in both positivity and arousal, which was exhibited through an inverted U-shape curve. They also found that travelers reported feeling more positive at the front end of their vacation rather than at the end of their vacation. With respect to personality, they found that it may play a role in emotions experienced across individuals’ vacations.

Although these findings are very interesting and informative, researchers have adopted the underlying belief that emotions are static at each point of data collection, which is erroneous. According to Gross and Barrett (2011), emotions are not static throughout the travel experience; they are variable and can be regulated during their generative process. In fact, along the timeline of the unfolding emotional response, emotions can be regulated at five points in the emotion generative process (Gross, 2001). Specifically, before an emotional response has been generated, a person can use antecedent-focused strategies to regulate an emotional response at four different points of the emotion generative process (Gross, 1998). In addition, after an emotional response has been initiated and is underway, a person can take actions to regulate the emotional response (Gross, 1998). I accounted for the transient, dynamic, and variable nature of emotions in this study by examining tourists’ use of ERSs over time during the travel experience.
Emotions and well-being in the travel context

Researchers have linked individuals’ emotions during the travel experience to their post-travel well-being (also referred to as “quality of life,” “mental health,” and “happiness” in the travel and tourism literature). Evidence from a number of studies (e.g., Compton, Smith, Cornish, & Qualls, 1996; King & Napa, 1998; McGregor & Little, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001) has indicated that well-being is best conceived as multi-dimensional, consisting of hedonic (i.e., subjective well-being) and eudaimonic (i.e., psychological well-being) dimensions. The hedonic dimension focuses on happiness, defined as the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001), while the eudaimonic dimension considers well-being to consist of more than just happiness, and is concerned with meaningfulness (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and living well or in a fully and deeply satisfying way (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Despite these distinctions, evidence has shown a high level of statistical covariance between the experience of hedonia and eudaimonia, suggesting substantial overlap between the two dimensions of well-being (Bauer, McAdams, & Pals, 2008; Waterman, Schwartz, & Conti, 2008). Moreover, experiencing eudaimonia necessarily results in experiencing hedonic enjoyment, but not all hedonic enjoyment is derived from eudaimonia (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993; Waterman et al., 2008). Recognizing that much of the recent research on emotions and well-being in a travel context has only focused on the hedonic or subjective dimensions of well-being, this study incorporated both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions in order to have a holistic understanding of tourists’ well-being.

Following is a review of studies conducted by travel and tourism researchers on emotions and well-being. Gilbert and Abdullah (2004), for example, addressed subjective well-being by operationalizing it as positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. They found that
traveling could change vacationers’ sense of well-being. In a similar study Nawijn et al. (2010) examined the effects of post-trip happiness and whether a holiday trip boosts post-trip happiness. They did not report any significant difference on post-trip happiness, but indicated that vacationers reported a higher degree of pre-trip happiness than non-vacationers. Nawijn (2011a) continued examining the effects of traveling on happiness, this time focusing on its long-term effects. He found that traveling contributed positively to happiness, but its effect was small and short-lived.

Researchers have also examined component(s) of subjective well-being such as life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Nawijn (2010) collected data on travelers' daily mood and general life satisfaction during a holiday, which in total he referred to as “happiness.” His results suggested that there is a Holiday Happiness Curve, which changes over time. For example, his Curve showed that travelers' average mood was high, but mood was lower among people who had just begun their holiday and higher among people who had been traveling longer. Mood then declined slightly, but increased during the last part of the holiday. A notable limitation of his study was that he failed to recruit the same group of participants and monitor their mood change in order to construct the Curve. Instead, he used a cross-sectional approach to record different participants' mood at different parts of their trips, which resulted in a large variance for the Curve.

Nawijn (2011b) used “life satisfaction” in a second study to examine the determinants of travelers' daily happiness on vacation. He incorporated an Affect Balance Score to measure travelers' hedonic level of affect, and found that travelers were generally high on hedonic level of affect, with positive affect exceeding negative affect almost fourfold on vacation. Affect balance was higher than generally observed in everyday life, whereas no difference on life satisfaction
was found. Holiday stress and attitude towards the travel party were found as the most important
determinants of daily affect balance. According to Nawijn (2011b), these results indicated that
holiday trips or vacations are not always pleasant. Other researchers have come to the same
conclusion. They have reported travel-related health problems such as homesickness (Kop,
Vingerhoets, Kruithof, & Gottdiener, 2003; Pearce, 1981; Van Heck & Vingerhoets, 2007;
Vingerhoets, Sanders, & Kuper, 1997); worrying during trips (Larsen, Brun, & Ogaard, 2009);
relational problems (Ryan, 1991); as well as culture shock (Pearce, 1981). Hence, it is plausible
that experiencing a holiday with unpleasantness or stress could lead to less happiness (Nawijn et
al., 2010; Nawijn, 2011b). There is no research to my knowledge that has addressed how tourists
cope with such holiday unpleasantness or stress, which might be a source of tourists’ negative
emotions.

Overall, Nawijn’s (2011b) findings revealed that travelers’ positive affect exceeded their
negative affect on vacation. Building off his work as well as that of positive psychologists, Mitas
et al. (2012) examined daily positive emotion development before, during, and after a leisure
tavel experience. They used a developmental within-participants design to determine if
Nawijn’s (2010) Holiday Happiness Curve is a plausible account of positive emotion
development associated with leisure travel at the individual level. They graphically and
statistically examined change in daily positive emotion across 16 days, including pre, during, and
post leisure travel experiences. Consistent with Nawijn’s model, positive emotions overall, and
joy and interest in particular, increased before leisure travel, were elevated during travel, and
declined post travel.

Nawijn et al. (2013) used a diary method to track vacationers’ daily emotions during their
vacation. This study was different from previous studies on travelers’ emotions, which have
treated an entire vacation as a simple point in time (Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2011b). Their results revealed the important relationship between fluctuations in emotions and length of vacation, indicating that vacationers on an 8- to 13-day trip experienced significant changes in the balance of their emotions over the course of their trip.

Lin, Kerstetter, Nawijn and Mitas (2014) further examined changes in specific positive and negative emotions during a vacation, and found that travelers were high in both positivity and arousal, which was exhibited through an inverted U-shape curve. In general, travelers reported feeling more positive at the front end of their vacation rather than at the end of their vacation. Their findings also revealed the significant role that personality may play in travelers’ emotions during a vacation.

To address whether a link exists between emotions and well-being, Sirgy et al. (2011) used the bottom-up spillover theory of subjective well-being. According to Sirgy et al., the basic premise of the bottom-up spillover theory is that life satisfaction is functionally related to satisfaction with all of life’s domains and sub-domains, and therefore the concept of satisfaction is hierarchical, i.e. life satisfaction is influenced by satisfaction with life domains such as family, which are influenced by lower levels of life concerns such as social events related to a vacation. Building on this premise, Sirgy et al. developed a model to describe how travel-related events contribute to positive and negative affect in various life domains such as family and work, which in turn spill over to life satisfaction. They identified specific sources of positive (e.g., being able to break away from daily routine through travel) and negative affect (e.g., feeling tired and exhausted traveling from one place to another) that play a significant role in tourists’ overall sense of well-being.
In general, studies on leisure travel, emotions and well-being report that people have an increased sense of well-being either before or after traveling than those who do not travel. There is also evidence of “peak” fluctuations of emotions during a trip (Lin et al., 2014; Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2010; Nawijn et al., 2013). However, most of the existing studies have been built off of the underlying belief that emotions are static and, in some cases, that individuals can recall their emotions after their travel experience (Sirakaya et al., 2004). They have failed, however, to take emotions' dynamic performance into account. Hence, I examined tourists’ emotions and well-being from a dynamic perspective by accounting for their use of ERSs in the travel context.

**Emotion regulation theory**

Emotions are human's best allies, helping people to respond energetically and effectively to the opportunities and difficulties they encounter (Lazarus, 1991). There are times, however, when emotions are human's worst enemies, leading people to think and behave in ways that are destructive (Parrott, 2001). As one of the fastest growing areas within psychology (Koole, 2009), the field of emotion regulation deals with how to cultivate emotions that are helpful and how to manage emotions that are harmful (Gross, 2013).

Gross and John (2003) conceptualized emotion regulation as a process that involves initiating, inhibiting or modulating a person’s state of mind or behavior in a given situation. It requires the activation of a goal to up- or down-regulate either the magnitude or duration of the emotional response (Gross, Sheppes, & Urry, 2011). For example, people may try to increase positive emotions, such as love, interest and joy (Quoidbach, Berry, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2010), while they also try to decrease negative emotions, such as anger, sadness and anxiety (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006). Less frequently people try to increase negative emotions, such
as anger, when collecting debts (Sutton, 1991), or decrease positive emotions, such as amusement, during a serious meeting (Gruber, Mauss, & Tamir, 2011).

Whatever their goals, emotions may be activated in oneself or in someone else. For example, if Romeo regulates his own emotions he is intrinsically regulating his emotions; if Juliette regulates Romeo’s emotions, they are now being extrinsically regulated (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Once a goal to regulate emotion has been activated, explicit, and implicit emotion regulation processes are utilized. A prototypic instance of explicit emotion regulation process is when a speaker tries hard to look calm even though he is very anxious before a talk. However, the emotion regulatory process may also be implicit, and take place with unconscious awareness (Gross, 2013). In the case of the speaker, he may quickly turn his attention away from individuals in the audience who do not look friendly. Gross (2013) suggests that researchers account for the various emotion regulation processes used by individuals, including explicit, conscious, effortful, and controlled regulation to implicit, unconscious, effortless, and automatic regulation (Gyurak, Gross, & Etkin, 2011; Mauss, Bunge, & Gross, 2007).

People do lots of different things to regulate their emotions (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). Gross (1998) proposed a process model of emotion regulation to explain this array of regulatory activities on the premise that specific emotion regulation strategies can be differentiated along the timeline of the unfolding emotional response. He stipulated that an emotion can be regulated at five points in the emotion generative process (Gross, 2001). Each of these five points represents a family of emotion regulation strategies: (1) selection of the situation, (2) modification of the situation, (3) deployment of attention, (4) change of cognitions, and (5) modulation of experiential, behavioral, or physiological responses. Since this information-processing model treats each point in the emotion-generative process as a potential
target for regulation (Gross, 2013), these five families of emotion regulation strategies can be distinguished even further.

First, as the most forward-looking antecedent-focused strategy, situation selection involves individuals taking action in order to end up in a desirable situation in which they can expect desirable emotions (Gross, 2013). Considering the complexity of situations, self knowledge is required for decision making about which situations to seek and which ones to avoid (Gross, 1998).

Situation modification is another antecedent-focused strategy that targets situations. It refers to directly modifying a situation in order to change its emotional impact (Gross, 2014). Examples of this strategy are to convert a meeting into a phone conference, or to convince a neighbor to turn down loud music. Such efforts are referred to as problem-focused coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and constitute an important part of regulating a person’s emotions. As Gross (1998) suggested, however, there are no clear boundaries between situation selection and situation modification because efforts to modify a situation always involve a new situation, which, to some extent, overlaps with the meaning of situation selection. Both strategies utilize external, physical environments to regulate emotions (Gross, 2014).

The third antecedent-focused strategy—attentional deployment—is used to direct a person’s attention in a situation in order to influence his/her emotions, particularly when it is hard to modify the situation (Gross, 2014). Examples of attentional deployment involve distraction, concentration and rumination. Distraction emphasizes putting a person’s attention on other aspects of a situation, or simply moving attention away from the situation, or calling up other thoughts or memories to change a person’s internal focus (Gross, 1998; Thiruchselvam, Hajcak, & Gross, 2012). Concentration refers to a person’s ability to absorb attention while
working or being in other situations. It may create a self-sustaining transcendent state, which Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defined as flow. Rumination refers to directing attention to a person’s feelings and their consequences; if rumination is on negative emotions, it may lead to severe depressive symptoms (Just & Alloy, 1997).

Cognitive change, the fourth antecedent-focused strategy, deals with modifying a person’s internal environment (i.e. thoughts). Specifically, this strategy targets altering the emotional significance through modifying how a person appraises a situation (Gross, 2014). A particularly well-recognized example of cognitive change is reappraisal, which often results in decreased negative emotional experience, or increased positive emotions (Gross, 1998).

The fifth family of emotion regulation strategies—response modulation—is often used to influence experiential, behavioral, or physiological components of an emotional response (Gross, 2014). This family of strategies focuses on altering the emotional response through taking actions because the emotion response has already been initiated and is underway (Gross, 2001). Evidence suggests that physical activities such as breathing relaxation techniques, drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, taking drugs, and eating food can decrease the negative aspects of an emotional experience (Gross, 1998, 2014; Gross & John, 2003; Thayer et al., 1994). Emotion expressive suppression also falls within the scope of response modulation (Gross, 1998). Evidence, however, suggests that inhibiting expressive behaviors may decrease the intensity of positive emotions (e.g., pride), not negative emotions (e.g., disgust; Gross & Levenson, 1997) and thus does not fully reflect the essence of the family of response modulation strategies.

According to Gross’ (1998) process model, different forms of emotion regulation have different consequences. This is because they influence the emotion-generative process at different stages in the “assembly” of an emotion (Gross, 2013). An illustration of this idea is to
distinguish between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. In Gross' (1998) model, the first four families of regulation strategies are antecedent-focused and the fifth one is response-focused. The antecedent-focused strategies refer to things a person can do before the emotion response has become fully activated and changed behaviors (Gross, 2001). The response-focused strategy focuses on things a person can do once an emotion response has already been generated and is underway (Gross, 2001).

Since the distinction between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies is central to Gross' (1988) theory, two exemplars of each that people use commonly in everyday life are cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Cognitive reappraisal, representing the antecedent-focused strategies, is a form of cognitive change that construes a potentially emotion-eliciting situation in a way that helps change its emotional impact (Gross & John, 2003). For example, a person might view taking an exam on a snowy morning as an opportunity to challenge oneself and feel accomplished rather than as a painful experience. As an antecedent-focused strategy, cognitive reappraisal occurs earlier, and can be employed before the emotion response has been fully generated (Gross & John, 2003). In other words, cognitive reappraisal can efficiently alter the subsequent emotion response if adopted in time.

Therefore, cognitive reappraisal can affectively lead to decreased levels of negative emotions and increased positive emotions, which has no impact on, even decreases, sympathetic nervous system responses (Gross, 2013). Cognitive reappraisal can also lead to lesser activation in emotion-generative brain regions such as the amygdala (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Cognitively, reappraisal either has no impact on subsequent memory or actually improves it (Richards & Gross, 2000), and can enhance exam performance (Jamieson, Mendes, Blackstock,
Socially, reappraisal has no detectable adverse consequences for social affiliation when tested in the laboratory (Butler et al., 2003).

In contrast, expressive suppression is a form of response modulation that inhibits one’s ongoing emotion-expressive behavior (Gross & John, 2003). Using a classic example, imagine that during a group card game a person holds a great hand while keeping a poker face. According to Gross' (1998) process model, this is a response-focused strategy that comes relatively late in the emotion-generative process. The strategy primarily modifies the behavioral component of the emotion response (Gross, 2013). In terms of down-regulating negative emotions, expressive suppression can be effective in decreasing the behavioral expression of negative emotions, but it is not helpful in reducing the experiential component of negative emotions because suppression doesn’t directly target the experience (Gross & John, 2003).

It is important to note that suppression may cause discrepancy between a person’s true inner experience and his/her outer expression (Rogers, 1951). Socially, this sense of not being true to oneself, of being inauthentic, or of not being honest with others (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997) may bring negative feelings to that person, leading to a less positive response from partners, and to an increase in partners’ blood pressure levels (Gross, 2013). Such discrepancy alienates the individual not only from the self, but also from others (Gross & John, 2003). Affectively, suppression leads to decreased positive but not negative emotions, increased sympathetic nervous system responses, and greater activation in emotion-generative brain regions such as the amygdala (Gross, 2013). Cognitively, suppression leads to worse memory (Gross, 2013).

Mounting evidence suggests that our emotional responses, such as anger, anxiety, and depression can influence physical health (Suls & Bunde, 2005). It is thus critical to understand
the role emotion regulation plays in our overall well-being. Gross and John (2003) have suggested that the use of ERSs is related to a person’s psychological well-being. Reappraisal has been shown to be positively related to psychological well-being, whereas suppression has been negatively associated with well-being (Gross & John, 2003). Specifically, individuals who used reappraisal were found to have fewer symptoms of depression, higher levels of environmental mastery, personal growth, self-acceptance, and a clearer purpose in life, whereas suppressors were found to avoid and lack close social relationships and indicate less life satisfaction, lower self-esteem, and a less optimistic attitude about the future (Gross & John, 2003). DeSteno, Gross, and Kubzansky (2013) found direct effects of emotion on health, depending on physiological alterations that occur with affective states. They also suggested indirect effects of emotion on health, which influence individuals’ decisions and behaviors such as diet, exercise, coping strategies, and seeking social support.

In addition, Quoidbach, Mikolajczak, and Gross (2015) emphasized the importance of time frames when applying the process model of emotion regulation because it is likely that people want to extend the positive experience of their life events such as traveling well beyond a few iterations of the emotion-generative process. Quoidbach et al. (2015) summarized three types of processes that traveling typically involves, which are anticipating future events, experiencing present events, and reminiscing about past events. They also provided a list of ERSs before, during and after traveling, which are consistent with the five families of strategies in Gross’ (1998) process model of emotion regulation. This study took into account the important time frame (i.e., during the travel experience) to examine tourists’ use of ERSs.

The previous discussion reflects the importance of understanding emotion regulation, which is closely linked to people's affective, cognitive and social lives. It is surprising to find
that travel and tourism studies have not incorporated emotion regulation theory. Take, for example, a foreign tourist in Amsterdam who was shocked by the biking culture where people bike anywhere, even on the sidewalk. She felt unsafe due to the number and behavior of bicyclists; however, she convinced herself to embrace the local culture and cheer up. This momentary regulatory strategy led to decreased levels of negative emotions and increased levels of positive emotions experienced, which contributed to her whole travel experience in Amsterdam. This study built upon emotion regulation theory to more holistically understand tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies, and the overall impact of ERSs on well-being during the travel experience.

Comparison between emotion regulation and leisure stress-coping

Leisure has been suggested as a means by which individuals can effectively cope with stress and maintain or improve their health. As early as 1993 Coleman and Iso-Ahola proposed a leisure and health model that conceptualized leisure as a way of coping with stress and maintaining good health. They considered self-determination and social support as buffers against stress. Later, Iwasaki and Mannell (2000) introduced a hierarchical notion of leisure stress and coping. They identified two major roles that leisure plays in helping people cope with stress. First, leisure coping beliefs were proposed as a buffer or moderator against stress to maintain good health. They documented hierarchical dimensions of coping beliefs such as leisure friendship, which includes emotional support (Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000). Second, leisure coping strategies were thought to be more situation-specific and intentional, mediating the effect of stress on health (Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000). In other words, leisure has been found to play a mediating or linking role in the stress-health relationship (i.e., stress → leisure → health).
Iwasaki and Mannell also documented hierarchical dimensions of coping strategies such as companionship, escape, and mood enhancement. It is worth noting that emotional support (i.e., leisure coping beliefs) and specific management of emotions (i.e., leisure coping strategies) have been indicated as a way to cope with stress.

While links between leisure stress-coping and emotion management exist, emotion regulation theory has not to my knowledge been addressed in the travel and tourism field. I suggest that several parallels exist between the studies on leisure-stress-coping and travel-emotion-regulation. First, both lines of research deal with a problematic situation during the process of participation, specifically with the reduction of a negative state for a person. Second, cognitive appraisals are used in both lines of research. Coleman and Iso-Ahola’s (1993) coping model includes an appraisal process from primary appraisal to secondary appraisal to reappraisal. Similarly, emotion-regulation research requires cognitive appraisals towards an emotional stimulus before an emotional response has been fully activated and generated (Gross, 2013).

According to the conceptualization of the hierarchical dimensions of leisure stress-coping (Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000), leisure mood management is part of leisure coping strategies. For example, leisure may allow individuals to take a break such as a vacation from a stressful problem either from work or interpersonal relationships. Iwasaki and Mannell (2000) have also suggested that emotional support from friendships may be effective in dealing with a stressful event such as a problem with a relationship.

Fourth, lives are filled with stress, even during a vacation (e.g., Kop et al., 2003; Nawijn et al., 2010; Van Heck & Vingerhoets, 2007). It is unclear in a vacation context, however, whether stress causes negative emotions, or stress results from a negative mood, which works
beneath a person’s consciousness. The on-going discussions on this matter may provide implications for both lines of research on stress-coping and emotion-regulation in the leisure-travel context. Fifth, both coping and emotion-regulation researchers are concerned about potential health outcomes. Leisure has been suggested as a buffer or moderator and interacts with stress to influence health (Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000). The health benefits of leisure, which represent the positive effects of leisure on health, are more apparent when stress levels are higher. Gross and John (2003) also documented a significant association between emotion regulation strategies and mental health.

Despite several parallels, distinctions between both lines of research also exist. The leisure-stress-coping research mainly focuses on dealing with a problematic situation such as increased stress, while diminishing the other role of leisure, which is to provide an opportunity for individuals to enhance a positive mood which may arise as a result of leisure participation. This aspect of mood management is, however, included in the concept of emotion regulation when applied in a travel context. Emotion regulation is not only about down-regulating negative emotions, but also about up-regulating positive emotions to extend and enhance positive affect (Gross, 2013). In the context of leisure travel, the use and application of emotion regulation can effectively address the two roles of leisure in enhancing positive emotions and reducing negative emotions.

Although both lines of research include adjustment and transformation, leisure has been recognized as a way to adjust and cope with stress in stress-coping research, the same is not true for travel. For example, there is evidence that leisure can work as a means of adjustment for negative life events, by using the role of leisure in restoring one’s valued self which is continuous/consistent with the past, and transforming oneself to grow through finding new
opportunities and life perspectives (Kleiber, 1999; Kleiber, Hutchinson, & Williams, 2002). This perspective regards leisure as a way of long-term adjustment to negative life events rather than a way of coping with immediate stressors (Kleiber et al., 2002).

In contrast, the emotion-regulation research has focused on the use of and processes associated with individuals’ cognitive resources. For example, emotion regulation requires individuals to use their cognitive resources to reappraise negative emotional stimuli and transform their response to the positive by successfully using reappraisal strategies (Gross, 2013). Since emotions are short-lived (Beedie et al., 2005), and such transformation is momentary, it is very likely that tourists are using emotion regulation strategies to cope with their emotional responses to the travel experience.

**Methods**

I collected data on the use of ERSs and perceptions of well-being during individuals’ travel experiences. In this section I discuss the data collection process, three study instruments, and data analysis used in this study.

**Data Collection**

In early June 2015 all faculty and staff ($N = 5,071$) at a university in the northeastern United States were contacted via email with a formal invitation (see Appendix A) to participate in an on-line survey. When faculty and staff clicked on the survey link provided in the email, they were sent to a home page that described the study purpose, confidentiality, and privacy protocols. If they agreed to participate in the study they were sent to the first survey screen, which included a filter question: “Are you planning to take a vacation in the next four months (i.e., June,
July, August, September, 2015?”. Those who answered "yes" or "maybe" were asked to provide the travel dates of their next vacation and to indicate whether they were willing to complete a daily diary during their vacation. Individuals who did not plan to take a vacation by September 2015 or who were not willing to complete a diary exited the survey. Participants whose next vacation was taking place by September 2015 and who were willing to complete a daily diary were asked to continue with the survey. A total of 551 (10.9%) individuals completed the on-line survey.

A total of 174 (32.0% of the 551 respondents) faculty and staff indicated that their vacations were taking place by September 2015 and also agreed to complete the daily diary while on vacation. I hand delivered hard copies of the travel diary along with instructions and an addressed return envelope to the 174 participants approximately one week prior to their vacation. Data collection concluded in October 2015. A total of 152 (87.4%) individuals returned completed diaries.

Study Instruments

Three data collection instruments were used in this study:

On-line survey. The on-line survey (Appendix B) included screening questions as well as questions about individuals’ travel behavior and socio-demographic characteristics. As noted previously, the following screening questions were used to obtain a sample: “Are you planning to take a vacation in the next 4 months (i.e., June, July, August, September, 2015)?” and “Are you willing to complete a diary during your vacation?” Those who met the sample criteria were then asked to indicate who organized their upcoming vacation, the composition of the group traveling on their upcoming vacation, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, and
average length of stay last year. They were also asked a series of questions about their socio-demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation). The travel behavior and socio-demographic data were used to address the second and third research questions in this study.

**The diary.** The daily diary instrument (see Appendix C) included four questions. First, individuals were asked to indicate the extent to which they experienced seven positive (i.e., joy, excitement, pride, love, amusement, interest, surprise) and seven negative (i.e., anger, anxiety/fear, embarrassment/shame, guilt, disgust, sadness, loneliness) emotions using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always) The positive and negative emotions were derived from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). Second, they were asked to indicate whether they used 20 emotion regulation strategies introduced by Heiy and Cheavens’ (2014), which also correspond to the 5 families of emotion regulation strategies in Gross' (1998) model. They documented their use of the strategies on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree).

The diary used in this study included questions about: (1) positive (i.e., joy, excitement, pride, love, amusement, interest, surprise) and negative (i.e., anger, anxiety/fear, embarrassment/shame, guilt, disgust, sadness, loneliness) emotions; (2) ERSs (10 positive and 10 negative); (3) well-being; and (4) post-travel satisfaction and intention and/or reason to return. To address individuals’ use of ERSs with their positive and negative emotions, study participants were first asked to rate their strongest experience of each emotion every day of their vacation using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always), which was derived from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). Participants were then asked to document whether they used the 10 positive and 10 negative ERSs to regulate the
emotions they experienced. They did this using a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1
(strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). The ERSs scale was derived from the work of Heiy
and Cheavens (2014), which corresponds to the five families of ERSs in Gross' (1998) model.

Evidence has suggested emotion regulation may change individuals' perception of their
well-being (Gross & John, 2003); thus, a measure of well-being was included in the diary. I
focused on tourists’ perception of hedonic/subjective and eudaimonic/psychological well-being
using two scales. First, I used the five-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener,
Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), which has been widely adopted by travel and tourism
researchers (e.g., Chen, Lehto, & Cai, 2013; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; McCabe & Johnson,
2013). Because using ERSs such as reappraisal, repression and disclosure is highly pertinent to
eudaimonic well-being (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Gross & John, 2003; King & Pennebaker,
1998), a measure of the eudaimonic/psychological well-being developed by Ryff and Keyes
(1995) was also incorporated in to the eudaimonic dimension of well-being. The SWLS was
modified to include six statements representing autonomy, environmental mastery, personal
ERSs and their impact on well-being. Both of the measures used a seven-point Likert scale,
ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7).

Post-Travel Interview. During the interview participants were asked to: (a) briefly
describe their vacation, (b) clarify questions that emerged from the interviewer’s review of their
travel diaries, (c) think of examples of how they regulated their positive and/or negative
emotions, and (d) discuss how regulating emotions affected their vacation positively and
negatively (see Interview Guide in Appendix D). If participants indicated that they had used
ERSs during their vacation, they were asked to talk about the impact the strategies may have on
their future travel experiences and overall life, as well as what they have learned by trying to regulate their emotions. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed after obtaining consent from and assuring confidentiality for participants.

**Data Analysis**

To address the first study objective (i.e., to discover what ERSs tourists used during their vacations), this study used NVivo 10.2.1 to analyze the post-travel interview data. The dissertation author, with the support of her dissertation advisor, began by independently open-coding the data into initial themes, they then focused their coding to develop more substantial themes. This process involved constantly comparing codes and related quotes until the most significant, meaningful, and frequently cited codes emerged (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This iterative process uncovered categories, key themes, and sub-themes in the data and was continued until no new insights emerged through subsequent coding (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

For the second and third study objectives (i.e., to examine potential changes in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation, and their interactions with socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics), this study used repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) and repeated measures analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to analyze part of the on-line survey and diary data. Significant repeated measures ANOVA results were followed with Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparison tests. The critical level of .05 was used to measure significance levels for the repeated measures ANOVA tests. From the on-line survey data, five socio-demographic (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation) and five travel behavior (i.e., travel organizer, composition of travel group, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year,
average length of stay last year) variables were added into a series of repeated measures ANCOVA models as covariates. Significance levels for the repeated measures ANCOVA tests were measured at the .05 critical levels.

Prior to answering the fourth study objective (i.e., to access the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being), paired samples t-tests were first employed to examine whether tourists’ perception of their well-being differed before and after their vacation. A series of standard multiple linear regressions were conducted for the third study objective. Multi-collinearity among independent variables was examined to make sure that variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics were above the conservative minimum scores (VIF > .10) and tolerance statistics were below conservative maximum scores (< 10.0; Mertler & Vannatta, 2005). The critical level of .05 was used to measure significance levels for the regression models.

**Presentation of Results**

The following three chapters highlight the results of this dissertation. In Chapter 2, I assessed what ERSs tourists used during a vacation, and uncovered 11 key themes comprising 3 overarching categories of ERSs (i.e. self-focused, situation-focused and travel-member-focused). In Chapter 3, I explored the change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation as well as interactions between change in tourists’ use of ERSs and socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics. In Chapter 4, I examined the degree to which tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation influenced their perceived post-travel well-being. The final chapter (i.e., Chapter 5) provides a summary of the results presented in Chapters 2 through 4. A discussion of the overall findings, limitations, and directions for future research also are included in this chapter.
References


   Boston: Houghton Mifflin


   *Psychological Bulletin, 131,* 260–300.


Chapter 2

From sad to happy to happier:

A qualitative assessment of emotion regulation strategies used during a vacation

The text in this chapter will be modified for an article to be submitted to *Tourism Management*.

**Abstract:** The construct of emotion regulation guided this examination of tourists’ use of strategies to either down-regulate negative emotions (e.g., from sad to happy) or up-regulate positive emotions (e.g., from happy to happier) during a vacation. Eleven key themes comprising three overarching categories of emotion regulation strategies (i.e., self-focused, situation-focused and travel-member-focused) were uncovered. All results validated the appropriateness of using emotion regulation in the tourism context, and contributed to tourism research by documenting the transient, dynamic and variable nature of emotions. The results were also translated so as to provide a glimpse into how tourism and hospitality professionals should modify programs/experiences in response to tourists’ regulation strategies.

**Keywords:** emotions, tourist behavior, travel experience
Introduction

Many within the tourism industry believe that traveling is good for people because they will experience positive outcomes such as the ability to problem solve, renewed energy, positive emotions, and more (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Mitas et al., 2012). These positive outcomes have been linked to increased satisfaction, a modified destination image, positive word-of-mouth, repeat travel, even improved well-being (Hosany & Gilbert, 2010). While researchers have explored one of the positive outcomes—emotions—in the travel context (Nawijn et al., 2013), they have done so with the underlying belief that emotions are static, which is erroneous. According to Gross and Barrett (2011), emotions are not static throughout the travel experience; they are variable and can be regulated during their generative process.

An important construct in psychology—emotion regulation—highlights the process of regulating emotions, which involves initiating, inhibiting or modulating one’s state of mind (Gross & John, 2003). Emotion regulation requires individuals to use their cognitive resources to appraise emotional stimuli, and move the emotional transformation of their response in a more positive direction by using regulation strategies (Gross, 2013). Given that tourists must invest time, effort, money and more in their travel experiences, it is expected that they will experience greater variance in emotions during the travel experience than in other contexts. In addition, considering the fact that emotions are short-lived (Beedie, Teery, & Lane, 2005), and the emotional transformation is momentary, it is very likely that tourists are using ERSs to cope with their negative or less positive emotional responses to the travel experience. Yet, few researchers have studied emotions from this dynamic perspective, particularly in the temporary, fluid travel and tourism context.
Further, much of the research on emotion regulation has been lab- rather than field-based, and it has failed to account for the dynamic nature of emotions, leaving the validity of the findings in question. It has also limited our knowledge of how tourists regulate their emotions and/or the potentially positive outcomes of their regulation (e.g., satisfaction, improved travel experience). According to Gross and John (2003), regulation strategies lead to positive outcomes such as enhanced psychological well-being and good social relationships. Documenting a similar relationship in a travel context would be groundbreaking!

The construct of emotion regulation was used in this study as a guiding theoretical framework. The purpose of this study was to reveal what emotion regulation strategies tourists used during their vacations. To my knowledge, this interdisciplinary study is the first to link emotion regulation to the travel context, which is important for a number of reasons. First, utilizing the construct of emotion regulation as a guiding theoretical framework challenges the existing view of studying emotions (i.e., treating emotions as a static response). Second, since the novel social structure that accompanies pleasure travel appears to increase individuals' reappraisal of their emotions, it’s worth documenting how tourists regulate emotions and what strategies they use in the travel context. Third, focusing on individuals' experience in the field, i.e., during a vacation, extends our knowledge of their ERSs and will contribute to existing literature about emotion regulation. Fourth, from a practical perspective, the results of this study will help tourism professionals to modify their programs/products in response to tourists’ regulation strategies.
Emotion Regulation

Emotions are human's best allies, helping people to respond energetically and effectively to the opportunities and difficulties they encounter (Lazarus, 1991). There are times, however, when emotions are human's worst enemy, leading them to think and behave in ways that are destructive (Parrott, 2001). As one of the fastest growing areas within psychology (Koole, 2009), the field of emotion regulation deals with how to cultivate emotions that are helpful and how to manage emotions that are harmful (Gross, 2013).

Gross and John (2003) conceptualized emotion regulation as a process that involves initiating, inhibiting or modulating a person’s state of mind or behavior in a given situation. It requires the activation of a goal to up- or down-regulate either the magnitude or duration of the emotional response (Gross, Sheppes, & Urry, 2011). For example, people may try to increase positive emotions, such as love, interest and joy (Quoidbach, Berry, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2010), while they also try to decrease negative emotions, such as anger, sadness and anxiety (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006). Less frequently people try to increase negative emotions, such as anger, when collecting debts (Sutton, 1991), or decrease positive emotions, such as amusement, during a serious meeting (Gruber, Mauss, & Tamir, 2011).

Emotions may be activated in oneself or in someone else. For example, if Romeo regulates his own emotions he is intrinsically regulating his emotions; if Juliette regulates Romeo’s emotions, they are now being extrinsically regulated (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Once a goal to regulate emotion has been activated, explicit and implicit emotion regulation processes are utilized. A prototypic instance of explicit the emotion regulation process is when a speaker tries hard to look calm even though he is very anxious before a talk. However, the emotion regulatory process may also be implicit, and take place with unconscious awareness (Gross,
2013). In the case of the speaker, he may quickly turn his attention away from individuals in the audience who do not look friendly. Gross (2013) suggests that researchers account for the various emotion regulation processes used by individuals, including explicit, conscious, effortful, and controlled regulation to implicit, unconscious, effortless, and automatic regulation (Gyurak, Gross, & Etkin, 2011; Mauss, Bunge, & Gross, 2007).

People do many different things to regulate their emotions (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). According to Gross (1998a), they use strategies that can be differentiated along a timeline of unfolding emotional response. In Gross' process model of emotion regulation, two types of regulation strategies are included: antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. The antecedent-focused strategies are things a person can do before the emotion response has become fully activated and changed behaviors, while the response-focused strategies focuses on things a person can do once an emotion response has already been generated and is underway (Gross, 2001). Considering the significance of the distinction between these two types of strategies, two exemplars of each that people use commonly in everyday life are: (1) cognitive reappraisal, and (2) expressive suppression.

Cognitive reappraisal, representing the antecedent-focused strategies, is a form of cognitive change that construes a potentially emotion-eliciting situation in a way that helps change its emotional impact (Gross & John, 2003). For example, a person might view taking an exam on a snowy morning as an opportunity to challenge him/herself and feel accomplished rather than as a painful experience. As an antecedent-focused strategy, cognitive reappraisal occurs earlier, and can be employed before the emotion response has been fully generated (Gross & John, 2003). In other words, cognitive reappraisal can efficiently alter the subsequent emotion response if adopted in time. Therefore, cognitive reappraisal can affectively lead to decreased
levels of negative emotions and increased positive emotions, which has no impact on, even decreases, sympathetic nervous system responses (Gross, 2013). Cognitive reappraisal can also lead to lesser activation in emotion-generative brain regions such as the amygdala (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Cognitively, reappraisal either has no impact on subsequent memory or actually improves it (Richards & Gross, 2000); it also can enhance exam performance (Jamieson, Mendes, Blackstock, & Schmader, 2010). Socially, reappraisal has no detectable adverse consequences for social affiliation when tested in a laboratory (Butler et al., 2003).

In contrast, expressive suppression is a form of response modulation that inhibits one’s ongoing emotion-expressive behavior (Gross & John, 2003). Using a classic example, imagine that during a group card game a person holds a great hand while keeping a poker face. According to Gross (1998a), this is a response-focused strategy that comes relatively late in the emotion-generative process. The strategy primarily modifies the behavioral component of the emotion response (Gross, 2013). In terms of down-regulating negative emotions, expressive suppression can be effective in decreasing the behavioral expression of negative emotions, but it is not helpful in reducing the experiential component of negative emotions because suppression doesn’t directly target the experience (Gross & John, 2003). It is important to note that expressive suppression may cause discrepancy between a person’s true inner experience and his/her outer expression (Rogers, 1951). Socially, this sense of not being true to oneself, of being inauthentic, or of not being honest with others (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997) may bring negative feelings to that person, leading to a less positive response from partners, and to an increase in partners’ blood pressure levels (Gross, 2013). Such discrepancy alienates the individual not only from the self, but also from others (Gross & John, 2003). Affectively, suppression leads to decreased positive but not negative emotions, increased sympathetic
nervous system responses, and greater activation in emotion-generative brain regions such as the amygdala (Gross, 2013). Cognitively, suppression leads to worse memory (Gross, 2013).

In sum, the previous discussion reflects the importance of understanding emotion regulation and the use of strategies to regulate emotions, which is closely linked to people's affective, cognitive and social lives. It is surprising to find that travel and tourism studies have not incorporated emotion regulation theory. Take, for example, a foreign traveler in Amsterdam who is shocked by the biking culture where people bike anywhere, even on the sidewalk. She feels unsafe due to the number and behavior of bicyclists; however, she has convinced herself to embrace the local culture and cheer up. This momentary regulatory strategy can lead to decreased levels of negative emotions and increased levels of positive emotions, which ultimately contribute to her travel experience in Amsterdam. Thus, this study uses emotion regulation as a guiding theoretical framework to:

(a) assess how tourists use emotion regulation, and

(b) document what strategies tourists apply to their travel experiences to regulate their emotions.

Methods

Participant recruitment and data collection

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were employed in order to facilitate conversations with participants about their travel experiences (Small, 1999; Sedgley, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2011) and how they used ERSSs. The specific steps used to recruit participants and collect qualitative data are outlined below.
First, the entire faculty and full-time staff at a university in the northeastern United States were contacted via email with a formal invitation to participate in an on-line survey. A total of 551 individuals completed the on-line survey. Individuals who completed the online survey were asked about their vacation plans in the next three months; past travel behaviors; socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education); and whether they would be willing to complete a travel diary during their upcoming vacation. A total of 174 (32%) faculty and staff agreed to complete the travel diary. Second, those who completed the travel diary were asked at the end of their diaries about whether they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview. A total of 152 (87%) individuals mailed back their completed travel diaries. One-hundred thirty (86%) agreed to participate in the post-travel interview and were contacted within the week following their vacations. Post-travel interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

During the interview participants were asked to: (a) briefly describe their vacation, (b) clarify questions that emerged from the interviewer’s review of their travel diaries, (c) think of examples of how they regulated their positive and/or negative emotions, and (d) discuss how regulating emotions affected their vacation positively and negatively. If participants indicated that they had used ERSs during their vacation, they were asked to talk about the impact the strategies may have on their future travel experiences and overall life, as well as what they have learned by trying to regulate their emotions. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed after obtaining consent from and assuring confidentiality for participants.
Data analysis

Using NVivo 10.2.1, the primary author, with the support of her dissertation advisor, began by independently open-coding the data into initial themes, they then focused their coding to develop more substantial themes. This process involved constantly comparing codes and related quotes until the most significant, meaningful, and frequently cited codes emerged (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This iterative process uncovered categories, key themes, and sub-themes in the data and was continued until no new insights emerged through subsequent coding (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

Findings and Discussion

The final sample consisted of 42 (30 females and 12 males who've been given pseudonyms) participants who ranged in age from 27 to 74 (Table 2-1). Approximately one-half were full-time faculty and the other half were full-time staff. The two exceptions were Heddi, a part-time faculty member, and Jeremy, who retired at the time of data collection. Most participants reported having a four-year college degree and over 50% indicated that they had received a graduate education (i.e., master’s degree or PhD). Only two (Jane and Lawrence) reported having a two-year college degree; one participant (Jaime) had a professional degree, and another one (Dalla) had some college.

The iterative data analysis uncovered three overarching categories (i.e., self-focused strategies, situation-focused strategies, and travel group-focused strategies) and eleven key themes (i.e., manipulating emotions, coping with stress, having perspective, accepting emotions, letting it go, planning or preparing, distraction, considering the alternatives, reveling/living in the moment, building family relationship, talking to others; Table 2-2). Although the three
overarching categories may overlap to some extent in terms of their meanings, the key themes that comprise them represent strategies tourists have used to regulate their positive and negative emotions during their travel experiences. Three (i.e., manipulating emotions, coping with stress, having perspective) of the key themes also contain sub-themes that further exemplify their meanings.

Table 2-1. Information about study participants

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Table 2-2. Categories, key themes and sub-themes uncovered from data analysis

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<tr>
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<th>Sub-themes</th>
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<td>1. Self-focused strategies</td>
<td>1.1 Manipulating emotions</td>
<td>1.1.1 Releasing emotions</td>
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<td>1.1.2 Controlling negative emotions</td>
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<td>1.2 Coping with stress</td>
<td>1.2.1 Work-related stress</td>
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<td>1.2.3 Stress linked to the travel group</td>
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<td>1.3 Having perspective</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.5 Letting it go</td>
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<td>2.3 Considering the alternatives</td>
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<td>2.4 Reveling/Living in the moment</td>
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<td>3. Travel group-focused strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.2 Talking to others</td>
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**Category 1: Self-focused strategies**

When participants regulated their emotions during their travel experience, many indicated that they focused on regulating themselves. They did this through *manipulating emotions, coping with stress, having perspective, accepting emotions, and letting it go.*

**Key theme 1: Manipulating emotions**

The manipulation of emotions as well as their sub-strategies (i.e., *releasing emotions, controlling negative emotions, and holding in emotions*) was focused on individuals’ modulation of their own emotional responses, which, according to Gross (2001), tend to occur late in the emotion-generative process after response tendencies have been initiated. This is important to know, not only because emotional responses require immediate attention (Scherer, 2005), but also because in the tourism context, which is unique, temporary, and social, tourists must provide immediate feedback about their emotions in order to maximize the pleasure from their vacation experience.

Study participants manipulated their emotions in a variety of ways, some of which appeared to directly influence experiential, behavioral and/or physiological components of an emotional response (Gross, 2014). For example, Taylor and her husband *released their emotions* by “yell[ing] at each other for a while…” Doing this allowed them to release their frustration on the first travel day of their vacation. Taylor indicated that she and her husband “[ended] up joking about it…” and used the “…humor… [to be] a part of [their] resolution.” Sue, “[whose] husband complained about the heat, and [her] being stuck in [the] hospital…” with their daughter who had gotten sick on the family vacation, chose to speak with “… [her] husband individually after [their] kids fell asleep…” She told him “… if [he] complained and behaved so impatiently
all the time, [he could] just stay away from [them].” Releasing her emotions and sharing her thoughts with her husband resulted in an attitude adjustment, which led to his being “…satisfied with [their] trip and …[even telling] others on the phone [about the] great time [he] had in Disney.” Gross and John (2003), among others (Frisina, Borod, & Lepore, 2004; Rachman, 1980) suggest that these types of emotional response represent a powerful strategy for changing troubling situations and can lead to better mental and physical health.

While Taylor and Sue released their emotions by yelling, joking with, and talking to their spouses, others manipulated their emotions by controlling their negative emotions or holding in their emotions. Both regulation strategies typify response modulation or expressive suppression (Gross & John, 2003). Maggi indicated: “When those negative emotions are getting in the way of other things, then that’s when I think I need to do a better job of getting myself out of that funk and getting myself to a better place.” Similarly, Kelsy said,

I have been working on techniques to regulate and not get lost in my emotions, which allows me to come out of the negative emotions much more than to increase the positive emotions. It is a way of keeping the negative ones in check, so that I don't have to focus on the positive emotions; they just happen.

By controlling their negative emotions, Kadie and Lacey were “…aware of what [they were] feeling and taking steps to improve it, [which] made it a much more enjoyable trip.” They realized that “it’s not really fair to share [their own] negative emotions with others and take [others’] joy away.” These sentiments represent examples of response modulation or expressive suppression, which involves inhibiting ongoing emotion-expressive behaviors (Gross, 1998b). It is important to realize a person’s negative emotions in time because response modulation or expressive suppression require individuals to put effort in to managing their emotion response.
tendencies as they arise (Gross, 1998b). Although such efforts may consume cognitive resources (Gross & John, 2003), they could lead to optimal performance in the tourism context as suggested by the results in this study.

Results also showed that some participants attempted to hold in their emotions: “I tried hard to hold everything within myself and not let my bad emotions affect others, and get angry in front of my kids” (Sue); “I kept [my emotions] inside, [and] tried not to talk about it” (Dane); and “When knowing our flight got canceled… I was trying to keep it really cool because I didn’t want [my son] to get all upset… he was a little upset about it” (Lawrence). With this form of regulation, tourists are trying to inhibit ongoing negative or positive emotion-expressive behavior (Gross, 2014). Such regulation of emotions is focused on self, but importantly works through the mechanism of modulating emotional responses during the process of emotion regulation.

*Key theme 2: Coping with stress*

Participants also indicated that different stresses triggered their need to regulate emotions during their travel experience. This emotion regulation strategy is different from other self-focused strategies because it emphasizes the reason for regulation (Gross, 1998b). For example, Jay said that he had to deal with work during a vacation, which resulted in stress. He said that he “…[tried] not to blend [home and work] together, but in reality, [he was] doing work things all the time… [his] job never stopped… [so he had] to talk with other people about how to regulate job and personal time during a vacation.” Recognizing the sources of his stress and attempting to regulate them through altering his emotional response is, in effect, modifying the cognitive-affective process, in which individuals can use their cognitive qualities to interact with the environment and thus influence their behaviors (Goldin & Gross, 2010).
Other participants commented that the *travel* portion of their vacation was the primary cause of their individual stress. As Kayla said, “the trip itself was positive, but… the travel portion of it was the negative part. Driving there and driving back. Just the time in the car, the time in the bus and the time in the cab… everyone gets tired of being in the car… It’s just the anticipation of getting there and the anticipation of getting home. The negative impact parts were usually in the traveling side…” Balia similarly commented, “… there are two parts… the travel portion and… the resort portion. The travel portion was awful, [while] the resort portion was fantastic.” Through coping and regulation Kayla and Balia were able to enjoy their vacation. Gross (1998b) suggests that this form of regulation can lead to better psychological health (Gross, 1998b).

Some participants mentioned that *traveling in a group* caused stress. As Sue noted, “Your experience depends on whom you travel with, especially when you are in a big group… I took my father and kids… they had different needs and preferences. And I wanted everyone to be happy and have a good time. A lot of stress for me.” A similar comment was shared by Kayla: “This trip we had more conflict, because there were four adults attending the trip, so there were four different opinions, four different wants and needs, and four different… this is actually when we’re going to be able to do this. That makes it a little more stressful.”

Overall, these results provide evidence of the link between stress coping and emotion regulation, which have been documented in the leisure literature. As early as 1993 Coleman and Iso-Ahola proposed that stress coping and emotion regulation involve the cognitive appraisal process. Less than a decade later Iwasaki and Mannell (2000) extended their proposition by arguing that leisure mood management (conceived broadly) is a component of leisure coping strategies. Given the findings in this study, it appears that Iwasaki and Mannell were correct;
individuals can cope with stress through emotion regulation or mood management in tourism, a sub-sector of leisure. Although lives are filled with stress, even during a vacation (e.g., Kop et al., 2003; Nawijn et al., 2010; Van Heck & Vingerhoets, 2007), individuals are provided with an option to cope with it—emotion regulation.

Key theme 3: Having perspective

While the majority of travelers enjoyed their overall travel experience, they did face challenges during their vacation. Many responded by “having perspective,” and more specifically, *putting a positive spin on it*. Having perspective is an example of an emotion regulation strategy targeted toward reappraising the situation and reminding oneself that things could be worse (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014):

You’re stuck here… there’s nothing you can do [but] make the best of it. Being able to do that… turned it around. And… let us have a good time. Create some memories. (Jane)

You just focus on the positive things but it’s not going to turn a bad idea into a good time. It’s going to make it less of a bad time. Then you see the positives and really try to focus on the positives, the joy on your kids face, you try to hold on to that. (Bell)

Our flight was cancelled in Philadelphia… a good thing is that my sister lives there… we called her and spent the night in her house… just trying to look on the… bright side of things. I liked it that we got to spend an evening [that] we weren’t expecting with my sister. That’s nice! (Lawrence)
While some tourists were able to put a positive spin on the challenges they faced during their vacations, some participants opted instead to put the challenges into perspective. Bell, for example, who hated being stuck in an all-inclusive resort during his vacation, said that he had to remind himself that the vacation “…wasn’t [his] whole life. That was just a very small part… [He needed to] think about [his] whole life, [his] healthy kids. [He] enjoyed [his] life; [his] kids go to good schools, that’s what [he] focused on. [He] didn’t have to be stuck in a bad moment.” Maggi recalled her travel experience when she missed a connection after her flight was delayed, she attempted to “…put it into perspective, [because] there’s nothing [she] can do in that situation. It wasn’t [her] fault… [she] just [put] whatever got [her] into that place into perspective: it’s not that big of a deal; don’t worry about it.” Kali also reflected on how she regulated her emotions on vacation when her husband and she found that their bike hitch was too old to strap their bikes up on the car: “…it has always been an issue… Do I want to spend the extra money for another bike rack or can we get by with it? We just decided [that] it wasn’t worth the frustration anymore… it is not the end of the world; we can figure out something that will be our plan B.” According to Aldao and Dixon-Gordon (2014), having perspective is a covert strategy, which works cognitively in a person’s mind by changing how one thinks about the situation. Research has shown that such cognitive change can modify how a person appraises a situation so as to alter its emotional significance (Gross, 2014).

Key theme 4: Accepting emotions

Accepting emotions was another strategy used by tourists to regulate emotions during their vacation. Heiy and Cheavens (2014) described this strategy as accepting emotions and/or the situation (i.e., “Acceptance”). For example, Jane who missed her son during her vacation,
said “…knowing and expecting [to miss my son] next time will help [me to]… regulate some emotions and have a better time [on future vacations].” Kadie indicated the importance of recognizing and accepting negative emotions that arise during a vacation: “… being aware of what I was feeling and taking steps to improve it made it a much more enjoyable trip… Just the fact that I have to do, that I have to [remind myself], ‘Oh, this is a negative feeling’ that does impact and take some joy away from vacation…” Aldao and Dixon-Gordon (2014) have argued that acceptance like that which Kadie described is a cognitive or covert strategy which involves how a person takes action to end up in a situation that one expects will help regulate emotions. Maggi also noted the importance of recognizing and accepting negative emotions, suggesting that doing so improved her emotional status (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014):

> It would be a disservice to myself to not let myself feel a little bit sad… especially [when] my husband wasn’t there… [but] I do still see some value in letting yourself feel upset. I don’t think you should deny those emotions… there is something satisfying about being sad, having a good cry, [releasing] some of the tension or anxiety that you might be feeling… I am all about letting myself feel the way I feel.

*Key theme 5: Letting it go*

Many participants indicated that when experiencing negative emotions on vacation, they regulated them by *letting it go*. This emotion regulation strategy reflects stimulus control, which is used to avoid negative thoughts and stressors:

> I either try to avoid it, or try to forget it… I don’t let things bother me for very long… [Just like] playing golf… You should remember the good shot… You don’t want to remember the bad. You have to let it go, let it go… (Jay)
That way I wasn’t worrying about it all the time… I was worried about it at the moment and thought about some solutions, but I just let it go because I had a plan… I was okay. I didn’t have to fret over it… [I could enjoy] the vacation and not allow the negativity to take over. (Lacey)

When you travel, as… challenges come up, either you can get really worked up about it, or you can let them go… staying positive and upbeat. I don’t see a negative part of [letting them go] with traveling. In fact, it really helps us in not getting uptight about, especially on traveling days… (Jazz)

Participants in this study avoided, forgot, and/or did not worry about negative emotions—they let the negative thoughts, stressors, emotions go. According to Samson and Gross (2012), this is a good strategy as reappraising and controlling the emotional stimulus can decrease the intensity of negative emotions.

Category 2: Situation-focused strategies

The second category of emotion regulation strategies focused on the positive and negative situations tourists encountered during their vacations. Results revealed four key themes of strategies that participants adopted to regulate through the challenging situations or to indulge in wonderful moments: planning/preparing, distraction, considering the alternatives, and reveling/living in the moment. It is worth noting that the first and third strategies—planning/preparing and considering the alternatives—directly focused on situation modification
from different angles, which is expected to result in altering emotional impact (Gross, 2014). Distraction as a strategy emphasized modifying the situation through behavioral activation.

**Key theme 1: Planning/Preparing**

Participants regulated their emotions by planning for their vacations. As Jagger stated, “We scheduled a long connection intentionally. We don’t like to schedule a connection for less than 2 hours…” Balia, who on previous vacations would be interrupted by work problems, decided to “…[leave her] phone [home]. [She] didn’t take [her] phone. [She] didn’t take [her] kindle…” in order to enjoy her vacation. Planning ahead or “Capitalizing” as Heiy and Cheavens (2014) refer to the strategy, is aimed at making a good situation happen or making a situation better.

Participants also indicated that they used strategies to regulate their emotions by reminding themselves to *be prepared* for problems that may arise during their vacations. Kayla did this by...

…anticipation and being able to be prepared… knowing that there might be an unpleasant experience and thinking about what’s next and putting a positive spin on it… It’s a different kind of readiness. It’s an adult readiness and it’s a good kind of readiness… Sometimes it tends to make me a little anxious because sometimes the day before it’s crazy.

Dale, on the other hand, “…prepare[s] a bit more mentally for areas where [she] noticed problems, like making a better schedule of meal times… schedul[ing] activities like swimming or stuffs better around [children’s] nap times, and try[ing] to keep things in order.” James, who missed his flight connection after visiting his old friends in London and Copenhagen, said: “…[I]
focused on sort of what needs to happen if things are going awry [or] if things are going poorly, and better at enjoying the moment if things are going well…”

Other participants recognized the need to be better prepared in the future. Dale, who enjoyed her family trip to Jellystone Park, said she would like to plan better and prepare more for future vacations: “I think planning ahead a bit more, and realizing that there are time frames that are good for everybody… [I will] avoid doing activities where everyone needs to focus at the same time.” Similarly, Jay realized the value of preparing ahead: “…by being better prepared… there will still be things [on vacation] that cause stress like traffic or other things… just being better prepared… printing the map and directions and at least having the address, or getting in the car before we leave the house, and typing the directions into the car.” As Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggest, being prepared for the future is beneficial for regulating emotions because it means being better prepared to take advantage of future opportunities and challenges.

Key theme 2: Distraction

When encountering and dealing with problems on vacation, study participants regulated their emotions by allowing for distraction:

If you can not let those things… prevent you from enjoying the vacation, that certainly is a good skill to have… It is smiling sometimes; it is distracting myself, so finding something to do so I’m not thinking about what’s bothering me. (Maggi)

If I wasn’t feeling happy… I like to go for walks or just sit and chat with my mom, so I would try to do more of those things. A lot of walking helps me feel better. (Kadie)
I bring music I like or books on tape… like audio books… kind of distract you or entertain us while we’re in the traffic and then on the actual vacation… (Jadon)

If nothing else, it is kind of a coping strategy; it distracts me from spinning into bad cycles. So being spontaneous, I was trying to fill my time. I didn’t want to have a lot of time sitting, so I’ll call my friends [and say,] ‘hey let’s go for a movie, let’s go for a walk, let’s go do this.’ A lot of things they were not necessarily planned in advanced and we just made it happen. (Candy)

Heiy and Cheavens (2014) refer to behavior distraction as behavioral activation—a regulation strategy in which individuals engage in activity to keep distracted and busy. It has been shown to successfully reduce various indices of emotional responses through deploying attention away from emotionally salient aspects of an emotion-eliciting event (Urry, 2010). In the tourism context, this strategy can help tourists decrease the unpleasantness of painful stimulation in a short period of time.

Key theme 3: Considering the alternatives

Considering the alternatives emerged as an important regulation strategy used by participants when they ran into problems on vacation. This strategy, also referred to as “Problem Solving” by Heiy and Cheavens (2014), is aimed at offering an option to the challenge or problem individuals are facing.

Most participants indicated that they like to think of alternative plans to deal with their problems: “…I was thinking of like what is an alternative plan… even if something really bad
happened, I thought I could rent a car. So I was just trying to think of all the things I could possibly do. Like have a back up plan and then another plan” (Lacey) and “With the medicine I was coming up with alternative plans all over the place like, Ok, can you just give me a ten-day supply? And just call it into the local you know can we do this? Can we do that?” (Cathy).

Some participants mentioned how alternative plans helped them move forward on vacation. For example, when X-J was too tired to continue driving in Death Valley National Park, his wife and friends suggested that he “…take a rest here and we will wait for you… we can stay here for another half hour or one hour…” Accepting an alternative plan gave X-J time to safely finish the road trip. As Lacey suggested, it is best to “find a solution and move on. I think… it keeps you healthier.”

Key theme 4: Reveling/Living in the moment

Regulating emotions was not all about dealing with negative experiences; there were moments when tourists chose to up-regulate their positive emotions-they reveled or lived in the moment to increase the intensity of their positive emotions. Thiruchselvam, Hajcak, and Gross (2012) refer to this strategy as “Attentional Deployment,” which often involves changing one’s internal focus to help sustain the desired emotional state. For example, when Jane was enjoying her time with her husband in a resort in Punta Cana, she said, “[I] just… calm down and live in the moment… push all [worries] aside to enjoy the time…” Sue, who was invited to join in a dance with a band in the Magic Kingdom, reflected: “They wore colorful costumes and played wonderful music. My kids loved them, so we sang with them. When we were invited to join in their dances, I just danced whatever I wanted with them, trying to revel in the wonderful
moments.” Dale also shared how she reveled in great moments when she went on her annual family trip:

Just to try to slow down and enjoy things more… Each little outing that we take is, we see a new development in the kids and in ourselves, because you know when we push ourselves to do something different every time. My 11-old before Memorial Day couldn’t ride her bike without our training; now you can’t stop her. It’s just like little things that you take the time to notice a bit more.

An important difference from the other strategies uncovered in this study is the focus on up-regulating positive emotions to increase their intensity or duration (Quoidbach, Berry, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2010). Jose, Lim, and Bryant (2012) believe reveling or living in the moment can positively mediate the relation between a pleasant event and a happy mood.

Category 3: Travel group-focused strategies

The third category of emotion regulation strategies focused on members of the travel group. Two key themes were uncovered in this category: building family relationships and talking to others. Scholars who study general emotion regulation (e.g., Gross & John, 2003; Morris et al., 2007) have previously identified these strategies. According to Heiy and Cheavens (2014), the strategy of building family relationships focuses on cognitively changing tourists’ mindset by seeking additional benefits (e.g., how to learn from the situation), while talking to others falls within the scope of social support (e.g., find a friend or family to talk to).
Key theme 1: Building family relationships

By focusing on members of their travel group, participants were able to regulate their emotions and continue enjoying their vacations. For example, Bell “…really focused on [her] kids… They give you this moment of happiness when you connect with your kids but you can’t regulate it the whole time… I try to focus on my kids’ momentary joy. Jazz, also attended to members of his travel group, i.e. his family: “I also try to express my appreciation to the people I am close to, so my wife and my children and close friends, thanking them for what they do for me, especially my wife.”

The key theme of building family relationships was not only a strategy participants used to regulate their emotion, but emerged as an outcome of such regulation. Sue indicated that “[she was] happy that different small chunks of hard time made [her and her husband] know each other better, and [they] as a unit [have] become stronger.” Dane had similar thoughts: “My wife and I feel closer [and] connected to each other on this entire trip… it just totally relaxes.” Dale, who vacations with her family every year, appreciated how regulating during a vacation helped build her family: “I can look at last November till now, and there’s a big change in our family you know as far as personality wise…”

This finding provided support for the important role that family plays in the development of emotion regulation. For example, Morris et al. (2007) noted that children learn about emotion regulation through observational learning, modeling and social referencing in the context of family.
**Key theme 2: Talking to others**

Talking to others (i.e., families, friends, spouses, other tourists) was another regulation strategy used by participants during their vacation, which is consistent with evidence in the coping literature, which suggests that social support and/or sharing falls into the adaptive strategy category and can lead to better mood outcomes (Iwasaki, 2003; Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000):

I just talked to my brother about it. By talking to him about it I was able to get it out and I didn’t have to think about it so much. (Kadie)

I’ve only ever traveled with my husband and he knows, he can tell when I’m starting to get into that negative mind frame, and ‘we can talk about it now’ before going any further… I talk to my husband a lot. We share a lot of the burden together, so it is easier to talk about it. (Dale)

I found that I could have a lot of joyful emotions by sharing them and so I would talk with my son or talk with my husband and say ‘Oh, wow, aren’t we making sure great memories?’ and, um, really just talking and connecting and spending time together so usually always comes back to sharing in some way with family. (Cary)

Some participants also mentioned that a conversation with family members, friends, or other tourists helped with the emotions they were experiencing during their vacations. According to Jane, “When we would go out to dinner we would strike up conversations with people that were near us… a couple at dinner… had done the excursions the day before and were able to tell
us what to expect. Hearing their experiences before we went on the excursion… helped, like, calm my nerves.” When Candy was experiencing a sad Sunday during her vacation, she “…went with a good friend… Spur of the moment [they] drove up to Salt Lake City for dinner, and… talked… a bit about things, which [was] helpful.”

**Implications, Limitations and Future Research**

This is the first interdisciplinary study to link emotion regulation to the travel context. It contributes to the body of knowledge about emotions and, more broadly, travel and tourism research, in a number of ways. First, by studying emotion regulation in the travel context, this study introduces a new perspective for studying emotions. Instead of treating emotions as a static response, this study utilized emotion regulation as a guiding theoretical framework to study emotions as transient, dynamic, and variable. Hence, the results not only challenge the notion that emotions are static, but importantly showcases how emotions generate from an antecedent to a response, and during the generative process, how to regulate emotions in order to address their dynamic, and variable nature.

Second, although psychologists have documented emotion regulation and its related approaches and theories, few have considered the novel social structure (e.g., a family vacation) that moderates individuals’ use of emotion reappraisal and regulation. According to Heiy and Cheavens (2014), cognitively changing one’s mindset by seeking additional benefits (e.g., learning from the situation) and talking to others falls within the scope of social support. Hence, traveling, particularly with family vacations, may lead to a broader sense of well-being. This speculation is not too far afield as Iwasaki and his colleagues (e.g., Iwasaki, 2003; Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000) suggest that social support and/or sharing represent adaptive strategies that are
associated with better mood outcomes. Gross and John (2003) indicated that social interactions are potent triggers for emotions, which offer opportunities for individuals to regulate emotions, achieve their social goals, and maintain good relations with family members. In turn, such emotionally close relationships may give rise to social support. Family vacations may be a powerful context in which children learn about emotion regulation as they observe and model their care givers’ expressions of positive and negative emotions (Ramsden & Hubbard, 2002) and behavior (Morris et al., 2007).

Furthermore, the 11 key themes of emotion regulation revealed in this study were unique to the travel context, which may be because of its characteristics (e.g., extended experience, inability to “control” the experience). In the future researchers should attempt to validate these themes and develop a scale of emotion regulation specific to the travel context. Even within the big travel context, study results also shed light on how tourists use emotion regulation in different contextual periods. For example, participants experienced different emotional responses when traveling to destination and traveling home, which affected their choice and use of emotion regulation strategies. Future studies are needed to account for the contextual division and compare their use of regulation strategies in different contextual periods, such as pre-vacation planning stage versus actual vacation stage.

Fifth, much of the research on emotion regulation has been lab-based, leaving validity of the findings in question (e.g., Gross & John, 2003; Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). Documenting how individuals use emotion regulation in real-life contexts such as a vacation not only validates and contributes to the existing literature, but extends our knowledge about ERSs.

Lastly, this study has implications for research on related constructs (e.g., stress reappraisal and coping, happiness and well-being). In this study stress was revealed as a trigger
of the need to regulate emotions during vacation; thus, in the future, researchers should consider examining whether tourists view emotion regulation as a form of stress coping and, if so, how. Also, study participants’ comments suggested that the emotion regulation strategies used during their vacation may lead to enhanced psychological well-being. This relationship should also be addressed in future studies.

While the results of this research have implications for existing and future research on emotion regulation, the limitations of this study must be acknowledged. Study participants were faculty or staff who worked for the same institution of higher education, reported higher levels of education, and identified themselves as more mature travelers with some travel experience. While I intentionally chose this homogeneous population given its potential to be more aware of personal feelings and the possibility of being able to document emotion regulation strategies, I recognize that the results may not be generalizable to the general tourist population. In the future, researchers should utilize a more diverse sample of tourists in order to validate the results of this study. In addition, I did not discuss emotion regulation with study participants in an effort to reduce potential bias. Without a standardized understanding of the meaning of emotion regulation it is possible that participants interpreted the construct differently or, at least, potentially meant something different than its intended meaning. However, there is a tension between qualitatively assessing emotion regulation in the travel context and ensuring that all participants have the same operational definition of emotion regulation during interviews. Ensuring that participants have a uniform understanding of this construct may, in fact, change their perceptions or use of these strategies.

Another potential concern related to the study results is that the meanings of the three overarching categories of emotion regulation strategies overlapped to some extent. For example,
“accepting emotions” was considered to be a self-focused strategy because participants indicated that they recognized their emotions and accepted them as they were. Yet, recognizing and accepting emotions could also be interpreted as recognizing and accepting the situation they were in. In the future researchers should delve more deeply into tourists’ descriptions in an effort to validate that three distinct types of emotion regulation strategies exist in the travel context.

Lastly, although participants were interviewed within one week after they came back from their vacation, they were still asked to recall their travel experience. Despite the short time frame (i.e., about one week) between the interview and their vacation, participants may have focused on the positive and not remembered or shared the negative travel experiences they had (Opdenakker, 2006). Most participants indicated, however, that they were satisfied and happy during their interviews no matter what happened during their vacations; thus, the issue of recall may not be an issue. To ensure that this is the case and to validate the results of this study, researchers should consider employing an ethnographic approach in the future. Adopting an insider perspective will allow researchers to interact with and observe and document tourists’ emotions as well as what they do to regulate them.

**Conclusions**

This study used the construct of emotion regulation to discover what emotion regulation strategies tourists used during their vacations. Through uncovering 11 key themes comprising 3 overarching categories of emotion regulation strategies (i.e., self-focused, situation-focused, and travel-member-focused), this study, as the first interdisciplinary study to introduce the construct of emotion regulation to the tourism field, not only validated the appropriateness of using
emotion regulation in the tourism context, but also contributed to tourism research by
documenting the transient, dynamic and variable nature of emotions. The results were also
translated so as to provide a glimpse into how tourism and hospitality professionals should
modify programs/experiences in response to tourists’ regulation strategies, and how tourism
researchers should think about emotion regulation in future studies.
References


Chapter 3

Understanding change in tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies in a vacation context

In this chapter I explore the patterns of change in tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies during a vacation as well as their interactions with socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics. The text and data in this chapter will be split into two manuscripts to be submitted to a special issue of *the Journal of Positive Psychology* and the *Journal of Travel Research*.

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine the patterns of change in tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) during a vacation, and their interactions with socio-demographic and travel behavioral characteristics. Using an on-line survey and travel daily diaries, 152 tourists exhibited significant change patterns when using 6 ERSs with positive emotions and two ERSs with negative emotions over time during their vacations. Some socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics were found to play a significant role in explaining the change patterns of using ERSs with positive and negative emotions over time. The results suggested that tourism researchers and professionals must acknowledge and address the change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and account for the role of their socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics in influencing the change.

**Keywords:** emotions, tourist behavior, diary study, longitudinal, well-being
Introduction

Emotions influence individuals’ decisions to purchase tourism services, level of satisfaction and memories with travel experiences, even behavioral intentions for future travel (Bigne, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005; Chuang, 2007; De Rojas & Camarero, 2008; Mattila, 2001; Sirakaya, Petrick, & Choi, 2004; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Emotions also vary throughout the tourism experience and are related to tourists’ sense of well-being (Lin, Kerstetter, Nawijn, & Mitas, 2014; Nawjin, 2010; Nawjin et al., 2013). How tourists react to their emotions during their vacation, however, is unclear.

In general, researchers who’ve studied vacation-based emotions have done so by collecting data at multiple points during a vacation with the underlying belief that emotions are static at each data collection point (Lin et al., 2014; Nawjin, 2010; Nawjin et al., 2013). This approach is problematic as emotions are not static at each point-in-time nor are they static throughout the travel experience (Gross & Barrett, 2011). Emotions are variable and can be regulated at separate points during the generative process (Gross, 1998; 2001). This concept, referred to as “emotion regulation,” establishes that a person can use antecedent-focused strategies to regulate an emotional response at four different points during the generative process and use response-focused strategies after the emotion has been generated and is underway (Gross, 1998). Hence, this study will build on existing travel emotions research by documenting how tourists regulate their emotions at multiple points-in-time and over the course of a vacation.

Different indicators of tourists’ travel behaviors, such as travel frequency and composition of travel group, have been linked to a better understanding of tourists’ perceptions, emotional experiences, and their relations with other travel groups (Gross & John, 2003; Gao, Barbieri, & Valdivia, 2014; Nawijn et al., 2013). Thus, the overall purpose of this study was to
examine tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) during their vacation and the
degree to which they interact with socio-demographic and travel behavioral characteristics. The
results of this study are expected to contribute to the travel and tourism literature by (a)
introducing a new, dynamic perspective to study emotions rather than treating emotions as a
static response, (b) accounting for emotion’s transient nature, dynamicity, and variability
throughout a vacation, and (c) documenting the role of socio-demographic and travel behavioral
characteristics on tourists’ use of ERSs. This study will, to the best of my knowledge, be the first
to address tourists’ use of ERSs outside of a lab (e.g., Gross & John, 2003; Heiy & Cheavens,
2014).

**Literature Review**

In this section I first review the literature on emotions in the tourism context. Then, I
follow up with a review of emotion regulation theory and the five families of ERSs, which not
only account for the important nature of emotions, but establish how a person can manipulate
five families of strategies to regulate their emotions during the generative process.

**Emotion research in tourism**

Researchers have used the terms mood, affect and emotions interchangeably to examine
emotions and their link to tourist satisfaction. Mattila (2001) investigated the effect of mood on
service quality and satisfaction with two types of hospitality service encounters. She found that
the effect of mood is limited to brief and routine types of service interactions. Sirakaya et al.
(2004) documented a significant relationship between mood states during evaluation and
satisfaction with a travel-related product or service. De Rojas and Camarero (2008) examined the
moderator role of moods on the relationship between expectations and satisfaction in the context of cultural tourism. They found that a more positive mood makes the disconfirmation of expectations reinforce the satisfaction of the visitor. Jang Bai, Hu and Wu (2009) employed an affect scale to measure positive and negative affective states of Taiwanese seniors.

More recently, researchers have studied emotions role in tourists’ experiences (Lin et al., 2014; Nawjin et al., 2013; Mitas et al., 2012) because they are more direct, intense reactions to events that happen in an individual’s environment (Beedie, Terry, & Lane, 2005) and they dramatically effect individuals’ thinking and behavior, which leads to long-term consequences for quality of life (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Mitas et al., 2012). Nawijn and his colleagues (2010, 2013) were some of the first researchers to study emotions and emotion change over the course of a vacation. Their perspective on emotions in a vacation context was different from previous researchers who treated emotions as static and an entire experience as a simple point in time (Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2011b). For example, Nawijn (2010) proposed a holiday happiness curve based on data indicating that tourists felt relatively worse during the first couple of days of their holiday, best during 70% of the holiday time, and slightly worse and then more positive during the last part of the holiday. Later, in 2013, Nawijn and his colleagues tracked vacationers’ daily emotions during their vacation using a daily dairy. Their findings indicated that fluctuations in emotions are related to length of vacation: vacationers on an 8- to 13-day trip experienced significant changes in the balance of their emotions over the course of their trip.

Lin et al. (2014) examined changes in specific positive and negative emotions during a vacation, as well as their interactions with personality. They found that travelers were high in both positivity and arousal, which was exhibited through an inverted U-shape curve. They also found that travelers reported feeling more positive at the front end of their vacation rather than at
the end of their vacation. With respect to personality, they found that it may play a role in emotions experienced across individuals’ vacations.

Although these findings are very interesting and informative, researchers have adopted the underlying belief that emotions are static at each point of data collection, which is erroneous. According to Gross and Barrett (2011), emotions are not static throughout the travel experience; they are variable and can be regulated during their generative process. In fact, along the timeline of the unfolding emotional response, emotions can be regulated at five points in the emotion generative process (Gross, 2001). Specifically, before an emotional response has been generated, a person can use antecedent-focused strategies to regulate an emotional response at four different points of the emotion generative process (Gross, 1998). In addition, after an emotion response has been initiated and is underway, a person can take actions to regulate the emotion response (Gross, 1998). I accounted for the transient, dynamic, and variable nature of emotions in this study by examining how tourists’ use of ERSs change over time during the travel experience.

**Emotion regulation**

The idea that emotions may be regulated, particularly in situations where emotions are harmful, has been studied for some time (Gross, 1999). It was not until 1998, however, that Gross introduced a new perspective, which focused on the regulation of emotions, rather than regulation by emotions, as well as what a person can do to regulate different emotions and what forms of regulation exist for emotion regulation. Specifically, Gross proposed a process model of emotion regulation. This model addresses an array of regulatory activities based on the premise that specific ERSs can be differentiated along the timeline of the unfolding emotional response. Gross (2001) stipulated that an emotion can be regulated at five points in the emotion generative
process. Each of these five points represents a family of ERSs: (1) situation selection, (2) situation modification, (3) attentional deployment, (4) cognitive change, and (5) response modulation.

According to Gross’ process model, each form of emotion regulation has different consequences (Gross, 2013). An illustration of this idea is to distinguish between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. In Gross’ model, the first four families of ERSs (i.e., situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change) are antecedent-focused and the fifth one (i.e., response modulation) is response-focused. The antecedent-focused strategies refer to things a person can do before the emotion response has become fully activated and changed behaviors (Gross, 2001). The response-focused strategy focuses on things a person can do once an emotion response has already been generated and is underway (Gross, 2001). Since this information-processing model treats each point in the emotion-generative process as a potential target for regulation (Gross, 2013), these five families of ERSs can be distinguished even further.

First, as the most forward-looking antecedent-focused strategy, situation selection involves individuals taking action in order to end up in a desirable situation in which they can expect desirable emotions (Gross, 2013). Considering the complexity of situations, self knowledge is required for decision making about which situations to seek and which ones to avoid (Gross, 1998).

Situation modification is another antecedent-focused strategy that targets situations. It refers to directly modifying a situation in order to change its emotional impact (Gross, 2014). Examples of this strategy are to convert a meeting into a phone conference, or to convince a neighbor to turn down loud music. Such efforts are referred to as problem-focused coping by
Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and constitute an important part of regulating a person’s emotions. As Gross (1998) suggested, however, there are no clear boundaries between situation selection and situation modification because efforts to modify a situation always involve a new situation, which, to some extent, overlaps with the meaning of situation selection. Both strategies utilize external, physical environments to regulate emotions (Gross, 2014).

The third antecedent-focused strategy—attentional deployment—is used to direct a person’s attention in a situation in order to influence his/her emotions, particularly when it is hard to modify the situation (Gross, 2014). Examples of attentional deployment involve distraction, concentration and rumination. Distraction emphasizes putting a person’s attention on other aspects of a situation, or simply moving attention away from the situation, or calling up other thoughts or memories to change a person’s internal focus (Gross, 1998; Thiruchselvam, Hajcak, & Gross, 2012). Concentration refers to a person’s ability to absorb attention while working or being in other situations. It may create a self-sustaining transcendent state, which Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defined as flow. Rumination refers to directing attention to a person’s feelings and their consequences; if rumination is on negative emotions, it may lead to severe depressive symptoms (Just & Alloy, 1997).

Cognitive change, the fourth antecedent-focused strategy, deals with modifying a person’s internal environment (i.e. thoughts). This strategy targets altering the emotional significance through modifying how a person appraises a situation (Gross, 2014). A particularly well-recognized example of cognitive change is reappraisal, which often results in decreased negative emotional experience, or increased positive emotions (Gross, 1998).

The fifth family of ERSs—response modulation—is often used to influence experiential, behavioral, or physiological components of an emotional response (Gross, 2014). This family of
strategies focuses on altering the emotional response through taking actions because the emotion response has already been initiated and is underway (Gross, 2001). Evidence suggests that physical activities such as breathing relaxation techniques, drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, taking drugs, and eating food can decrease the negative aspects of an emotional experience (Gross, 1998, 2014; Gross & John, 2003; Thayer et al., 1994). Emotion expressive suppression also falls within the scope of response modulation (Gross, 1998). Evidence, however, suggests that inhibiting expressive behaviors may decrease the intensity of positive emotions (e.g., pride), not negative emotions (e.g., disgust; Gross & Levenson, 1997) and thus does not fully reflect the essence of the family of response modulation strategies.

Recently, Quoidbach, Mikolajczak, and Gross (2015) emphasized the importance of accounting for time frames when applying the process model of emotion regulation. Their argument was based on the notion that people may want to extend positive experiences (e.g., traveling) well beyond a few iterations of the emotion-generative process. Specifically, they argued that individuals may employ different ERSs before, during and after traveling, consistent with the five families of strategies in Gross' (1998) process model of emotion regulation. In this study I accounted for the most important time frame (i.e., during the travel experience) by using daily diaries to record tourists’ emotional experiences and their daily use of ERSs. I also assessed how tourists’ socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics influence the change patterns of using ERSs over time.

Exploring the interaction between tourists’ use of ERSs and their socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics is important. Socio-demographic characteristics have been considered as tourists’ internal inputs, which influence their perceptions of a destination and their travel experience (Goodall & Ashworth, 1988; Um & Crompton, 1990). For example, Weaver,
McCleary, Lepisto and Damonte (1994) found that age influenced tourists’ perceptions of destination, while Zimmer, Brayley and Searle (1995) documented that income and education affect tourists’ choice of nearby and farther-away destinations. Evidence has also suggested that tourists’ perceptions can be influenced by their previous travel behaviors or experiences (Gao et al., 2014). If a person has traveled more frequently in the past, his or her experience (e.g., to start a stalled rental car) might help regulate emotions. Nawijn et al. (2013) also indicated that length of stay influences tourists’ emotional experiences. Gross and John (2003) suggested that interactions with others are potential triggers for emotions. Individuals have been found to regulate their emotions to maintain good relations with others (Gross & John, 2003), but it is unknown whether the composition of the travel group will influence tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies. In sum, no research to date has unveiled whether socio-demographic and travel behavioral characteristics influence tourists’ use of different ERSs over the course of a vacation.

The overall purpose of this study was to analyze potential change in tourists’ use of ERSs over the course of a vacation, and to determine whether socio-demographic (e.g., gender, education) and travel behavior (e.g., travel frequency, average length of stay) characteristics influence potential change. To address this overall purpose, the following research questions were proposed: (1) Does tourists’ use of ERSs change over the travel experience? (2) Do socio-demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation) explain changes in tourists’ use of ERSs over the travel experience? (3) Do travel behavior characteristics (i.e., travel organizer, composition of travel group, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, average length of stay last year) explain changes in tourists’ use of ERSs over the travel experience?
Research Methods

Sample and Data Collection

In early June 2015 all faculty and staff ($N = 5,071$) at a university in the northeastern United States were contacted via email with a formal invitation to participate in an on-line survey. When faculty and staff clicked on the survey link provided in the email, they were sent to a home page that described the study purpose, confidentiality, and privacy protocols. If they agreed to participate in the study they were sent to the first survey screen, which included a filter question: “Are you planning to take a vacation in the next four months (i.e., June, July, August, September, 2015)?” Those who answered "yes" or "maybe" were asked to provide the travel dates of their next vacation and then whether they were willing to complete a daily diary during their vacation. Individuals who did not plan to take a vacation by September 2015 or who were not willing to complete a diary exited the survey. Participants whose next vacation was taking place by September 2015 and who were willing to complete a daily diary were asked to continue with the survey. A total of 551 (10.9%) individuals completed the on-line survey.

More than one-half of the study participants (281 or 51% of the 551 respondents) indicated that their vacations were taking place by September 2015 and also agreed to complete the daily diary while on vacation. However, I was only able to reach 174 (32.0% of the 551 respondents) participants and hand deliver hard copies of the travel diary along with instructions and an addressed return envelope approximately one week prior to their vacation. Data collection concluded in October 2015. A total of 152 (87.4%) individuals returned completed diaries.
Data Collection Instruments

Two data collection instruments were used in this study—an on-line survey and a diary. The on-line survey included screening questions as well as questions about individuals’ travel behavior and socio-demographic characteristics. As noted previously, the following screening questions were used to obtain a sample: “Are you planning to take a vacation in the next 4 months (i.e., June, July, August, September, 2015)?” and “Are you willing to complete a diary during your vacation?” Those who met the sample criteria were then asked to indicate who organized their upcoming vacation, the composition of the group traveling on their upcoming vacation, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, and average length of stay last year. They were also asked a series of questions about their socio-demographic characteristics (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation). The travel behavior and socio-demographic data were used to address the second and third research questions in this study.

Given that researchers who have previously studied emotions in a travel context have used pre- and post-trip appraisals (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Nawijn, 2011a; Nawijn et al., 2010), which, according to Nawijn (2011b), may not provide a reliable assessment of emotion, I used daily diaries as a more effective method to collect structured, time dependent, on-site data (Coghlan & Pearce, 2010). Nawijn et al. (2013) and Lin et al. (2014) have successfully used this approach in a travel context. Considering the significant evidence between intense emotional experiences and high memory confidence (Levine & Pizarro, 2004), participants were asked to carry the diary with them while traveling, and to complete it daily for the purpose of producing valid and reliable data.

The daily diary instrument included four questions. First, individuals were asked to indicate the extent to which they experienced seven positive (i.e., joy, excitement, pride, love,
amusement, interest, surprise) and seven negative (i.e., anger, anxiety/fear, embarrassment/shame, guilt, disgust, sadness, loneliness) emotions using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). The positive and negative emotions were drawn from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). Second, they were asked to indicate whether they used 20 emotion regulation strategies introduced by Heiy and Cheavens’ (2014), which also correspond to the 5 families of ERSs in Gross' (1998) model. They documented their use of the strategies on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). Table 3-1 summarizes the list of ERSs included in this study.

**Statistical analysis**

Before running statistical analyses, the fidelity of the diaries was checked in order to establish trustworthiness. First, in cases where there was no response to an emotion item or emotion regulation scale, the notes section below the scale questions on the diary were used to identify why there were missing responses. If respondents wrote notes indicating that they didn’t experience strong emotions on a certain travel day and thus left the response scale blank, it was counted as a valid response. Second, each diary was checked to make sure that there was variation in response. The results indicated that there was substantial variation and all data could be retained for follow-up analyses.

To examine potential changes in study participants’ use of ERSs during their vacation, I began by dividing their total number of travel days into 20% sections (from now on referred to as “travel sections”1), a technique successfully employed by Nawijn et al. (2013) and Lin et al.

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1 When creating the travel sections, an outlier of a 30-day vacation was initially removed from the data prior to statistical analyses. However, there were no significant differences in the results with and without the outlier; thus, it was thus placed back in to the dataset.
(2014). For example, with a 7-day vacation, I created 5 sections: day 1 = first travel section (i.e., 14.3% < 20%), day 2 = second travel section (i.e., 28.6% which is between 20% and 40%), days 3 and 4 = third travel section (between 40% and 60%), day 5 = fourth travel section (between 60% and 80%), and days 6 and 7 = fifth travel section (between 80% and 100%).

Repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) and repeated measures analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were used to analyze the data. By multiplying the number of respondents ($N = 152$) and average length of stay of each respondent ($M = 8; SD = 3.49$; range = 5 to 30 days), a total of 1,216 data points were included in this study. Considering that the suggested minimum sample size for repeated measures ANOVA is between four and eleven (Cleophas et al., 2009; Wilcox & Keselman, 2003), the sample size in this study can be considered large (Wilson VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007). Significant repeated measures ANOVA results were followed with Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparison tests. I also corrected for violations of sphericity with the Huynh-Feldt correction because it is recommended when the $\epsilon$ (i.e., estimate of sphericity) in all the tests are bigger than .75 (Field, 2009; Girden, 1992). The critical level of .05 was used to measure significance levels for the repeated measures ANOVA tests.

In order to address the second and third research questions, five socio-demographic (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation) and five travel behavior (i.e., travel organizer, composition of travel group, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, average length of stay last year) variables were added into a series of repeated measures ANCOVA models as covariates. Significance levels for the repeated measures ANCOVA tests were measured at the .05 critical levels.
### Table 3-1. Emotion regulation strategies on positive and negative emotions found in the literature and their operationalization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation Selection</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>Stimulus control</em>: I avoided all negative</td>
<td>1. <em>Acceptance</em>: I accepted the situation and/or my emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoughts and emotions</td>
<td>2. <em>Social support</em>: I found a friend or family member to talk to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>Social sharing</em>: I talked to my friends and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation Modification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>Capitalizing</em>: I made a plan to make the good</td>
<td>3. <em>Problem-solving</em>: I made a plan to make the situation better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situation happen again</td>
<td>4. <em>Behavioral activation</em>: I found an activity to keep myself busy and distracted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Behavioral activation</em>: I sought out activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and socializing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attentional Deployment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>Savoring</em>: I tried to revel in the moment and</td>
<td>5. <em>Rumination</em>: I thought over and over again about the situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concentrate on how good I felt</td>
<td>6. <em>Positive refocusing</em>: I thought of something pleasant instead of what had happened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>Replaying</em>: I replayed all the details of the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>event in mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Change</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>Broadening</em>: I thought about all the good things</td>
<td>7. <em>Perspective</em>: I reminded myself that things could be worse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that were happening in my life as well</td>
<td>8. <em>Benefit finding</em>: I thought about how I could become stronger or learn from this situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Other-credit</em>: I thought how someone else was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsible for this good situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Modulation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotions by showing them</td>
<td>10. <em>Substance use</em>: I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <em>Substance use</em>: I smoked a cigarette or drank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a drink or got high or exercised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. Gross and John (1998) developed the process model of emotion regulation, including the five families of emotion regulation strategies.
2. Ten regulation strategies for positive emotions and ten regulation strategies for negative emotions were selected from the regulation strategies provided by Heiy and Cheavens (2014).
**Results**

**Respondents’ socio-demographic profile and travel behavioral characteristics**

Most respondents were female (78.8%). On average, respondents were in their mid-forties ($M = 44.9$ years); 32.9% respondents were less than 39 years old, 32.2% were between 40 and 50, and 34.9% were in their fifties or older (Table 3-2). Overall, respondents had higher levels of education; only 13.8% had some college or less. At the time of the study, 39.5% of the respondents were full-time or part-time faculty members working at the university, over one-half (55.9%) were full-time or part-time staff, and a small proportion (4.6%) were retired or postdoctoral scholars. The vast majority of respondents (84.9%) were married or living with their partners.

The majority of respondents indicated that they organized their upcoming vacation (88.7%). Only 4.0% used a travel agent and 7.3% participated in a vacation organized by family members, friends or others (Table 3-3). Most (80.7%) were planning to travel with family members on their upcoming vacation, 16.7% with their friends or others, and only 2.7% alone. When asked about their past travel behavior, respondents indicated that they travel on average about 2.2 times per year. About one-third (30.3%) rarely travel, while most respondents travel occasionally (40.1%) or often (29.6%). In the past year, however, respondents averaged 2.3 vacations ($SD = 1.4$). In terms of their average length of stay in the past year, over a quarter (27.5%) reported vacations lasting four days or less, 33.6% five or six days, and 38.9% seven days or more.
Table 3-2. Socio-demographic profile of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender (n = 151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (n = 149)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 39 years old</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49 years old</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years or older</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (in years)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(44.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>(11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Level (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or less</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s college</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD or doctorate degree</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time or part-time faculty</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time or part-time staff</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single or living alone</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or living with partner</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Measured on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (high school graduate) to 7 (PhD or doctorate degree).
b Master’s degree includes master’s and professional degree.
c Occupation includes six options of full-time faculty, part-time faculty, full-time staff, part-time staff, retiree and postdoctoral scholar.
d Others include retiree and postdoctoral scholar.
e Marital status includes single, divorced, widowed, separated, married and living with partner.
Table 3-3. Travel behavioral characteristics of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel organizer ( (n = 151) )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel agent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, friends or others</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition of travel group ( (n = 150) )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or others</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average travel frequency ( (n = 152) )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (in times)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel frequency last year ( (n = 152) )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (in times)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average length of stay last year ( (n = 149) )</th>
<th>( N )</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 days or less</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 6 days</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 days or more</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( a \) Measured on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (1 to 2 days) to 4 (7 days or more).
Changes in tourists’ use of ERSs over their travel experience

To address whether tourists’ use of ERSs change over the travel experience (i.e., research question #1), a series of repeated measures ANOVA tests were conducted. First, two indices of ERSs were created for both positive and negative emotions (Table 3-4). In general, respondents’ use of ERSs on positive emotions had significant change over their vacation ($F = 7.822; p < .001$), while no significant differences were found in the general use of ERSs on negative emotions. In terms of their use of ERSs with positive emotions, there were six significant models: respondents’ use of savoring ($F = 6.676; p < .001$), emotional expression ($F = 8.139; p < .001$), stimulus control ($F = 2.837; p = .030$), behavioral activation ($F = 9.427; p < .001$), and substance use ($F = 10.445; p < .001$) significantly changed over the course of tourists’ vacations (Table 3-5). Post-hoc pairwise comparison analyses revealed that respondents exhibited a significantly higher level of using emotional expression ($M_{sec.2} = 6.19; M_{sec.3} = 6.17; M_{sec.4} = 6.15$), behavioral activation ($M_{sec.2} = 5.61; M_{sec.3} = 5.48; M_{sec.4} = 5.58$), and substance use ($M_{sec.2} = 3.83; M_{sec.3} = 3.77; M_{sec.4} = 3.78$) at travel sections two, three and four than the first and last travel sections (Figure 3-1). Respondents also reported significantly increased use of savoring ($M_{sec.2} = 6.03; M_{sec.4} = 6.00$) and stimulus control ($M_{sec.2} = 4.74; M_{sec.4} = 4.78$) at travel sections two and four, compared with the first and last travel sections. No significant differences were found in the use of the remaining four regulation strategies on positive emotions across the five travel sections.

In terms of using ERSs with negative emotions, the use of acceptance ($F = 3.504; p = .011$) and substance use ($F = 3.932; p = .004$; Table 3-6) regulation strategies significantly differed over the course of a vacation. Post-hoc pairwise comparison analyses indicated that respondents were significantly more likely to use acceptance ($M_{sec.5} = 5.61$) as a regulation
strategy at the end of their vacations than during the middle of their vacations ($M_{sec.3} = 5.22$; Figure 3-2). Respondents also reported significantly increased use of *substance use* at travel sections two ($M_{sec.2} = 3.48$) and three ($M_{sec.3} = 3.44$), compared with the first section of their vacations ($M_{sec.1} = 2.94$). None of the remaining eight strategies used with negative emotions were found to significantly change over the course of individuals’ vacations.
Table 3-4. Repeated-measures ANOVA results of the Emotion Regulation Strategies (ERSs) indices on positive and negative emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies 1</th>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Section 4</th>
<th>Section 5</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Index of ERSs on positive emotions</td>
<td>4.99 (1.52) (^a)</td>
<td>5.23 (1.40) (^b)</td>
<td>5.17 (1.44) (^b)</td>
<td>5.18 (1.45) (^b)</td>
<td>5.01 (1.50) (^a)</td>
<td>7.822 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Index of ERSs on negative emotions</td>
<td>4.54 (1.74)</td>
<td>4.57 (1.77)</td>
<td>4.53 (1.89)</td>
<td>4.60 (1.74)</td>
<td>4.64 (1.77)</td>
<td>0.562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Any two values with different superscript letters \(^a\) and \(^b\) were significantly different in Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparisons.

*** \(p < .001\)

1 Measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neutral) to 7 (strongly agree).
Table 3-5. Repeated measures ANOVA results of Emotion Regulation Strategies (ERSs) on positive emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies ¹</th>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Section 4</th>
<th>Section 5</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social sharing: I talked to my friends and family</td>
<td>6.19 (1.49)</td>
<td>6.31 (1.39)</td>
<td>6.26 (1.43)</td>
<td>6.18 (1.47)</td>
<td>6.14 (1.43)</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Savoring: I tried to revel in the moment and concentrate on how good I felt</td>
<td>5.64 (1.65) ⁹</td>
<td>6.03 (1.39) ¹ ³</td>
<td>5.91 (1.52)</td>
<td>6.00 (1.40) ³</td>
<td>5.71 (1.54) ⁹</td>
<td>6.676 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Emotional expression: I expressed my positive emotions by showing them</td>
<td>5.86 (1.49) ⁹</td>
<td>6.19 (1.23) ¹ ³</td>
<td>6.17 (1.22) ³</td>
<td>6.15 (1.22) ³</td>
<td>5.89 (1.44) ⁹</td>
<td>8.139 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Capitalizing: I made a plan to make the good situation happen again</td>
<td>5.08 (1.76)</td>
<td>5.34 (1.77)</td>
<td>5.22 (1.85)</td>
<td>5.21 (1.77)</td>
<td>5.27 (1.76)</td>
<td>1.451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Stimulus control: I avoided all negative thoughts and emotions</td>
<td>4.50 (2.09) ⁹</td>
<td>4.74 (1.94) ³</td>
<td>4.71 (1.98)</td>
<td>4.78 (1.91) ³</td>
<td>4.56 (1.91) ⁹</td>
<td>2.837 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Broadening: I thought about all the good things that were happening in my life as well</td>
<td>5.43 (1.73)</td>
<td>5.37 (1.68)</td>
<td>5.31 (1.75)</td>
<td>5.25 (1.80)</td>
<td>5.16 (1.80)</td>
<td>2.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Replaying: I replayed all the details of the event in mind</td>
<td>4.66 (2.00)</td>
<td>4.73 (1.93)</td>
<td>4.71 (2.02)</td>
<td>4.73 (1.97)</td>
<td>4.91 (1.91)</td>
<td>1.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Other-credit: I thought how someone else was responsible for this good situation</td>
<td>4.27 (2.28)</td>
<td>4.09 (2.23)</td>
<td>4.18 (2.22)</td>
<td>4.20 (2.23)</td>
<td>4.09 (2.24)</td>
<td>1.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Behavioral activation: I sought out activities and socializing</td>
<td>5.03 (2.08) ⁹</td>
<td>5.61 (1.64) ³</td>
<td>5.48 (1.76) ³</td>
<td>5.58 (1.78) ³</td>
<td>5.09 (1.92) ⁹</td>
<td>9.427 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Substance use: I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised</td>
<td>3.25 (2.75) ⁹</td>
<td>3.83 (2.70) ³</td>
<td>3.77 (2.73) ³</td>
<td>3.78 (2.69) ³</td>
<td>3.21 (2.51) ⁹</td>
<td>10.445 ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Any two values with different superscript letters a and b were significantly different in Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparisons.

** p < 0.05, *** p < .001

¹ Measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neutral) to 7 (strongly agree).
Table 3-6. Repeated measures ANOVA results of Emotion Regulation Strategies (ERSs) on negative emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies ¹</th>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Section 4</th>
<th>Section 5</th>
<th>$F$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>Acceptance</em>: I accepted the situation and/or my emotions</td>
<td>5.57 (1.70)</td>
<td>5.36 (1.79)</td>
<td>5.22 (2.00) $^a$</td>
<td>5.43 (1.69)</td>
<td>5.61 (1.66) $^b$</td>
<td>3.504 $^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>Behavioral activation</em>: I found an activity to keep myself busy and distracted</td>
<td>5.03 (1.99)</td>
<td>5.10 (1.95)</td>
<td>4.96 (1.96)</td>
<td>5.16 (1.92)</td>
<td>5.18 (1.86)</td>
<td>0.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>Problem-solving</em>: I made a plan to make the situation better</td>
<td>4.89 (2.06)</td>
<td>4.96 (1.96)</td>
<td>4.81 (2.06)</td>
<td>4.84 (2.01)</td>
<td>5.00 (1.93)</td>
<td>0.680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Positive refocusing</em>: I thought of something pleasant instead of what had happened</td>
<td>4.64 (2.12)</td>
<td>4.71 (2.02)</td>
<td>4.66 (2.03)</td>
<td>4.89 (1.97)</td>
<td>4.85 (1.94)</td>
<td>1.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>Social support</em>: I found a friend or family member to talk to</td>
<td>5.10 (2.04)</td>
<td>4.89 (2.09)</td>
<td>4.97 (2.15)</td>
<td>5.02 (1.98)</td>
<td>5.19 (1.92)</td>
<td>1.371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>Benefit finding</em>: I thought about how I could become stronger or learn from this situation</td>
<td>4.30 (2.28)</td>
<td>4.49 (2.06)</td>
<td>4.49 (2.22)</td>
<td>4.60 (1.96)</td>
<td>4.44 (2.11)</td>
<td>1.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>Perspective</em>: I reminded myself that things could be worse</td>
<td>4.78 (2.16)</td>
<td>4.70 (2.21)</td>
<td>4.51 (2.23)</td>
<td>4.65 (2.10)</td>
<td>4.76 (2.16)</td>
<td>1.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Substance use</em>: I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised</td>
<td>2.94 (2.58)$^a$</td>
<td>3.48 (2.56)$^b$</td>
<td>3.44 (2.66)$^b$</td>
<td>3.35 (2.47)</td>
<td>3.24 (2.56)</td>
<td>3.932 $^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <em>Rumination</em>: I thought over and over again about the situation</td>
<td>3.72 (2.40)</td>
<td>3.69 (2.38)</td>
<td>3.75 (2.45)</td>
<td>3.74 (2.24)</td>
<td>3.78 (2.33)</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <em>Expression suppression</em>: I controlled my negative emotions by not showing them</td>
<td>4.43 (2.22)</td>
<td>4.34 (2.15)</td>
<td>4.48 (2.21)</td>
<td>4.30 (2.12)</td>
<td>4.44 (2.09)</td>
<td>0.477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Any two values with different superscript letters a and b were significantly different in Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparisons.

$^{**} p < .05$

¹ Measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neutral) to 7 (strongly agree).
Figure 3-1. Changes in tourists’ use of five ERSs on positive emotions over their travel experience.

Figure 3-2. Changes in tourists’ use of two ERSs on negative emotions over their travel experience.
Interactions between tourists’ use of ERSs and socio-demographic characteristics

To answer the second research question, i.e. whether socio-demographic characteristics explain changes in tourists’ use of ERSs over their travel experience, I added socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation) into a series of repeated measures ANCOVA models as covariates. Out of the 10 regulation strategies for positive emotions, results showed significant within-subject interactions between tourists’ use of 4 strategies (i.e., emotional expression, replaying, other-credit, and substance use) and 3 socio-demographic variables (i.e., gender, education and occupation). First, gender was found to significantly influence the change patterns when respondents used emotional expression (i.e., I expressed my positive emotions by showing them; $F = 2.783; p = .028$) and replaying (i.e., I replayed all the details of the event in mind; $F = 4.196; p = .003$) to regulate their positive emotions (Figures 3-3 and 3-4). Females were significantly more likely to use both strategies at the beginning of their vacations than males.

Second, respondents’ occupation significantly influenced the change in use patterns associated with the positive strategy of other-credit ($F = 2.725; p = .035$; Figure 3-5). Full-time and part-time faculty were significantly more likely to regulate their emotions by thinking that someone else was responsible for their good situation (i.e., other-credit) during the first section of their vacations, compared with their counterparts; however, retirees and postdoctoral scholars (i.e., others) significantly used more of this strategy during the last travel section than the other groups of respondents.

Lastly, respondents’ education level also significantly mattered in terms of the change patterns of using substances to regulate positive emotions over the travel experience ($F = 3.866; p = .005$; Figure 3-6). Respondents with higher levels of education were significantly more likely
to use substances (e.g., smoking, drinking, getting high or exercising) to regulate their positive emotions during the middle sections of the vacation than their counterparts who had lower education levels. No other significant within-subject interactions were found between tourists’ use of ERSs on positive emotions and socio-demographic characteristics.

For the strategies individuals used to regulate their negative emotions, results revealed significant within-subject interaction models between age and benefit finding (Figure 3-7) as well as marital status and substance use (Figure 3-8). Respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 39 were more likely to regulate their negative emotions by thinking about how they could become stronger or learn from the situation (i.e., benefit finding) during the middle section of the vacation than those in the two older age groups ($F = 2.993; p = .021$). Respondents who reported being single or living alone exhibited a significantly lower likelihood of using substances (e.g., smoking, drinking, getting high and/or exercising) to regulate their negative emotions during travel section four than married respondents and those who live with their partners ($F = 2.650; p = .035$). No other significant findings were revealed regarding tourists’ use of ERSs on negative emotions and socio-demographic characteristics.
Figure 3-3. Within-subject effect of gender on using the positive strategy of emotional expression.

Figure 3-4. Within-subject effect of gender on using the positive strategy of replaying.
Figure 3-5. Within-subject effect of occupation on using the positive strategy of other-credit.

Figure 3-6. Within-subject effect of education level on using the positive strategy of substance use.
Figure 3-7. Within-subject effect of age on using the negative strategy of benefit finding.

Figure 3-8. Within-subject effect of marital status on using the negative strategy of substance use.
Interactions between tourists’ use of ERSs and travel behavioral characteristics

To answer the last research question, i.e. whether travel behavioral characteristics explain changes in ERSs over their travel experience, I added travel behavior variables (i.e., travel organizer, composition of travel group, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, average length of stay last year) into a series of repeated measures ANCOVA models as covariates. This series of tests resulted in six significant within-subject interaction models between tourists’ use of four particular strategies (i.e., savoring, emotional expression, capitalizing and behavioral activation) and four travel behavior variables (i.e., travel organizer, average travel frequency, travel frequency last year, average length of stay last year). First, respondents’ travel frequency in the past year was found to significantly influence the change patterns for respondents use of savoring (i.e., I tried to revel in the moment and concentrate on how good I felt; $F = 3.292; p = .013$; Figure 3-9); emotional expression (i.e., I expressed my positive emotions by showing them; $F = 2.495; p = .044$; Figure 3-10); and capitalizing (i.e., I made a plan to make the good situation happen again; $F = 2.687; p = .031$; Figure 3-11) to regulate their positive emotions over the course of their vacations. Respondents who traveled often in the past year were significantly more likely to use all three ERSs at the end of their vacations than the other two groups of respondents. In terms of capitalizing, respondents who traveled often in the past year were significantly more likely to use the strategy during the middle section of their vacation than those who traveled occasionally in the past year.

Respondents’ average travel frequency also played a significant role in the change patterns of using capitalizing to regulate positive emotions over their travel experience ($F = 2.543; p = .039$; Figure 3-12). Respondents who traveled often were significantly more likely to use this strategy to regulate their positive emotions during the first two sections and at the end of
their vacation than their counterparts with less travel frequency.

Third, respondents’ average length of stay in the past year significantly influenced change patterns linked to the positive strategy of *savoring* ($F = 2.559; p = .041$; Figure 3-13). Respondents who had a shorter vacation (i.e., 4 days or less) were significantly more likely to use *savoring* during the first section of their vacations than those who traveled for 7 days or more in the past year. In addition, results also revealed that the travel organizer played a significant role in the change patterns tied to using *behavioral activation* (i.e., I sought out activities and socializing; $F = 3.929; p = .006$; Figure 3-14) to regulate their positive emotions over the vacation. Specifically, respondents whose vacations were organized by family, friends or others, were significantly more likely to use this particular strategy during the first and last sections of their vacations, compared with those who organized vacations by themselves or participated in vacations guided by a travel agent. No other significant within-subject interactions were found between tourists’ use of ERSs on positive emotions and travel behavioral characteristics.

Results only revealed one significant within-subject interaction model between tourists’ use of *behavioral activation* to regulate negative emotions and travel frequency last year ($F = 2.737; p = .030$; Figure 3-15). Respondents who traveled often in the past year were significantly more likely to use this strategy to regulate their negative emotions during travel section two than those who rarely traveled in the past. The same group of respondents was also significantly more likely to use *behavioral activation* during the last travel section, compared with respondents who traveled occasionally in the past. No other significant findings were revealed regarding tourists’ use of ERSs on negative emotions and travel behavioral characteristics.
Figure 3-9. Within-subject effect of travel frequency last year on using the positive strategy of savoring.

Figure 3-10. Within-subject effect of travel frequency last year on using the positive strategy of emotional expression.
Figure 3-11. Within-subject effect of travel frequency last year on using the positive strategy of capitalizing.

Figure 3-12. Within-subject effect of average travel frequency on using the positive strategy of capitalizing.
Figure 3-13. Within-subject effect of average length of stay last year on using the positive strategy of savoring.

Figure 3-14. Within-subject effect of travel organizer on using the positive strategy of behavioral activation.
Figure 3-15. Within-subject effect of travel frequency last year on using the negative strategy of behavioral activation.

**Discussion and Implications**

Respondents exhibited significant differences in their use of five ERSs with positive emotions (i.e., *savoring, emotional expression, stimulus control, behavioral activation*, and *substance use*) and two ERSs with negative emotions (i.e., *acceptance* and *substance use*) during their travel experience. For the five ERSs used with positive emotions, tourists’ use patterns peaked at travel sections two and four and bottomed at the first and last travel sections. This change was represented by an M-shaped pattern, which indicates that the use of emotion regulation strategies to increase the intensity of positive emotions during a vacation is most likely during travel sections two and four and least likely at the beginning and end of a vacation. This result lends support to Lin et al.’s (2014) finding that tourists felt more positive emotions
during the vacation than at the beginning and end, and that they not only feel, but also build upon, their positive emotions by using emotion regulation strategies to increase their intensity.

In terms of the two ERSs used with negative emotions, tourists’ use of acceptance exhibited a V-shaped pattern, which peaked at the first and last travel sections and bottomed at the middle travel section. On the contrary, tourists exhibited an inverted V-shaped use pattern with their use of substance use to deal with negative emotions. This finding suggests that tourists are more willing to accept what they had during the beginning and end of vacation and less willing to accept the situation and/or their negative emotions during the middle of their vacation. It might be because as their vacations progress, tourists move from the awareness stage to the familiarity stage (Milman & Pizam, 1995), and they’d like to do things to control their negative emotions during this time. Without more focused research on this finding, however, this is simply conjecture. In addition, some tourists chose smoking, drinking, and/or exercising to deal with their negative emotions. This is consistent with existing evidence that negative emotions trigger relapses in addictive behaviors such as smoking and drinking, which can be counterproductive in the long term (Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000).

It is worth noting that in spite of the important role social sharing (e.g., talking to a friend or family member) has in emotional experiences (Duprez et al., 2015), there was no significant difference in its use as an ERS with positive or negative emotions during a vacation. According to Rimé (2009), social sharing is used in all contexts as a way to regulate emotions because it is a process that takes place following an emotional episode; thus, based on his research, we should not expect to find significant differences in the travel context.

After adding socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, education, marital status and occupation) into the models, greater insight to tourists’ use of ERSs over time during a vacation
was attained. The main effect of gender and the interaction between gender and travel sections turned out to be significant for tourists’ use of *emotional expression* and *replaying*, indicating that tourists’ gender influences their decisions to choose ERSs on positive emotions during vacation. On average, females used more of both strategies during travel and exhibited a significantly higher level of use at the beginning of their vacations than males, which confirms previous researchers’ (e.g., Lang, Greenwald, Bradley, & Hamm, 1993; Kring & Gordon, 1998; Kring, Smith, & Neale, 1994) findings that women tend to be more emotionally expressive and responsive than men.

In addition, faculty tended to assign others’ credit for their positive emotions during the initial stage of their vacations, while retirees and postdoctoral scholars (i.e., others) did so at the end of their vacations. Of note is the fact that all three occupation groups used this strategy to intensify their positive emotions, providing partial support for Wong and Law’s (2002) contention that using ERSs significantly influenced their positive attitudes, regardless of occupation.

Lastly, tourists with higher levels of education were significantly more likely than tourists with lower levels of education to deal with their emotions by smoking, drinking, getting high and/or exercising during the middle sections of their vacation. This result differs from previous evidence on the positive relationship between lower education and higher level of substance use (Wills, McNamara, & Vaccaro, 1995). The difference might be due to a number of factors. First, much of the research on the relationship between education and substance use has not been conducted in a travel context, which can be quite different from everyday life as travel changes the mindset and behaviors of individuals’ (Lehto, O’Leary, & Morrison, 2004). Second, I used the ERS scale presented by Heiy and Cheavens (2014), which included exercise in the
regulation statement regarding substance use. Exercise has not been included in previous studies that examined the use of substances (e.g., Kilpatrick et al., 1997; Newcomb & Bentler, 1989; Wills et al., 1995).

Significant interactions were also revealed between tourists’ age and their use of benefit finding, as well as marital status and use of substance use to regulate negative emotions. Younger respondents tended to think more about how they could become stronger or learn from the situation (i.e., benefit finding) to regulate their negative emotions during the middle section of the vacation, which is different from previous findings on the lower use of cognitive emotion regulation strategies by younger people (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006). This variance might be due to the higher average age included in my younger group (i.e., from 18 to 39 years). It is also possible that compared with their day to day life, vacations provided younger people a new context in which they could reflect on their lives (Dolnicar, Yanamandram, & Cliff, 2012). Also, respondents who were single or living alone exhibited significantly lower use of substances (e.g., smoking, drinking, getting high or exercising) to regulate their negative emotions during travel section four. This finding might be because those who were single or living alone did not have a travel partner, and thus they were not influenced by their peers’ use of substances (Fleming, White, & Catalano, 2011), particularly when they approached the end of a trip and experienced less positive emotions (Lin et al., 2014).

Interactions were also found with respect to travel behavior variables. Respondents’ past and average travel frequency were found to significantly influence their use of capitalizing, savoring and emotional expression, suggesting that the more travel experience tourists had, the more likely they were to use these three strategies to regulate their positive emotions. It was not only because accumulated travel experiences positively influenced tourists’ revisit intention
(Lam & Hsu, 2004; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998), but also because past travel experiences taught tourists to maintain a relaxed, comfortable mindset, which allows for self-expression, self-indulgence and savoring (Yarnal & Kerstetter, 2005). In addition, tourists with more past tourism experiences exhibited an M-shaped use pattern of *behavioral activation* to regulate their negative emotions. This may suggest that they are seeking activities and other outlets for socialization that enable venting when negative emotions arise during vacation. This finding complements Gross’ (2002) evidence that participating in social activities can regulate negative emotions (Gross, 2002). While some evidence regarding the effect of past tourism experiences on tourists’ preferences towards landscape features (Gao et al., 2014) and intention to visit regional destinations (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998) exists, these results add to the literature by showcasing the role tourists’ past travel experiences play in terms of tourists’ use of ERSs.

Furthermore, this study found that respondents who reported taking shorter vacations in the past year were more likely to use *savoring* to increase their positive emotions at the beginning of their vacations. Nawijn et al. (2013) reported a relationship between length of stay and positive emotions. This finding provides additional evidence of this relationship and indicates that individuals who’ve not been able to take extended vacations in the past are likely excited about the vacation they have just started and know that the time they have to spend on their vacation is limited and precious (Alexander, Bakir, & Wickens, 2010).

The fact that respondents whose vacations were organized by family, friends or others, were more likely to use *behavioral activation* at the beginning and end of their vacation might be because in a group travel context, individuals have different needs for activities (Thornton, Shaw, & Williams, 1997), and people seek more opportunities to enhance their positivity. For example, Yarnal and Kerstetter (2005) found that people enjoyed their group cruise tour because
of the variety of spaces and activities on the ship. Having variety provided them with opportunities to fit in, but also space to distance themselves from others, including members of their tour group.

In sum, the results of this study extend Lin et al.’s (2014) finding that positive emotions peak during the middle section of vacations by documenting that individuals not only have positive emotions, but use ERSs to increase their intensity. My results also extend knowledge regarding tourists’ emotional experiences by addressing change patterns associated with strategies used to regulate positive and negative emotions. Furthermore, I documented that changes in regulation strategies hold across a variety of socio-demographic and travel behavioral characteristics, which significantly influence tourists’ use of ERSs during the vacation.
Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations to this study. First, I used a list of seven positive and seven negative emotions, which were culled from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). I chose to use this list of emotions because it has been tested and thus was deemed appropriate for examining ERSs; however, it was not developed for a vacation context. Some emotions on the list did not directly apply to tourism and other salient emotions tourists may experience during a vacation, such as disappointment and frustration (Lofgren, 2008), were not represented on the list. In the future researchers may want to develop a list of emotions built upon the literature on emotion regulation, but also qualitative inquiry that takes into account the study context of travel and tourism.

Furthermore, I did not attempt to create a standardized understanding of emotion assessment. It is possible that participants may have had idiographic interpretations about the meanings of different emotion terms, such as joy, and completed the diary with considerable variability. I admit that the subjectivity of participant interpretation is a limitation of all self-report emotion regulation studies; however, there is a tension between naturalistically assessing emotion regulation in the travel context and controlling all participants so they have the same operational definition of emotions. Hence, an examination using these two different approaches is needed in the future. Doing this will allow researchers to examine whether there are variances between coaching participants to develop a standardized understanding of the emotion assessment and natural assessment.

Third, the methodology I employed, I was not able to differentiate between tourists purposeful and natural use of ERSs. For instance, some regulation strategies used with positive emotions (e.g., seeking out activities and socializing, smoking a cigarette or drinking a drink)
might have naturally occurred during the beginning and last sections of the vacation. Thus, when conducting studies on ERSs in the future, researchers may want to include an examination between purposeful and natural use of ERSs in the travel context. For example, in-depth interviews might be used with tourists to find out whether strategies such as seeking out activities and socializing are being used as a strategy to regulate their emotions or a something that commonly happens during their vacations.

Fourth, to assess tourists’ use of ERSs, I used a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree), 4 (neutral) and 7 (strongly agree). This scale did not provide respondents with a “not applicable” option, which may have been problematic when respondents felt an emotion was irrelevant to a strategy. As a result, respondents may have used “neutral” or “strongly disagree,” considering either one to be equivalent to “not applicable.” The potential result may be an inconsistency in their answers. Although this scale has been used and tested in previous emotion regulation studies (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014), future studies should address this potential problem by clearly defining “neutral” and “strongly disagree,” as well as exemplifying what respondents should choose in situations where they do not feel an emotion is applicable.

Fifth, there was more missing data with the negative emotions and the use of regulation strategies on negative emotions. One possible explanation may be with the design of the diary package, which had positive emotions on the front and negative emotions on the back of each diary sheet. Individuals could have responded to the positive emotion and emotion regulation strategy scales on the front of the page and ignored the negative and negative regulation questions on the back of the page. In the future, researchers should consider this when designing the diary or questionnaire in the future. Perhaps they could reduce the number of regulation strategy items and/or print them on the same page.
In addition, although this study had a higher response rate in the participant recruitment stage (i.e., 51% of the participants were willing to complete the travel diaries), it is very likely that participants’ interest in the study topic may have increased their awareness of using ERSs during the vacation, influencing the general interpretation of study results. In the future, more effort should be invested in diversifying the sample in order to validate these study results.

Lastly, this study did not account for the personality of participants during the data collection process. It is impossible for a fairly low-key person to experience strong positive or negative emotions. Therefore, the fact that personality has been found to play a role in the process of emotion regulation (John & Gross, 2004) and in tourists’ emotional experiences (Lin et al., 2014), future studies should take into account the influence of personality when examining tourists’ use of ERSs.

**Conclusions**

I found that 152 tourists exhibited significant change patterns when using 6 ERSs on positive emotions and two ERSs on negative emotions over time during their vacations. Some socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics were found to play a significant role in explaining the change patterns. The results suggested that in order to survive and excel in the increasingly competitive environment of the tourism industry, tourism companies and professionals must acknowledge and respond to tourists’ emotions and their use of ERSs by accounting for the role of their socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics in influencing their use changes. For example, I found that women were more likely to express emotions and replay details of their experiences at the beginning stage of their vacations. Rather than focusing on the benefits of the destination, tourism providers should consider incorporating
images (e.g., a happy lady with a big smile) and/or words that showcase elements of emotional expression into the design of their travel brochures, promotional films, websites, and more.

Although tourism managers and their marketing teams have realized that tourists are seeking multiple benefits from a vacation, they often ignore emotional benefits that are as important as utilitarian benefits. As a result, a much greater awareness of what emotional benefits are sought by tourists and when, should be integrated into tourism managers’ training programs. For example, hotel and tour companies often offer discounts for future visits at the end of a vacation. According to this study’s results, tourists tend to seek benefits during the middle of their vacation, which may be the best time to offer them a discount for future visits. In addition, younger tourists are more likely to regulate emotions cognitively by seeking benefits rather than venting their negative emotions; thus, tourism providers should provide experiences that result in multiple benefits (e.g., socialization, laughter, education) and/or hang banners or utilize other forms of promotion that highlight these same benefits.

One striking finding was that tourists smoked, drank, and/or exercised to regulate their positive and their negative emotions, especially during the middle of a vacation. Together with their needs for social activities during vacation, tourism managers should consider adding activities or experiences to address both demands. Examples of such activities or experiences might include happy hour specials, physical events that connect tourists, even wine tasting events that combine both drinking and socialization.
References


Chapter 4

Happier after a vacation?

A closer look at how emotion regulation boosts tourists’ well-being

In this chapter I examined the degree to which tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) during a vacation influence their perceived post-travel well-being. The text and data in this chapter will be modified and submitted to *Annals of Tourism Research*.

**Abstract:** The relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being was explored. Tourists’ use of ERSs was recorded daily while their perceived well-being was measured one day before and after their vacation. Results indicated that tourists’ perceived well-being differ before and after a vacation. In general, they had significantly higher perceptions of well-being after a vacation than before a vacation. The results also revealed that tourists who used ERSs were more likely to perceive a higher sense of post-travel well-being compared with those who didn’t use ERSs. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** emotions, tourist behavior, tourism experience, happiness, health, diary study
Introduction

Emotions have been viewed as passions that come and go, more or less of their own accord (Solomon, 1976). Tourism researchers who have studied how emotions fluctuate throughout the tourism experience have adopted this perspective (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Lin, Kerstetter, Nawjin, & Mitas, 2014; Nawjin, 2010; Nawjin, Mitas, Lin, & Kerstetter, 2013). Most existing emotion research in a tourism context has captured tourists’ emotions at multiple moments in time during a vacation with the underlying belief that emotions are static at each point-in-time (Lin et al., 2014; Nawjin, 2010; Nawjin et al., 2013), ignoring the variability and dynamicity of emotions during the tourism experience. Being able to account for the generative process of emotions throughout the course of an experience is very important in the study of tourists’ experiences (Coghlan & Pearce, 2010).

In addition to being variable and dynamic, emotions are short-lived and subjective (Beedie et al., 2005) and, according to Gross (1998a), can be controlled using a wide range of strategies. This notion, referred to as emotion regulation, highlights the variable and dynamic nature of emotions and suggests that emotions can be regulated at separate points during the generative process (Gross, 1998a; 2001). Individuals use their cognitive resources to appraise emotional stimuli and move the emotional transformation of the response in a more positive direction by successfully using ERSs (Gross, 2013). However, it is unclear how individuals use ERSs during pleasurable experiences such as a vacation and whether doing so results in positive health outcomes. Documenting whether the use of ERSs in a vacation context will be an important addition to the increasing evidence of the relationship between emotions and health outcomes (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Lazarus, 1991).

The purpose of this study was to examine tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and
whether their use of ERSs influences their perceived post-travel well-being. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the travel and tourism literature by (a) introducing the notion of emotion regulation, (b) advancing knowledge about emotion regulation as a factor that contributes to well-being, and (c) contributing to the burgeoning emotion research in tourism by accounting for emotion’s transient nature, dynamicity, and variability throughout a vacation. This study will also contribute to the affective science literature by documenting the relationship between emotion regulation and well-being in a tourism context.

**Literature Review**

In this section I review two related literatures, both of which have contributed to a better understanding of travel, emotion and well-being in general, and emotion regulation specifically. First, I introduce the results of research focused on emotions and well-being in a travel context in order to have a more holistic sense of the current research on this issue. Because travel and tourism researchers have treated emotions as a static response throughout a travel experience they have missed important opportunities to address emotion’s transient nature, dynamicity and variability; thus, I follow-up with a review of emotion regulation theory, which recognizes the important nature of emotions and establishes that a person can use strategies to regulate emotions during the generative process.

**Emotions and well-being in a travel context**

Researchers have linked individuals’ emotions during the travel experience to their post-travel well-being (also referred to as “quality of life,” “mental health,” and “happiness” in the travel and tourism literature). Evidence from a number of studies (e.g., Compton, Smith,
Cornish, & Qualls, 1996; King & Napa, 1998; McGregor & Little, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001) has indicated that well-being is best conceived as multi-dimensional, consisting of hedonic (i.e., subjective well-being) and eudaimonic (i.e., psychological well-being) dimensions. The hedonic dimension focuses on happiness, defined as the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001), while the eudaimonic dimension considers well-being to consist of more than just happiness, and is concerned with meaningfulness (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and living well or in a fully and deeply satisfying way (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Despite these distinctions, evidence has shown a high level of statistical covariance between the experience of hedonia and eudaimonia, suggesting substantial overlap between the two dimensions of well-being (Bauer, McAdams, & Pals, 2008; Waterman, Schwartz, & Conti, 2008). Moreover, experiencing eudaimonia necessarily results in experiencing hedonic enjoyment, but not all hedonic enjoyment is derived from eudaimonia (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993; Waterman et al., 2008). Recognizing that much of the recent research on emotions and well-being in a travel context has only focused on the hedonic or subjective dimensions of well-being, this study incorporated both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions in order to have a holistic understanding of travelers’ well-being.

Following is a review of studies conducted by travel and tourism researchers on emotions and well-being. Gilbert and Abdullah (2004), for example, addressed subjective well-being by operationalizing it as positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. They found that traveling could change vacationers’ sense of well-being. In a similar study Nawijn et al. (2010) examined the effects of post-trip happiness and whether a holiday trip boosts post-trip happiness. They did not report any significant difference on post-trip happiness, but indicated that vacationers reported a higher degree of pre-trip happiness than non-vacationers. Nawijn (2011a)
continued examining the effects of traveling on happiness, this time focusing on its long-term effects. He found that traveling contributed positively to happiness, but its effect was small and short-lived.

Researchers have also examined component(s) of subjective well-being such as life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Nawijn (2010) collected data on travelers' daily mood and general life satisfaction during a holiday, which in total he referred to as “happiness.” His results suggested that there is a Holiday Happiness Curve, which changes over time. For example, his Curve showed that travelers' average mood was high, but mood was lower among those who had just begun their holiday and higher among those who had been traveling longer. Mood then declined slightly, but increased during the last part of the holiday. A notable limitation of his study was his failure to recruit the same group of participants and monitor their mood change in order to construct the Curve. Instead, he used a cross-sectional approach to record different participants' mood at different parts of their trips, which resulted in a large variance for the Curve.

Nawijn (2011b) used “life satisfaction” in a second study to examine the determinants of travelers' daily happiness on vacation. He incorporated an Affect Balance Score to measure travelers' hedonic level of affect, and found that travelers were generally high on hedonic level of affect, with positive affect exceeding negative affect almost fourfold on vacation. Affect balance was higher than generally observed in everyday life, whereas no difference on life satisfaction was found. Holiday stress and attitude towards the travel party were found to be the most important determinants of daily affect balance. According to Nawijn (2011b), these results indicated that holiday trips or vacations are not always pleasant. Other researchers have come to the same conclusion. They have reported travel-related health problems such as homesickness...
(Kop, Vingerhoets, Kruithof, & Gottdiener, 2003; Pearce, 1981; Van Heck & Vingerhoets, 2007; Vingerhoets, Sanders, & Kuper, 1997); worrying during trips (Larsen, Brun, & Ogaard, 2009); relational problems (Ryan, 1991); as well as culture shock (Pearce, 1981). Hence, it is plausible that experiencing a holiday with unpleasantness or stress would lead to lower feelings of happiness (Nawijn et al., 2010; Nawijn, 2011b). There is no research to my knowledge that has addressed how travelers cope with such holiday unpleasantness or stress, which might be a source of travelers' negative emotions.

Overall, Nawijn’s (2011b) findings revealed that travelers' positive affect exceeded their negative affect on vacation. Building off his work as well as that of positive psychologists, Mitas et al. (2012) examined daily positive emotion development before, during, and after a leisure travel experience. They used a developmental within-participants design to determine if Nawijn’s (2010) Holiday Happiness Curve is a plausible account of positive emotion development associated with leisure travel at the individual level. They graphically and statistically examined change in daily positive emotion across 16 days, including pre, during, and post leisure travel experiences. Consistent with Nawijn’s model, positive emotions overall, and joy and interest in particular, increased before leisure travel, were elevated during travel, and declined post travel.

Nawijn et al. (2013) used a diary method to track vacationers’ daily emotions during their vacation. This study was different from previous studies on travelers' emotions, which have treated an entire vacation as a simple point in time (Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2011b). Their results revealed the important relationship between fluctuations in emotions and length of vacation, indicating that vacationers on an 8- to 13-day trip experienced significant changes in the balance of their emotions over the course of their trip.
Lin, Kerstetter, Nawijn, and Mitas (2014) further examined changes in specific positive and negative emotions during a vacation, and found that travelers were high in both positivity and arousal, which was exhibited through an inverted U-shape curve. In general, travelers reported feeling more positive at the front end of their vacation rather than at the end of their vacation. Their findings also revealed the significant role that personality may play in travelers’ emotions during a vacation.

To address whether a link exists between emotions and well-being, Sirgy et al. (2011) used the bottom-up spillover theory of subjective well-being. According to Sirgy et al., the basic premise of the bottom-up spillover theory is that life satisfaction is functionally related to satisfaction with all of life’s domains and sub-domains, and therefore the concept of satisfaction is hierarchical, i.e. life satisfaction is influenced by satisfaction with life domains such as family, which are influenced by lower levels of life concerns such as social events related to a vacation. Building on this premise, Sirgy et al. developed a model to describe how travel-related events contribute to positive and negative affect in various life domains such as family and work, which in turn spill over to life satisfaction. They identified specific sources of positive (e.g., being able to break away from daily routine through travel) and negative affect (e.g., feeling tired and exhausted traveling from one place to another) that play a significant role in tourists’ overall sense of well-being.

In general, studies on pleasure travel, emotions, and well-being report that people have an increased sense of well-being either before or after traveling than those who do not travel. There is also evidence of “peak” fluctuations of emotions during a trip (Lin et al., 2014; Mitas et al., 2012; Nawijn, 2010; Nawijn et al., 2013). However, most of the existing studies have been built off of the underlying belief that emotions are static and, in some cases, that individuals can recall
their emotions after their travel experience (Sirakaya et al., 2004). They have failed, however, to take emotions' dynamic performance into account. Hence, I examined traveler's emotions and well-being from a dynamic perspective by accounting for their ERSs.

**Emotion regulation**

Emotion regulation was conceptualized as a process that involves initiating, inhibiting or modulating a person’s state of mind or behavior in a given situation (Gross & John, 2003). A core feature of emotion regulation is the activation of a goal to up- or down-regulate either the magnitude or duration of the emotional response (Gross, Sheppes, & Urry, 2011). For example, people may try to increase positive emotions, such as love, interest and joy (Quoidbach, Berry, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2010), while they also try to decrease negative emotions, such as anger, sadness and anxiety (Gross, Richards, & John, 2006). The up- or down-regulation process activates the goal either in oneself (i.e., intrinsic emotion regulation) or in someone else (i.e., extrinsic emotion regulation). Intrinsic emotion regulation refers to situations when individuals regulate their own emotions, while extrinsic emotion regulation represents instances when individuals regulate another person’s emotions (Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004; Gross, 1998b). Infrequently, both intrinsic and extrinsic emotion regulation co-occur, i.e. when persons regulate other’s emotions (i.e., extrinsic regulation) in order to calm themselves down (i.e., intrinsic regulation).

Whether driven by intrinsic or extrinsic goals, people do many different things to regulate their emotions (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999). To understand their array of regulation activities, Gross (1998a, 2001) proposed the process model of emotion regulation, which treats each step in the emotion-generative process as a potential target for regulation. The model highlighted five
points at which individuals can regulate their emotions. Each of these five points represents a family of ERSs: (1) situation selection, (2) situation modification, (3) attentional deployment, (4) cognitive change, and (5) response modulation.

Because each family of emotion regulation strategies has different consequences, Gross (2013) modified the model to further distinguish between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. The first four families of regulation strategies (i.e., situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change) are antecedent-focused and the fifth one (i.e., response modulation) is response-focused. The antecedent-focused strategies refer to things a person can do before the emotion response has become fully activated and changed behaviors, while the response-focused strategy focuses on things a person can do once an emotion response has already been generated and is underway (Gross, 2001).

Mounting evidence suggests that our emotional responses such as anger, anxiety, and depression can influence both our mental and physical health (Suls & Bunde, 2005). Many mental disorders (e.g., anxiety, mood disorder) are thought to involve emotion dysregulation or misregulation, or emotion regulation failure that results in problematic emotional states (Gross & Munoz, 1995). Framing these mental disorders from an emotion regulation perspective provides potential mechanisms for underlying psychosocial interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (Goldin et al., 2012). With regard to emotional influences on physical health, particular attention has been paid to the positive relationship between negative emotions and cardiovascular disease (Suls & Bunde, 2005), which led to further studies on emotion regulation and cardiovascular outcomes (Appleton, Buka, Loucks, Gilman, & Kubzansky, 2013; Kubzansky, Park, Peterson, Vokonas, & Sparrow, 2011)
Given that I want to document the role of emotion regulation in a travel context, I thought it wise to build on existing research to determine if individuals’ use of ERSs influence their overall perception of well-being. Gross and John (2003) suggested that the use of ERSs is related to a person’s psychological well-being: reappraisal has been shown to be positively related to psychological well-being, whereas suppression has been negatively associated with well-being. Individuals who used reappraisal were found to have fewer symptoms of depression, higher levels of environmental mastery, personal growth, self-acceptance, and a clearer purpose in life, whereas individuals who used suppression were found to avoid and lack close social relationships and indicate less life satisfaction, and have lower self-esteem and a less optimistic attitude about the future (Gross & John, 2003). DeSteno, Gross, and Kubzansky (2013) found direct effects of emotion on health, depending on physiological alterations that occur with affective states. They also documented indirect effects of emotion on health, which influence individuals’ decisions and behaviors such as diet, exercise, coping strategies, and seeking social support.

In summary, the purpose of this study was to examine tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and whether their use of ERSs influences their perceived post-travel well-being. To address this overall purpose, the following research questions were answered:

(1) Do tourists perceive their sense of well-being differently before and after a vacation?

(2) Does tourists’ use of ERSs with positive and negative emotions explain differences on their perceived well-being before and after a vacation?
Methods

Data Collection

Two phases of data collection were used in this study. First, an on-line survey was used to recruit participants from faculty and staff with a publically listed e-mail at a university in the northeastern United States in early June 2015. Second, individuals who met the study criteria and agreed to participate in the second phase of data collection instrument completed a daily diary.

A sample of 5,071 faculty and staff were contacted via email with a formal invitation to participate in an on-line survey. Those who chose to participate clicked on a link that sent them to the study’s home page, which described the study purpose, confidentiality, and privacy protocols. Those who agreed to participate in the study were sent to the first filter question—“Are you planning to take a vacation in the next four months (i.e., June, July, August, September, 2015)?” If they answered "yes" or "maybe," they were asked to provide the travel dates of their next vacation and then sent to the second filter question—“Are you willing to complete a diary during your vacation?” Participants who planned to take a vacation by September 2015 and who were willing to complete the diary were asked to continue with the survey. Participants who were not taking a vacation by September 2015 or who did not want to complete a diary exited the survey. This process resulted in a total of 592 (11.7%) responses, but only 551 (10.9%) completed the on-line survey.

A total of 174 (32.0%) faculty and staff agreed to complete the daily diary while on vacation. I hand delivered hard copies of the travel diary along with instructions and an addressed return envelope to all of them approximately one week prior to their vacation. A total of 152 (87.4%) travel diaries were completed and returned.

2 The diary in this study was a small booklet. Each day individuals were “…asked to respond to 4 questions, which should take no more than 10 minutes to answer.”
Daily diaries are an effective method for collecting structured, time dependent, on-site data (Coghlan & Pearce, 2010; Levine & Pizzaro, 2004), even in a travel context (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2013). The diary used in this study included questions about: (1) positive (i.e., joy, excitement, pride, love, amusement, interest, surprise) and negative (i.e., anger, anxiety/fear, embarrassment/shame, guilt, disgust, sadness, loneliness) emotions; (2) ERSs (10 positive and 10 negative); (3) well-being; and (4) post-travel satisfaction and intention and/or reason to return. For the purpose of this study, only the questions about ERSs and well-being were referenced. Individuals were asked to answer questions on well-being one day before and after their vacation, but questions on emotions and ERSs every day of their vacation.

To address individuals’ use of ERSs with their positive and negative emotions, study participants were first asked to rate their strongest experience of each emotion every day of their vacation using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always), which was derived from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). Participants were then asked to document whether they used the 10 positive and 10 negative ERSs to regulate the emotions they experienced. They did this using a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). The ERSs scale was derived from the work of Heiy and Cheavens (2014), which corresponds to the five families of ERSs in Gross' (1998) model.

Given that evidence has suggested emotion regulation may change individuals' perception of their well-being (Gross & John, 2003), a measure of well-being was included in the diary. I focused on tourists’ perception of hedonic/subjective and eudaimonic/psychological well-being using two scales. First, I used the five-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), which has been widely adopted by travel and tourism researchers (e.g., Chen, Lehto, & Cai, 2013; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; McCabe & Johnson,
Because using ERSs such as reappraisal, repression and disclosure is highly pertinent to eudaimonic well-being (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998; Gross & John, 2003; King & Pennebaker, 1998), a measure of the eudaimonic/psychological well-being developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) was also incorporated into the eudaimonic dimension of well-being. Thus, the SWLS was modified to include six statements representing autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Gross and John (2003) have successfully utilized the scale to measure the relationship between the habitual use of ERSs and their impact on well-being. Both of the measures used a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7).

**Statistical analysis**

Prior to answering either of the research questions, principal components analysis and the varimax rotation method were used to reduce the 10 positive ERSs and the 10 negative ERSs into a set of simplified factors. Only factors with an eigenvalue equal to or greater than 1.0 were considered significant and chosen for interpretation. A variable with factor loadings equal to or greater than .40 was considered significant and included in the analysis (Hair et al., 2006; Stevens, 1992). Cronbach’s alpha was employed to test the internal consistency of the resulting factors.

To answer the first research question (i.e., whether tourists’ perception of their well-being differed before and after their vacation), paired samples t-tests were employed. The critical level of .05 was used to measure significance levels for the paired samples t-tests. Effect sizes were also reported. The second research question was answered through a series of standard multiple linear regressions. Multi-collinearity among independent variables was examined to make sure
that variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics were above the conservative minimum scores (VIF > .10) and tolerance statistics were below conservative maximum scores (< 10.0; Mertler & Vannatta, 2005). Critical levels of .05 and .10 were used to measure significance levels for the regression models.

**Results**

**Respondents’ socio-demographic and travel behavioral characteristics**

The mean age of respondents was approximately 45 (Table 4-1). The majority of respondents was female (78.8%), a member of the full- or part-time staff (55.9%), had completed a degree in higher education (86.2%), and were married or living with their partner (84.9%). In terms of their past travel behaviors, respondents indicated that they traveled about 2.3 times (SD = 1.4) in the past year. The length of their vacation in the past year ranged, on average, from four days or less (27.5%), to five or six days (33.6%), to seven days or more (38.9%).
Table 4-1. Socio-demographic and travel behavior characteristics of study respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender (n = 151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (n = 149)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 39 years old</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49 years old</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years or older</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (in years)</td>
<td>(44.9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>(11.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Level (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or less</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s college</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree (^b)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD or doctorate degree</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time or part-time faculty</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time or part-time staff</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (^d)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single or living alone</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or living with partner</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel frequency last year (n = 152)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (in times)</td>
<td>(2.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>(1.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average length of stay last year (n = 149)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 days or less</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 6 days</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 days or more</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Measured on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (high school graduate) to 7 (PhD or doctorate degree).
\(^b\) Master’s degree includes master’s and professional degree.
\(^c\) Occupation includes six options of full-time faculty, part-time faculty, full-time staff, part-time staff, retiree and postdoctoral scholar.
\(^d\) Others include retiree and postdoctoral scholar.
\(^e\) Marital status includes single, divorced, widowed, separated, married and living with partner.
\(^f\) Measured on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (1 to 2 days) to 4 (7 days or more).
Comparing respondents’ perceived well-being before and after their vacation

To answer the first research question—“Do tourists perceive their sense of well-being differently before and after a vacation?”—paired samples t-tests were conducted to determine the existence of differences in respondents’ perceived well-being before and after their vacation (Table 4-2). The results showed that respondents had significantly higher perceptions of hedonic/subjective well-being after their vacation than before their vacation, specifically with respect to the statements: “in most ways my life is close to my ideal” ($t = -3.005; p = .003$), and “the conditions of my life are excellent” ($t = -2.972; p = .003$). No significant findings were found with the three remaining hedonic/subjective well-being statements.

With respect to their perceived eudaimonic/psychological well-being, respondents had significantly higher perceptions of environmental mastery ($t = -2.540; p = .012$), self-acceptance ($t = -2.256; p = .026$), and positive relations with others ($t = -2.869; p = .005$) after their vacation. No other significant findings were revealed with the remaining eudaimonic/psychological well-being statements.

The role of tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs)

To answer the second research question—“Does tourists’ use of ERSs with positive and negative emotions explain differences on their perceived well-being before and after a vacation?”—an exploratory factor analysis was first performed on tourists’ use of the 10 ERSs with positive emotions in order to obtain a set of simplified factors. As shown in Table 4-3, two factors explaining 58.30% of the variance emerged. Bartlett’s test of sphericity (with a value of 597.84, $p < .001$) and a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic of .86 indicated that the data were suitable for factor analysis. Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation procedure was used to
identify orthogonal factor dimensions. Variables with loadings equal to or greater than .40 were
included in a given factor to decrease the probability of misclassification. The communalities of
the 10 variables ranged from .49 to .72, suggesting that the variances of each original variable
(from 49% to 72%) were reasonably explained by the two-factor solution. Most factor loadings
were greater than .60, indicating good correlations between the items and the factor groupings to
which they belonged (Comrey & Lee, 1992). Cronbach’s alpha tests were used to determine the
internal consistency of the resulting factors. The results showed high internal reliability for the
first factor ($\alpha = .87$), but relatively low with the inclusion of the regulation strategy—substance
use—in the second factor. Given its low alpha coefficient and conceptual considerations,
substance use was excluded from the second factor, which resulted in acceptable, but moderate
internal reliability ($\alpha = .64$). Thus, two factors were uncovered using nine of the ten positive
ERSs. They were labeled “Cognitive Reappraisal” and “Emotional Sharing.” Cognitive
Reappraisal explained 44.32% of the variance in the model and encompassed 6 regulations
strategies, including replaying, broadening, savoring, capitalizing, stimulus control, and other-
credit. Emotional Sharing explained 13.98% of the variance in the model and was composed of
the following regulations strategies: social sharing, behavioral activation and emotional
expression.

A second exploratory factor analysis was conducted with tourists’ use of the 10 ERSs
with negative emotions. Two factors explaining 69.98% of the variance emerged from the factor
analysis (Table 4-4). Bartlett’s test of sphericity (with a value of 1042.438, $p < .001$) and a
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic of .892 indicated that the data were suitable for factor analysis.
Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation procedure was again used to identify
orthogonal factors. Factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater were retained, as were factor items
with loadings greater than .40. The communalities of the 10 variables ranged from .60 to .83, suggesting that the variances of each original variable (from 60% to 83%) were reasonably explained by the two-factor solution. In this analysis all of the items had loadings greater than .70, indicating very good correlations between the items and the factors to which they belonged (Comrey & Lee, 1992). The Cronbach’s alpha statistic was referenced to determine the internal consistency of the factors. The coefficients ranged from .76 (Factor 2) to .92 (Factor 1), indicating that they were internally consistent. All of the final communalities were higher than .60, indicating strong correlations between the indicators and the associated factors. The two resulting factors that represented regulation strategies with negative emotions were labeled, “Positive Reappraisal” and “Response Modulation.” Positive Reappraisal explained 59.61% of the variance in the model and included 7 regulations strategies, including problem-solving, positive refocusing, social support, acceptance, behavioral activation, benefit finding, and perspective. Response Modulation explained 10.38% of the variance in the model and included 3 of the regulation strategies used with negative emotions: rumination, substance use, and expression suppression.

A series of standard multiple linear regressions were then conducted to explore the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs and their perceived post-travel well-being. Because no significant difference was revealed between tourists’ use of ERSs and the indices of two dimensions of well-being, the dependent variables were the 11 items that represented respondents’ overall well-being after a vacation. The factors generated from the regulation strategies used with positive and negative emotions were the independent variables of the two regression models. Using the resulting factors helped to avoid multi-collinearity in the models.

Results showed that the two factors of regulation strategies with positive emotion (i.e.,
Cognitive Reappraisal and Emotional Sharing) are generally good predictors of tourists’ post-travel well-being statements, except for “I'm satisfied with my life” ($R^2 = .015; p = .313$) and “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life” ($R^2 = .021; p = .200$; Table 4-5). After controlling for the Emotional Sharing factor, the results showed that respondents who tended to use Cognitive Reappraisal to regulate their positive emotions were more likely to agree that they have autonomy ($\beta = .196; p = .016$), environmental mastery ($\beta = .164; p = .043$), personal growth ($\beta = .186; p = .022$), positive relations with others ($\beta = .215; p = .008$), purpose in life ($\beta = .277; p = .001$), and self-acceptance ($\beta = .334; p < .001$) after their vacation. Those who tended to use Emotion Sharing to regulate their positive emotions, on the other hand, were more likely to perceive that “if I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing” ($\beta = .206; p = .011$) after their vacation.

Although no significant relationships were found between ERSs with negative emotion factors and the 11 well-being items (Table 4-6), after controlling for the factor of Response Modulation, respondents who tended to use Positive Reappraisal with their negative emotions were more likely to perceive that they have personal growth ($\beta = .152; p = .06$).
Table 4-2. Paired samples $t$-tests for respondents’ perceived well-being before and after a vacation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Well-being items a</th>
<th>Statistical Values</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedonic/subjective well-being</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I'm satisfied with my life.</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>1.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The conditions of my life are excellent.</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td>1.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eudaimonic/psychological well-being</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Autonomy: I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Environmental mastery: In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personal growth: I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Self-acceptance: I like most aspects of my personality.</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Positive relations with others: People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Purpose in life: Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (neutral) to 7 (strongly agree).

b Used the significance level at $\alpha = .05$. 
Table 4-3. Factor analysis of tourists’ use of regulation strategies with positive emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items representing regulation strategies with positive emotions</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>Variance Explained</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Cognitive reappraisal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.432</td>
<td>44.324</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Replaying</strong>: I replayed all the details of the event in mind</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.718</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Broadening</strong>: I thought about all the good things that were happening in my life as well</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Savoring</strong>: I tried to revel in the moment and concentrate on how good I felt</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Capitalizing</strong>: I made a plan to make the good situation happen again</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Stimulus control</strong>: I avoided all negative thoughts and emotions</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>.612</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Other-credit</strong>: I thought how someone else was responsible for this good situation</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>.524</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: Emotional sharing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.398</td>
<td>13.975</td>
<td>.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Social sharing</strong>: I talked to my friends and family</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Behavioral activation</strong>: I sought out activities and socializing</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Emotional expression</strong>: I expressed my positive emotions by showing them</td>
<td>.525</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Bartlett’s test of sphericity = 597.840, \( p < .001 \); Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .864; total variance explained at 58.30%. 
Table 4-4. Factor analysis of tourists’ use of regulation strategies with negative emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items representing regulation strategies with negative emotions</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>Variance Explained</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Positive reappraisal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.961</td>
<td>59.606</td>
<td>.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Problem-solving: I made a plan to make the situation better</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.825</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Positive refocusing: I thought of something pleasant instead of what had happened</td>
<td>.804</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social support: I found a friend or family member to talk to</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Acceptance: I accepted the situation and/or my emotions</td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Behavioral activation: I found an activity to keep myself busy and distracted</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td>.668</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Benefit finding: I thought about how I could become stronger or learn from this situation</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Perspective: I reminded myself that things could be worse</td>
<td>.712</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: Response modulation</strong></td>
<td>1.038</td>
<td>10.378</td>
<td>.763</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rumination: I thought over and over again about the situation</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.778</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Substance use: I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Expression suppression: I controlled my negative emotions by not showing them</td>
<td>.718</td>
<td>.705</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Bartlett’s test of sphericity = 1042.438, p < .001; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .892; total variance explained at 69.98%.
Table 4-5. Multiple linear regression of two factors of positive ERSs on respondents’ perceived post-travel well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>WB1</th>
<th>WB2</th>
<th>WB3</th>
<th>WB4</th>
<th>WB5</th>
<th>WB6</th>
<th>WB7</th>
<th>WB8</th>
<th>WB9</th>
<th>WB10</th>
<th>WB11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive reappraisal</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.196**</td>
<td>.164**</td>
<td>.186**</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.277***</td>
<td>.334***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional sharing</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.206**</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$p$-value</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$;
WB1 = “In most ways my life is close to my ideal;”
WB2 = “I'm satisfied with my life;”
WB3 = “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life;”
WB4 = “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing;”
WB5 = “The conditions of my life are excellent;”
WB6 = “I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus;”
WB7 = “In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live;”
WB8 = “I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world;”
WB9 = “I like most aspects of my personality;”
WB10 = “People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others;”
WB11 = “Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.”
Table 4-6. Multiple linear regression of two factors of negative ERSs on respondents’ perceived post-travel well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>WB1</th>
<th>WB2</th>
<th>WB3</th>
<th>WB4</th>
<th>WB5</th>
<th>WB6</th>
<th>WB7</th>
<th>WB8</th>
<th>WB9</th>
<th>WB10</th>
<th>WB11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive reappraisal</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.161**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response modulation</td>
<td>-.100</td>
<td>-.127</td>
<td>-.145</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$p$-value</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.401</td>
<td>.466</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.626</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** $p < .05$

WB1 = “In most ways my life is close to my ideal;”
WB2 = “I'm satisfied with my life;”
WB3 = “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life;”
WB4 = “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing;”
WB5 = “The conditions of my life are excellent;”
WB6 = “I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus;”
WB7 = “In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live;”
WB8 = “I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world;”
WB9 = “I like most aspects of my personality;”
WB10 = “People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others;”
WB11 = “Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.”
Discussion and Implications

Respondents’ perception of their overall well-being changed over the course of a vacation; they were significantly more likely to perceive that “In most ways my life is close to my ideal” and “The conditions of my life are excellent” after their vacation. This increase in some facets of hedonic/subjective well-being post vacation is similar to Gilbert and Abdullah’s (2004) findings but challenge those of Chen, Lehto and Cai (2013). Chen et al. did not find that tourists felt “In most ways my life is close to my ideal” after a vacation. This may be because their sample consisted solely of Chinese tourists. This conjecture is plausible, because Diener, Oishi, and Lucas (2003) have suggested that cultural variables can not only explain differences in individuals’ perceived subjective well-being, but also moderate which variables most influence their sense of subjective well-being. In the future researchers should consider conducting a comparative study between eastern and western tourists on their sense of well-being to test whether differences exist by using the same scale to measure their subjective well-being.

Results also revealed a significantly higher level of psychological well-being on facets of environmental mastery, self-acceptance, and positive relations with others after a vacation. Tourists may have been more “connected” because they felt in charge of their environment, appreciated most aspects of their personality, and maintained positive relationships with others, which in general confirms Sirgy et al.’s (2011) findings that traveling influences tourists’ life satisfaction through various life domains, such as social life, family life and leisure life. However, in this study, tourists experienced higher levels of psychological well-being after their vacation, which is a new finding and, to the best of my knowledge, hasn’t been examined in a tourism context. This finding may be explained by the fact that this study accounted for
individuals’ use of ERSs during their vacation. It has been well established in psychology that using ERSs is positively associated with these same facets of psychological well-being (Gross & John, 2003). Considering that a vacation creates a unique, relaxing but temporary social context where tourists can escape from their routines and experience something different (Crompton, 1979), it was worth examining how tourists used emotion regulation strategies in the tourism context and how emotion regulation interacted with their perceptions of psychological well-being. Future research on this topic should account for various characteristics of the tourism context (e.g., destination attributes, travel distances), and how they interact with tourists’ use of ERSs. Qualitative inquiry should be used to better understand how tourists interpret facets of their psychological well-being in terms of meanings and importance.

The factor analysis on the 10 ERSs with positive emotions resulted in two factors—Cognitive Reappraisal and Emotional Sharing. Cognitive Reappraisal included six ERSs (i.e., replaying, broadening, savoring, capitalizing, stimulus control, and other-credit), which corresponds to the antecedent-focused strategies in Gross’ (1988a) process model of emotion regulation. They represented things that a person can do that construes a potentially emotion-eliciting situation in a way that helps change its emotional impact (Gross & John, 2003). Emotional Sharing included three ERSs (i.e., social sharing, behavioral activation and emotional expression), which appears to be about sharing or expressing positive emotions with others. The consistency on the meanings of the three strategies might explain the exclusion of substance use from this dimension, because substance use focuses on the use of a substance (e.g., smoking a cigarette, drinking a drink), instead of emotional sharing and expression with others. This finding challenged existing evidence distinguishing between the two main ERSs, i.e., Cognitive Reappraisal and Expressive Suppression (Gross, 1998b), but also complemented the emotion
regulation literature (particularly with positive emotions) that reinforces individuals’ tendency to use Emotional Sharing instead of Expressive Suppression. Although substance use was not included in either regulation factor with positive emotions in this study, it is still worth examining in the future to see whether it may be another independent regulation factor with positive emotions (Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000).

In terms of the regression results, they revealed significant relationships between the two regulation factors with positive emotions and tourists’ perceived post-travel well-being. Respondents who were more likely to use Cognitive Reappraisal were also more likely after their vacation to agree with the subjective well-being statement, “The conditions of my life are excellent,” and the psychological well-being facets of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. These results support Gross and John’s (2003) findings about reappraisers generally being more satisfied with their lives, but also highlight the significance of items within the subjective well-being factor. In terms of the psychological well-being facets, all were significant for tourists who used cognitive reappraisal, which extends previous evidence on how reappraisers perceived these psychological well-being facets (e.g., Gross & John, 2003). It is worth noting that notwithstanding their greater sense of autonomy, tourists who had a higher level use of cognitive reappraisal scored higher on positive relations with others, which confirmed Gross and John’s (2003) findings concerning reappraisers being positively related to their social functioning.

With regards to the second positive emotions factor—Emotion Sharing, results showed that greater use of emotion sharing led to more agreement with the subjective well-being statements of “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing” and “The conditions of my life are excellent” post vacation. It should be noted that respondents who used Cognitive
Reappraisal or Emotion Sharing both experienced a higher level of perception towards the statement, “The conditions of my life are excellent,” which builds upon Gross and John’s (2003) findings and generally establishes the positive role of emotion regulation in boosting tourists’ subjective well-being after vacation. In particular, the statement of “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing” was positively associated with Emotion Sharing, which might indicate the close relationship between social sharing and functioning and emotion regulation, as well as how they influence individuals’ well-being together. As Gross and John (2003) claimed, interactions with others are potent triggers for emotions, and individuals often regulate emotions to achieve their social goals and maintain good relations with significant others. In turn, maintaining emotionally close relationships often gives rise both to strong emotions and to calls to share emotions, which may contribute to tourists’ satisfaction with their living environment and life.

When factor analysis was conducted with the 10 ERSs with negative emotions, two factors emerged: Positive Reappraisal (i.e., problem-solving, positive refocusing, social support, acceptance, behavioral activation, benefit finding, and perspective) and Response Modulation (i.e., rumination, substance use, and expression suppression), which generally corresponded with the antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies in Gross’ (1998a) process model. However, the emotion regulation strategy, rumination, loaded on to Response Modulation, which differs from previous research that has treated it as an antecedent-focused strategy and a member of the attentional deployment family (Gross, 1998a). This deviation may support Gross’ (2014) contention that boundaries between some ERSs are not clear. For example, the emotion regulation strategy of rumination was described in the diary as thinking over and over again about the situation. To some tourists this may suggest modifying a person’s internal
environment, which may overlap with the meanings associated with response-focused strategies. For example, a person might hate being stuck in an all-inclusive resort without opportunities for off property adventures. It is possible that this person has already had negative emotion responses and tried to use the strategy of rumination, which makes her realize internally that nothing can be changed because she has already paid for her entire vacation. This internal process, which focuses on changing the person’s negative emotion responses, generally is considered a response-focused strategy. In the future researchers might want to clearly define each strategy in the tourism context when using a quantitative approach to assess tourists’ use of ERSs. However, qualitative inquiry should also be employed to examine how individuals define and interpret each emotion regulation strategy.

The regression results revealed that respondents’ use of Positive Reappraisal with negative emotions was positively related to their perceptions after vacation towards the psychological well-being facets of personal growth and purpose in life, while their use of Response Modulation was negatively related to their perception towards the subjective well-being statement, “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.” These findings correspond to the distinctions between the meanings of the two dimensions of well-being. Psychological well-being represents more than happiness and is concerned with meaningfulness and living well or in a fully and deeply satisfying way, while subjective well-being focuses on happiness, defined as the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Hence, the tourists in this study who positively reappraised their negative emotions may have focused on the meanings of their vacations, whereas those who gave less effort to modulating their negative emotional responses likely ignored unhelpful emotions and focused on the presence of positive affect and their happiness.
Conclusions

Overall, the results of this study offer promising new information regarding which aspects of tourists’ subjective and psychological well-being can be boosted by taking vacations and how they may be enhanced by using different emotion regulation strategies. Following are specific contributions of the study.

The study provides a longitudinal perspective through the use of daily diaries. Previous studies have successfully adopted this approach in a travel context (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2013), but this study showcases how to extend emotion regulation research in tourism by using daily diaries. Researchers interested in using diaries in the future should consider conducting a longitudinal study that includes multiple data collection stages, for example, examining emotion regulation over the course of a year and multiple vacations for the same group of participants. Doing so would allow researchers to more deeply examine and validate emotion and ERSs being used in a vacation context.

This study represents the first attempt to introduce the construct of emotion regulation to the tourism field. Most of the current emotions research in tourism, which treats emotions as static, is concerned with tourists’ emotional status and changes in emotions. By accounting for the generative process of an emotional response and introducing the theory of emotion regulation, this study takes the study of emotions a step further. Instead of recording and examining the status of emotions at a certain point in time, emotion researchers today should be more concerned about the possibility of tourists manipulating the short-lived, subjective feeling that occurs in the foreground of consciousness and requires immediate attention (Scherer, 2005), and how to regulate that feeling in to positivity. In this sense, emotion regulation is inextricably linked to positive psychology, because both fields seek to promote optimal human functioning.
(Tamir & Gross, 2011). In addition, with the burgeoning interest in human well-being and happiness, emotion regulation also plays a unique role in advancing our understanding of well-being by developing strategies to make the best out of positive emotions so as to achieve lasting happiness and to cope with negative emotions. Emotion regulation can be considered a preventive intervention that can be used to enhance human functioning, reduce psychological distress, and help further individuals’ health and well-being (American Psychological Association, 2013). Therefore, examining tourists’ use of emotion regulation is groundbreaking and meaningful for other branches of research, including the broader area of leisure studies.

Tourists showed increased perceptions of well-being on half of the psychological facets (i.e., environmental mastery, self-acceptance, and positive relations with others) after vacation, and those who used Cognitive Reappraisal to regulate their positive emotions experienced a higher level of perceptions towards all psychological well-being facets. Hence, this study not only provided additional insight to psychological well-being as a dimension of tourists’ overall well-being, but also incorporated the theory of emotion regulation and an additional dimension of well-being (i.e., psychological well-being) into one study to showcase their interactions in the tourism context. Existing studies in tourism have given a great deal of attention to subjective well-being, which tends to focus on happiness (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Nawijn & Mitas, 2012); however, more and more tourists are traveling to seek meaning, which is based in psychology (McCain & Ray, 2003). Researchers are advised to consider incorporating the construct of psychological well-being in their well-being studies in order to extend our understanding of tourists’ overall well-being.

The travel and tourism field focuses on providing tourists with memorable experiences, something that researchers argue can’t generally be attained through the purchase of a product
(e.g., buying a new car; Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003). The results of this study suggest that the field continue to provide memorable experiences, but also publically recognize that such experiences (particularly for individuals who use emotion regulation strategies) can lead to a boost in overall well-being. Existing practices such as paid leave or national holidays are good, but in many countries are limited in time and scope; for example, the average Japanese man only takes 68% of his 10-day paid holiday every year (Richards, 1999). Thus, policy makers should pay attention to the value of vacation in individuals’ lives, particularly their sense of well-being.

It is not only because of vacations as a psychological need, such as searching for meaning and authenticity (MacCannell, 1976), but also vacations are our social right (Richards, 1999).

Further, study results indicated that being social and sharing were ERSs used by tourists and they boosted their overall well-being. Thus, tourism professionals should consider how the experiences they offer can be modified to allow for greater socialization and connection between tourists. Doing so may render less negativity (due to tourists’ ability to use ERSs to up regulate) and greater cooperation between tourists and providers. For tourists, our study not only delivers the cheerful message that they can potentially boost their overall well-being by taking a vacation, but also provides them with strategies for emotion regulation. Perhaps information about using such strategies could be added to travel websites, provided in travel brochures, even mentioned by tour leaders. Most tourists may already understand how to experience eudemonic well-being (i.e., happiness) through a vacation, but they may need reminding about the strategies they can use to ensure that their vacation is not only meaningful, but leads to overall well-being post vacation. As the study findings suggest, tourists who used Cognitive Reappraisal achieved higher perceptions of their psychological well-being after vacation.

While this study does introduce additional insight to psychological well-being in a travel
context, there are several limitations with it that must be recognized. First, I examined participants’ post-travel well-being one day after their vacations, but I did not follow up to examine their well-being after the vacation (e.g., three days later, one month, two months). Given existing evidence of a fade out pattern of vacation effects (i.e., tourists may experience post-vacation syndromes such as tiredness and depression; Chen et al., 2013; Strauss-Blasche et al., 2004), in the future researchers may want to account for the duration of the positive effects of vacation on well-being as well as the existence of the post-vacation syndrome, particularly with different lengths and types of vacation (Lin et al., 2014).

Second, missing data were found with responses to individuals’ use of regulation strategies with negative emotions. One possible reason may be that respondents did not experience negative emotions every day. Another potential explanation may be linked to the design of the diary, which had positive emotions on the front and negative emotions on the back of each diary sheet for every day of the vacation. Individuals could have responded to the positive emotion and emotion regulation strategy scales on the front of the page and ignored the negative and negative regulation questions on the back of the page. Researchers interested in using the diary method are advised to clearly instruct respondents what they should do when having no negative emotions on a particular vacation day.

Third, this study included an unbalanced sample of males and females, which might have affected the general interpretation of study results. Although results indicated the relatively important role that females play in travel decision making (Gao et al., 2014), a more gender balanced study is needed in the future. In addition to the gender role in emotion regulation, it is worth looking at various roles in a travel group (e.g., trip route organizer, photographer), and how these roles interact with the gender role. In addition, more attention should be paid on how
using emotion regulation strategy could be confounded with individuals’ roles in planning and/or managing a vacation.

Lastly, this study used a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree), 4 (neutral), and 7 (strongly agree) to assess tourists’ use of ERSs. This scale did not provide respondents with a “not applicable” option, which may have been problematic when respondents felt an emotion was irrelevant to an emotion regulation strategy. Or, as a fall back strategy, they may have used “neutral” or “strongly disagree,” considering them to be equivalent to “not applicable.” Although this scale has been used and tested in previous emotion regulation studies (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014), researchers should address this potential problem by clearly defining the options of “neutral” and “strongly disagree,” as well as exemplifying what respondents should do in situations where they do not feel an emotion is applicable.
References


Tamir, M., & Gross, J. J. (2011). *Beyond pleasure and pain? Emotion regulation and positive psychology*. In K. Sheldon, T. Kashdan, & M. Steger (Eds.), Designing the future of
positive psychology: Taking stock and moving forward (pp. 89-100). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.


Chapter 5

Conclusion

In this chapter I begin by summarizing the main findings of my study. I then discuss the theoretical contributions this study made to existing knowledge regarding tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies and their perceived well-being. This is followed by a review of potential managerial implications of my study to the tourism and travel industry. I end with a discussion about the limitations of my study and directions for future research.

Summary of Key Findings

The primary purpose of this study was to more holistically understand tourists’ use of emotion regulation strategies (ERSs) as well as the impact of using them on post-travel well-being.

Emotion regulation strategies used during a vacation

I used the construct of emotion regulation to discover what ERSs tourists used during their vacations. I uncovered 11 key themes comprising 3 overarching categories of ERSs (i.e. self-focused, situation-focused and travel-member-focused). As the first interdisciplinary study to introduce the construct of emotion regulation to the tourism field, the results not only validated the appropriateness of using emotion regulation in the tourism context, but also contributed to tourism research by documenting the transient, dynamic and variable nature of emotions.
Change in tourists’ use of ERSs in a vacation context

I found that 152 tourists exhibited significant change patterns when using 6 ERSs on positive emotions and two ERSs on negative emotions during their vacations. Some socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics played a significant role in explaining the change patterns of using ERSs with positive and negative emotions. The results suggested that tourism researchers and professionals must acknowledge and address the change in tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and account for the role of their socio-demographic and travel behaviors characteristics in influencing the change.

The relationship between emotion regulation and tourists’ well-being

When the relationship between tourists’ use of ERSs during a vacation and their perceived post-travel well-being was assessed the results indicated that tourists’ perceived well-being differed before and after a vacation. The results also revealed that tourists who used ERSs were more likely to perceive a higher sense of post-travel well-being compared with those who didn’t use ERSs.

Theoretical Contributions

Overall, the results of this study offer promising new information regarding what ERSs tourists can use, changes in tourists’ use of ERSs over time during the travel experience, which aspects of tourists’ subjective and psychological well-being can be boosted by taking vacations, and how well-being may be enhanced by using different ERSs. The theoretical contributions of my study are multifold.

First, the study provides a longitudinal perspective of emotions through the use of daily
diaries. Previous studies have successfully adopted this approach in a travel context (Lin et al., 2014; Nawijn et al., 2013), but this study showcases how to extend emotion regulation research in tourism by using daily diaries. Researchers interested in using diaries in the future should consider conducting a longitudinal study that includes multiple stages of data collection, for example, examining emotion regulation over the course of a year and multiple vacations for the same group of participants. Doing so would allow researchers to more deeply examine and validate emotion and ERSs being used in a vacation context.

Second, this study represents the first attempt to introduce the construct of emotion regulation to the tourism field. Most of the current emotions research in tourism, which treats emotions as static, is concerned with tourists’ emotional status and changes in emotions. By accounting for the generative process of an emotional response and introducing the theory of emotion regulation, this study takes the study of emotions a step further. Instead of recording and examining the status of emotions at a certain point in time, emotion researchers should be more concerned about the possibility of tourists manipulating the short-lived, subjective feelings that occur in the foreground of consciousness and requires immediate attention (Scherer, 2005), and how to regulate that feeling into positivity. In this sense, emotion regulation is inextricably linked to the larger leisure context and positive psychology, because both fields seek to promote optimal human functioning (Tamir & Gross, 2011).

Finally, with the burgeoning interest in human well-being and happiness, emotion regulation also plays a unique role in advancing our understanding of well-being by developing strategies to make the best out of positive emotions so as to achieve lasting happiness and to cope with negative emotions. Emotion regulation can be considered a preventive intervention that can be used to enhance human functioning, reduce psychological distress, and help further
individuals’ health and well-being (American Psychological Association, 2013). Therefore, examining tourists’ use of emotion regulation is groundbreaking and meaningful for other branches of research, including the broader area of leisure studies.

**Managerial Implications**

In order to survive and excel in the increasingly competitive environment of the tourism industry, tourism companies and professionals must acknowledge and respond to tourists’ emotions and their use of ERSs. For example, my findings indicated that women were more likely to express their emotions and replay the details of their experiences at the beginning stage of their vacation. In response, tourism providers targeting women should consider incorporating images (e.g., a happy lady with a big smile) and/or words that showcase elements of emotional expression into the design of their travel brochures, promotional films, websites, and more. Adopting this approach may be more advantageous than focusing solely on the benefits of the destination.

Although tourism managers and their marketing teams have realized that tourists are seeking multiple benefits from a vacation, they often ignore emotional benefits that are as important as utilitarian benefits. As a result, a much greater awareness of what emotional benefits are sought by tourists and when, should be integrated into tourism managers’ training programs. For example, hotel and tour companies often offer discounts for future visits at the end of a vacation. According to this study’s results, tourists tend to seek benefits during the middle of their vacation, which may be the best time to offer them a discount for future visits. In addition, younger tourists are more likely to regulate emotions cognitively by seeking benefits rather than venting their negative emotions; thus, tourism providers should provide experiences that result in
multiple benefits (e.g., socialization, laughter, education) and/or hang banners or utilize other forms of promotion that highlight these same benefits.

One striking finding was that tourists smoked, drank, and/or exercised to regulate their positive and their negative emotions, especially during the middle of a vacation. Together with their needs for social activities during vacation, tourism managers should consider adding activities or experiences to address both demands. Examples of such activities or experiences might include happy hour specials, physical events that connect tourists, even wine tasting events that combine both drinking and socialization.

In addition, the travel and tourism field focuses on providing tourists with memorable experiences, something that researchers argue can’t generally be attained through the purchase of a product (e.g., buying a new car; Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003). The results of this study suggest that the field continue to provide memorable experiences, but also publically recognize that such experiences (particularly for individuals who use ERSs) can lead to a boost in overall well-being. Existing practices such as paid leave or national holidays are good, but in many countries are limited in time and scope. Thus, policy makers should pay attention to the value of vacation in individuals’ lives, particularly its impact on well-being. It is not only because of vacations serve individuals’ psychological needs, such as searching for meaning and authenticity (MacCannell, 1976), but also because they are our social right (Richards, 1999).

Limitations and Future Research

Despite its many important contributions to the literature and tourism field, the study also has a few limitations that must be acknowledged. First, study participants were faculty or staff who worked for the same institution of higher education, reported higher levels of education, and
identified themselves as more mature travelers with some travel experience. While I intentionally chose this homogeneous population given its potential to be more aware of personal feelings and the possibility of being able to document emotion regulation strategies, I recognize that the results may not be generalizable to the general tourist population. In the future, researchers should utilize a more diverse sample of tourists in order to validate the results of this study.

Second, I used a list of seven positive and seven negative emotions in the diary, which were derived from the literature on emotion regulation (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014). I chose to use this list of emotions because it has been tested and thus was deemed appropriate for examining ERSs; however, it was not developed for a vacation context. Some emotions on the list did not directly apply to tourism and other salient emotions tourists may experience during a vacation, such as disappointment and frustration (Lofgren, 2008), were not represented on the list. In the future researchers may want to develop a list of emotions based on qualitative inquiry, which not only is built upon the literature of emotion regulation but also takes into account the study context of travel and tourism.

Third, I did not attempt to create a standardized understanding of emotion assessment. It is possible that participants may have had idiographic interpretations about the meanings of different emotion terms, such as joy, and completed the diary with considerable variability. I admit that the subjectivity of participant interpretation is a limitation of all self-report emotion regulation studies; however, there is a tension between naturalistically assessing emotion regulation in the travel context and controlling all participants so they have the same operational definition of emotions. Hence, an examination using these two different approaches is needed in the future. Doing this would allow researchers to examine whether there are variances between coaching participants to develop a standardized understanding of the emotion assessment and
natural assessment.

Fourth, to assess tourists’ use of ERSs, I used a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored in 1 (strongly disagree), 4 (neutral) and 7 (strongly agree). This scale did not include a “not applicable” option, which may have been problematic when respondents felt an emotion was irrelevant to an emotion regulation strategy and, as a result, used the “neutral” or “strongly disagree” options. Although this scale has been used and tested in previous emotion regulation studies (Heiy & Cheavens, 2014), future studies should address this potential problem for respondents by clearly defining the options of “neutral” and “strongly disagree,” as well as exemplifying what respondents should choose in situations where they do not feel an emotion is applicable.

Finally, there was missing data with the negative emotions and the use of ERSs on negative emotions. This result may be due to the design of the diary package, which had positive emotions on the front and negative emotions on the back of each diary sheet. Individuals could have responded to the positive emotion and emotion regulation strategy scales on the front of the page and ignored the negative and negative regulation questions on the back of the page. Researchers who choose to use a diary format in the future should consider this issue when designing the diary or questionnaire.

In sum, this study revealed what ERSs tourists used in the tourism context, and their change patterns and relationships with post-travel well-being. Future studies should focus on the outstanding strategies in the tourism field, and continue exploring how to better use those strategies to regulate emotions and maximize the positivity of tourists’ whole experience.
References


Van Boven, L., & Gilovich, T. (2003). To do or to have? That is the question. *Journal of*
Personality and Social Psychology, 85(6), 1193-1202.
Appendix A: Introductory E-Mail and Invitation E-Mail

Introductory E-Mail

Greetings!

Traditionally we think of nutrition and exercise as changes we must make to improve our health and well-being, but increasing evidence suggests that what we do in our free time may also have an impact. Thus, with the support of Penn State’s Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management, I am conducting my dissertation research on the emotions (a psychological component of well-being) individuals experience during a vacation.

If you are planning to take a vacation in the next four months, I'd love to have you participate in my study. Individuals who participate in the two components of the study will be entered in to a drawing for one of two $50 gift cards and receive an additional gift of $20 for their participation.

I will be sending you a formal e-mail invitation via qemailserver.com to participate in my study in two business days. If you have any questions about the study, please contact me at jgao@psu.edu.

I look forward to working with you!

Respectfully,

Jie Gao
Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management
Invitation E-Mail

Dear Participant,

Two days ago I sent you an e-mail indicating that you would be receiving an invitation to participate in an on-line survey sponsored by the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management. I am conducting my dissertation research on the emotions individuals experience during a vacation.

You are being invited to participate in the on-line survey because you have been identified as a full-time employee at Penn State who may be taking a vacation this summer.

When you click on the following link you will be forwarded to the on-line survey, which should take no more than 5 minutes to complete. Complete surveys will be entered into a drawing for the chance to win one of two $50 gift cards.

Please follow this link to the Survey:
Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine?Q_DL=6RqOooRNoeliJJX_5cZZOa
bCbwkSHOZ_MLRP_0OljLtvnWbo2V1z&Q_CHL=email

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

If you have any questions about this survey or our overall efforts to find out more about our travelers, please contact Jie Gao at jyg5217@psu.edu.

Respectfully,

Jie

Please note: Follow the link to opt out of future emails: Click here to unsubscribe
Appendix B: On-line Survey

Your Travel Plan

1. Are you planning to take a vacation in the next 4 months (i.e., June, July, August, September, 2015)? Required question.
   - Yes
   - Maybe
   - No

   <If "no", the participant would be exited from the survey.>

Your Trip

<If "yes", the participant needs to answer the following question.>

1. When are you planning to take your vacation? Required question.

   If you are taking more than one vacation in 2015, please list the dates of the vacation that you will take first.

   <If "maybe", the participant needs to answer the following question.>

1. When are you expecting to take your vacation? Required question.

   If you are expecting to take more than one vacation in 2015, please list the dates of the vacation that you expect to take first.

Completing A Dairy

1. Are you willing to complete a diary during your vacation? Required question.

   A diary is a small booklet. Each day you will be asked to respond to 4 questions, which should take you no more than 10 minutes to answer. You will receive $20 for completing the diary.

   - Yes
   - No

   <If "no", the participant would be exited from the survey.>
Section 1:  
Your Travel Behavior  

In this section you will be asked questions about your past travel behavior.

1. On average, how many times do you take a vacation each year?
   
   ______ times

2. How many vacations did you take last year?
   
   ______ times

3. Keeping in mind your vacations last year, how many days, on average, did your vacations last:
   
   [ ] 7 days or longer  [ ] 5 to 6 days  [ ] 3 to 4 days  [ ] 1 to 2 days (i.e., weekend vacation)

Section 2:  
Your Future Travel Plans  

You indicated that you will be taking a vacation in the next 4 months. If you are taking more than one vacation in the next 4 months, think about the first vacation you will take when answering the following questions.

1. Where will you travel to in the next four months?
   
   ____________

2. Will you organize your vacation yourself or will you use the services of a travel provider (e.g., travel agent, tour operator)?
   
   [ ] Myself  [ ] Travel provider  [ ] Other (please specify):
   
   ____________

3. With whom will you travel? (Check all that apply)
   
   [ ] No one  [ ] Family members  [ ] Friends
   [ ] Other (please specify): ________________
Section 3: Information About You

1. What is your age?
   [ ] years old

2. With which gender do you most strongly identify?
   [ ] Male  [ ] Female

3. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
   [ ] High school graduate  [ ] Some college
   [ ] Two-year college degree (e.g., associate degree)  [ ] Four-year college degree (bachelor’s degree)
   [ ] Master's degree  [ ] Professional degree
   [ ] PhD or doctorate degree  [ ] Other (please specify): ____________________

4. What is your marital status?
   [ ] Living with partner  [ ] Divorced  [ ] Widowed
   [ ] Single  [ ] Married  [ ] Separated
   [ ] Other (please specify): ____________________

5. What is your current employment status at Penn State?
   [ ] Full-time staff  [ ] Part-time staff  [ ] Student
   [ ] Full-time faculty  [ ] Part-time faculty  [ ] Retired
   [ ] Other (please specify): ____________________
Appendix C: Travel Diary

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements, 1 = extremely disagree, 7 = strongly agree.

- In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
- I'm satisfied with my life.
- So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
- If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.
- The conditions of my life are excellent.
- I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
- In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.
- I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.
- I like most aspects of my personality.
- People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.
- Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.

Please rate your strongest experience of each pleasant emotion today, 1 = never, 7 = always.

- Joy
- Excitement
- Pride
- Love
- Amusement
- Interest
- Surprise

What happened today that contributed to the pleasant emotions you experienced over half of the time?
Did you do any of the following things to increase the intensity of your pleasant emotions? 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree.

- I talked to my friends and family
- I tried to revel in the moment and concentrate on how good I felt
- I expressed my positive emotions by showing them
- I made a plan to make the good situation happen again
- I avoided all negative thoughts and emotions
- I thought about all the good things that were happening in my life as well
- I replayed all the details of the event in mind
- I thought how someone else was responsible for this good situation
- I sought out activities and socializing
- I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised

Did you do anything else to increase the intensity of your pleasant emotions?

Please rate your strongest experience of each unpleasant emotion today, 1 = never, 7 = always.

- Anger
- Anxiety/Fear
- Embarrassment/Shame
- Guilt
- Disgust
- Sadness
- Loneliness

What happened today that contributed to the unpleasant emotions you experienced over half of the time?

Did you do any of the following things to increase the intensity of your pleasant emotions? 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree.

- I accepted the situation and/or my emotions
- I found an activity to keep myself busy and distracted
- I made a plan to make the situation better
- I thought of something pleasant instead of what had happened
- I found a friend or family member to talk to
• I thought about how I could become stronger or learn from this situation
• I reminded myself that things could be worse
• I smoked a cigarette or drank a drink or got high or exercised
• I thought over and over again about the situation
• I controlled my negative emotions by not showing them

Did you do anything else to increase the intensity of your pleasant emotions?

Please complete the following questions on the last day of your vacation.

1. How satisfied were you with your vacation?
   - Very dissatisfied
   - Moderately dissatisfied
   - Slightly dissatisfied
   - Neutral
   - Slightly satisfied
   - Moderately satisfied
   - Very satisfied

2. How likely do you want to experience a vacation like this in the future?
   - Very unlikely
   - Unlikely
   - Somewhat unlikely
   - Neutral
   - Somewhat likely
   - Likely
   - Very likely

2A. Please tell me why you do or do not want to experience a vacation like this in the future.
Appendix D: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me about your trip?

2. Ask any question from diaries.

3. I saw you wrote in the diary that you bought souvenirs and took photos during your vacation. Can you talk about them?

4. Do you have any of your mementos in your office?
   (If yes) Why do you have your mementos in your office?

5. Could you give me examples of how regulating your emotions affected your travel experience positively?

6. Could you give me examples of how regulating your emotions affected your travel experience negatively?

7. (If participants give examples of how to regulate emotions)
   - Do you think knowing how to regulate your emotions will impact your future travel experience? If yes, how?
   - What have you learned by trying to regulate your emotions?
VITA
Jie Gao

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