ABSTRACT

HARDY, RICKY LYNN. Equestrians and How They Disperse along Plog’s Allocentric/Psychocentric Continuum. (Under the direction of Larry D. Gustke.)

This is a study of Stanley Plog’s traveler typology and its application to adults engaged in equestrian activities (various styles or classes of riding). The study is based on data acquired by the intercept surveying of adult equestrian riders in North Carolina and Virginia. Plog has been heavily referenced through both journal articles and textbooks (Mathieson and Wall 1982; Gee, Choy and Makens 1984; Mill and Morrison 1985; Murphy 1985; McIntosh and Goeldner 1986; Pearce 1987; and Gunn 1988) for almost forty years. Because of this, his personality typology has been accepted by the tourism industry and academics as a general baseline for predicting certain aspects of tourism behavior. No one has taken Plog’s general approach and applied it to a specific activity. By applying Plog’s personality typology to a specific activity, a greater understanding may emerge of the robustness of the typology that will help produce more refined measures for predicting tourism behavior. Convenience sampling was utilized to gather data from the intercepts, while contingency table analysis was used to analyze the data. Although the data did not produce significant differences between groups of riders (the groups were too homogeneous), it did support Plog’s findings along his allocentric/psychocentric continuum.
Equestrians and How They Disperse along Plog’s Allocentric/Psychocentric Continuum

by
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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of North Carolina State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management

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Dedication

To my mother Miriam Lee Gearing and my two sons Charles Robin Hardy and Graham Edward Hardy.

I love you and greatly appreciate your love and support.
Biography

I graduated from high school in 1980 at Clarke Central High School in Athens, Georgia. After spending nearly 10 years in the restaurant industry, I decided to go back to school in 1990. I attended North Carolina State University where I received both a B.S. degree (1993) and M.S. degree (1995) in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management, and I worked in the Office of Park and Tourism Research. From there I traveled northwest and received a M.S. degree (1997) in Advertising from the University of Illinois. While working with Bayer Pharmaceuticals in their Information Services department in 2000, I was given the opportunity to teach at North Carolina Central University. I fell in love with the students, the teaching and the University. I have taught at the university level at North Carolina Central, North Carolina State, East Carolina and The College at Brockport - SUNY. I am currently teaching and conducting research at Missouri Western State University.
Acknowledgements

I was part of the first cohort of doctoral students in the department. We were all told it would feel like a marathon. It truly has been for me, and I, the last one from this first cohort, am finally crossing the finish line.

First of all I want to thank the chair of my committee, Dr. Larry D. Gustke. He has been a true mentor. I would also like to thank my committee, Dr. Aram Attarian, Dr. Gene Brothers and Dr. Michael Vasu, for their patience and guidance.

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Chapter One

Introduction

This study explores Plog’s traveler typology and its application to equestrians in North Carolina and Virginia. This chapter presents the study’s significance and its background, specifies the research question, and presents an overview of the methodology. The chapter concludes with a description of Plog’s traveler typology, a discussion of the importance of travel to the equestrian, and descriptions of the types of equestrian riding activities.

1.1 Introduction

In the late 1960s, Plog developed a traveler typology that has been referenced more than 176 times (according to Plog) in journal articles and textbooks (for example, Goeldner & Ritchie, 2008; Liu, Siguaw & Enz, 2008; Hsu & Huang, 2008; Litvin, 2006; McKercher, 2005; Griffith & Albanese, 1996) for almost 40 years. The traveler typology developed by Plog has been accepted by both the tourism industry and tourism scholars. However, little research has tested Plog’s construct and applied it to a specific activity. By applying Plog’s personality typology to a specific activity, a greater understanding of the typology may emerge that will help produce more precise measurements for predicting tourism behavior.
This study analyzes the people who ride horses. In the pursuit of riding, equestrians are often required to travel to arenas or other venues. Travel distance and frequency may vary depending on whether the rider is traveling for competition or pleasure. Since travel is a major component of the riding experience, equestrian behavior is similar to that of other leisure tourists. Engagement in an equestrian activity may be based on such aspects as an individual’s personality, riding experience, the breed of the horse, the horse’s personality and experience and, finally, the specific type of riding. There are many types of riding: bareback, jumping, steeplechase, rodeo, dressage and racing, to name a few. Riders engage in the activity for various reasons such as recreation, health, family involvement, sport, competition and status. It should also be noted that the equine industry has been growing in popularity (number of participants and percentage of the population) over the past few decades, and the activity produces a significant economic impact.

Venue managers (facility managers at the Bob Martin Center in Williamston, North Carolina, the Hunt Horse Complex in Raleigh, North Carolina and the Western Ag Center near Asheville, North Carolina) believe they have strong knowledge of their equestrian operations and cliental. They see the riders as both equine enthusiasts and tourists. However, these beliefs appear to be based on past experience and anecdotal evidence. Kotler (2003) asserts that marketers ultimately see themselves as benefit providers. Experience is valuable in almost all business endeavors but it is not research, and this author believes it can lead to a myopic decision-making process. Holbrook and Hirschman’s (1982) series of articles
concentrated on both the utilitarian and hedonic values of goods and services. There is a hedonic aspect to the service of providing space for competition. This study can lead to a better understanding of equestrian involvement based on objectively measured variables. It also adds to the common body of knowledge concerning Plog’s typology by applying the model to an individual’s engagement in an activity.

Why do we travel? Fridgen (1991) states that tourism is purposeful, planned and motivated behavior. Reimer (1990) suggests travel and holiday are culturally constituted consumer goods, meaning the cultural environment strongly affects the pattern of travel consumption. Moutinho (1987) identified social influence and personal traits as the two basic factors that shape travel and tourism behavior. Crompton’s (1979) nine motivations to travel, based on in-depth interviews, are split into two classifications. Seven motivations are classified as “social-psychological” and two are classified as “cultural.” Lee and Crompton (1979) suggest that genetic predisposition may influence a tourist’s choice of destinations. Mayo and Jarvis (1981) state that many people are born with a sense of curiosity and a strong need to explore the world around them; similarly, Anderson (1970) coined the term “Ulysses factor,” which describes a person’s basic motivation to explore new places and meet new people. Lundberg (1971) developed a bundle of 18 different motivations that may influence travel. These 18 different motivations were placed into four distinct groups: educational/cultural motives, ethnic, relaxation/pleasure and other. Gray (1970) identified wanderlust and sunlust as two distinct types of tourism.
Wanderlust is an urge that pushes people to leave familiar settings and seek out exciting new places and cultures. “Sunlust” describes an individual’s need to seek out a single destination and stay put, focusing on relaxation, rest and the enjoyment of the best amenities. Wanderlust would fall on the allocentric side of Plog’s continuum, while sunlust would fall on the psychocentric side. Clawson and Knetsch (1966) developed a five-phase approach to describe the total recreation experience.

Whether researchers are measuring personality traits, motivations or behaviors they usually need a way to group, classify or segment the data. Typologies are a method of segmentation. Typologies are an important tool for researchers and marketers. They help the researcher/marketer manage large amounts of data by creating a classification or categorical system based on a set of criteria. An example would be to create a subset of business and leisure travelers based on information from the data to create a profile or type (unit of measurement) from a sampled population.

During the 1960s, Stanley Plog, through his company Behavior Science Corporation (BASICO), conducted research sponsored by Reader’s Digest for a group of 16 air travel industry clients (Plog 2004). These clients manufactured planes, ran airlines or marketed them. Each wanted to increase yield (people in seats) to generate revenue. Plog’s research focused on why people chose not to fly.

Also during this period, Gallop (Plog, 2004) reported that only 42 percent of the U.S. population had ever flown commercially. Reader’s Digest (1971, as cited in Plog, 2004) reported only 53 percent of airline seats were occupied. Flying
commercially was still a relatively new concept; commercial travel by plane had only existed for 31 years. The first successful passenger plane, the DC-3, took off for the first time on December 17, 1935 from Santa Monica, California. It also should be noted that between 1968-1969 - at the time of Plog’s research - the U.S. experienced 51 commercial airliner hijackings. Worldwide, there were 53 commercial airliner hijackings in 1970. The nation or world had never experienced such a high rate of hijackings. Moving forward thirty years, even without the events of 9/11, one in five Americans still refuse to fly. Aerophobia (fear of flying) affects 20 percent of Americans, which equates to 28,142,190 people, based on the April 1, 2000 census data. This is a significant amount of people not purchasing a service/product even by today’s standards.

The purpose of this study was to test the applicability of Plog’s theory to amateur equestrians by employing Plog’s macro perspective on travel motivation for recreational horse riding. For the study, the horse riding experience (competitive riding versus non-competitive riding and style or classification of riding) was the basis for participant involvement. Numerous definitions have been proposed concerning participant leisure involvement (Laaksonen, 1994) though the most widely agreed-upon conceptualization centers on “personal relevance.” Personal relevance describes the degree of involvement with which a person devotes themselves to an activity or associated product (Slama & Tashchiam, 1985; Zaichkowsy, 1985). This term can also indicate the strength or extent of cognitive linkage between the individual and the behavior or object.
1.2 Equine Activities

Equestrians were chosen for this study based on the amount of travel required for the activity. Riding activities were also chosen due to the variability in both horse breed and style of riding. Pleasure riders seek new places to ride in much the same way as like hikers seek new trails: competitive riders’ travel is based on the venue location. Two strong distinctions can be made in classifying riding styles: Western and English. These classifications evolved based on the historical influences of Spain, England and France. The Spanish influence survives in the form of western riding. This style of riding evolved over the years because of the hardships of cattle ranching in the American West. The English and French influences are still evident in English riding styles. The styles also determine the type of saddle worn by the horse.

Western styles include Reining, Rodeo (Roping, Barrel Racing, Steer Wrestling, and Bareback Riding) and Western Pleasure. English styles include Hunter Jumper, Dressage, Fox Hunt and Racing. Most of the competitions involved in this study (Reining, Hunter Jumper, and Dressage) require horse and rider to follow a pre-set pattern in the ring. Reining adds the element of stopping (reining) the horse at high speeds. This act literally has the horse recline its back legs to stop quickly. Hunter Jumper classes add the element of jumping over rails. Dressage concentrates more on the posture of both horse and rider as they move through the pre-set pattern set by the judges.
1.3 Scope and Scale U. S. Equine Industry

The American Horse Council (2004) estimates there are over seven million Americans currently involved in the equine industry. They are involved as owners, service providers, and volunteers. Throughout the U.S., 4.3 million individuals enjoy recreational horseback riding participation, and another 3.6 million individuals participate in showing events (American Horse Council, 2004).

The economic impact of the equine industry is significant. The American Horse Council states the equine industry provides the United States with 1.4 million full-time jobs, a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) impact of $112.1 billion and $1.9 billion in tax revenues. (American Horse Council, 2004) The equine industry is highly diverse and includes breeding, riding, maintenance activities, auctions, events (racing, rodeo & showing competitions), and facility operations (American Horse Council, 2004).

There are more than 6.9 million horses involved in both commercial and recreational activities throughout the United States (American Horse Council, 2004). Many equine aficionados are not interested in prize money or ribbons and simply enjoy recreational riding. People of all ages take a few hours each day or each week to ride. This sector of the equine industry has grown nationwide and has developed interest groups devoted to riding for pleasure and exploring vacations related to the activity. Most recreational riding is not focused on profit, although horse owners, breeders, stables, veterinarians, and feed and tack stores benefit
from the spending of participants (American Horse Council, 2004). This recreational
riding sector provides a $23.8 billion impact on the United States economy, one
that’s felt in all 50 states (American Horse Council, 2004).

There are more than 14,000 sanctioned equine events (sanctioned by various
equine groups such as the American Quarter Horse Association) and thousands of
unsanctioned events held across the United States every year (American Horse
Council, 2004). These events involve numerous types of riding, including Western,
English, jumping, hunt seat, halter, pleasure, sidesaddle and carriage/cart.
Competitions and events may be restricted to a particular breed or discipline, or may
be open to all horses and riders (American Horse Council, 2004). The showing
sector of the equine industry generates $34.8 billion (American Horse Council,
2004). There are 1.9 million horses and 3.6 million participants active in this sector.
The showing industry is active in all 50 states (American Horse Council, 2004).

1.4 The North Carolina and Virginia Equine Industry

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service (1996)
conducted a survey and found that 33,000 state residents owned 133,000 horses
(averaging four horses per owner). There are about 26,300 horse operations across
the state covering a combined area of 446,000 acres. The latest estimates by the
North Carolina Department of Agriculture’s Division of Marketing show there are
approximately 225,000 horses in the state. The Virginia Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services’ (2006) latest survey found 41,000 horse operations across the state, totaling 215,000 horses at a combined value of $1.65 billion.

Several factors contribute to the growing equine industry in North Carolina such as the state’s hospitality, the number of major shows within easy driving distance (there are more than 500 shows held in the state each year), the low cost of living, and climate” (Mobley, 2004). There are three state-maintained centers that have contributed to increased interest in the equine industry: the James B. Hunt Horse Complex in Raleigh, Western North Carolina Agricultural Center in Asheville, and the Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center (SBMEAC) in Williamston. These places hold special meaning to riders and exhibitors. Tuan (1977) presented a theoretical rationale for individuals and groups within a tourism experience who assign meaning to a place. This culture of sports tourists tends to identify with each other and the regular places they visit for competition. Based on informal conversations held with riders during the research phase, it is apparent that these venues occupy a special place in the minds and hearts of riders. This “special place” designation may also motivate riders to visit the venue repeatedly.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Plog’s research has focused on travelers and destinations. Allocentric/psychocentric studies have mainly observed traveler behavior in terms of the methods people use to travel, spending behavior, destination choice, and the time/distance traveled. A review of the literature suggests that no one has
published research addressing whether there is a relationship between a specific activity and its placement on Plog’s traveler typology.

### 1.6 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to test the applicability of Plog’s traveler typology to amateur equestrians. The general research question is:

*Can different rider/riding types be identified that are congruent with Plog’s typology, and are they influenced by different levels of risk?*

Plog’s theory centers on the perceived risks involved with travel. Travelers noted risks such as a new environment, a new activity, or experiencing anything outside their comfort zone. Plog developed an eight-question battery to measure the traveler’s comfort with risk. This study took Plog’s eight-question battery and attempted to place riders on Plog’s continuum based on the level of risk involved in their chosen riding style.

### Purpose of the Research

1. Investigate and identify the personality types of riders along Plog’s Traveler Typology.

2. Identify the congruence (relationship) between Plog’s theory of venturesomeness and the activity (commitment through competition/type of riding) of the participants.
**Null Hypothesis:**

There is no correlation \((r=0)\) between people along the traveler typology continuum and the nature of their participation in equestrian activities.

1. Test Plog’s theory of venturesomeness.
2. Identify the congruence (relationship) between Plog’s Venturer-Dependable Scale and an activity.
3. Test for differences among participants based on riding style choice.

### 1.7 Basic Assumptions

Plog’s allocentrics gravitate toward and seek out experiences outside their comfort zone. These experiences may range from hot air ballooning over the Serengeti during a safari to staying in a new boutique hotel in New York’s East Village. Psychocentrics are the direct opposite of allocentrics. They prefer to “feel comfortable” in their surroundings and are risk averse. The underlying assumption of this study is that participants whose scores place them on the allocentric end of the continuum should engage in riding styles that are classified as potentially more cautious for both horse and rider. And participants whose scores place them on the psychocentric end of the continuum should engage in riding styles that are classified as potentially riskier for both horse and rider. Another basic assumption was that riders who rode competitively would score more on the allocentric side of the continuum, and non-competitive riders would score more on the psychocentric side.
1.8 Delimitations and Limitations

Geography and length of time for data collection were two factors that were delimited. All venues were within a five-hour drive from Raleigh, North Carolina. The time allotted for data collection was a seven-month period from December 2005 through July 2006. This time frame represented a closing of one competitive season and the beginning of the next. The fact that the study was not funded was one limitation, which led to a second limitation of only one person available for data collection.

1.9 Need for the Study

Validity and reliability are key issues of all research. Smith (1990) raised the issue of reliability with Plog’s research when he tried to replicate the study using non-American based population groups and consequently observed poor results. Both validity and reliability come into question due to the fact that Plog’s research has always been privatized and not openly shared with academics. This research is important because, forty years on, Plog’s theory has never been tested on a level as narrowly defined as activity participation. If the current research produces verifiable results of Plog’s theory on a smaller scale narrowly focused on an activity, then there are potential implications for producing and marketing different travel destinations to people based on their activities. Therefore, any connection between Plog’s typology and equine activities could be important information for researchers and marketers.
1.10 Definitions of Terms

Psychocentric/Dependable is a term describing individuals who score 4-8 on Plog’s Traveler Typology. Mid-Centrics score 9-12 on the Traveler Typology and Allocentrics/Venturers score 13-16 on the Traveler Typology (Plog 1995). All three groups’ (based on past research of U.S. citizens) scores form a normal distribution when placed together on the continuum.

Styles of riding observed for data collection included:

- **Dressage** (the exercise of precise movements by horse and rider).
- **Cowboy Dressage** (low-speed dressage with a western saddle and tack).
- **Pleasure** (English pleasure, Hunter pleasure or Western pleasure is pleasure riding, depending on saddle choice).
- **Hunt Seat** (also known as hunter/jumper; similar to fox hunting, in which the horse and rider jump over obstacles through an assigned course).
- **Saddle Seat** (English style that shows off the different gaits of the horse).
- **Reining** (considered a Western saddle version of dressage; includes high speeds and sliding stops which can be dangerous to both horse and rider).
- **Rodeo**, which includes:
Barrel Racing (horse and rider race along a predetermined course, maneuvering around barrels).

Roping (horse and rider are timed on how fast they can rope, or lasso, a breakaway animal).

Cutting (a timed event in which horse and rider demonstrate their ability to separate a single animal from the cattle herd).

Harness (a race in which the horse uses a specified gait as it pulls a two-wheeled cart).

Roadster (similar to Harness racing except the horse and rider do not race, but rather show various gaits and manners of the horse).

1.11 Summary and Organization of Dissertation

The first chapter of this dissertation provides a general introduction to traveler typologies and tourism, and states the purpose and objectives of the study. It also describes Plog’s traveler typology in detail and introduces the various styles of riding. Finally, the important relationship between travel and the equestrian is discussed. Chapter Two describes the theory and research that focuses on Plog’s typology and its application to tourists and travel in general. The study methodology is presented in Chapter Three and describes the tools and techniques used to collect and analyze the data. The fourth chapter presents the results of the study.
The fifth chapter discusses the results of the study and their theoretical and practical applications.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Whether one rides for leisure or in competition, travel is an integral part of the equestrian lifestyle. The following chapter examines the size and importance of travel and tourism as a leisure pursuit. Various paradigms of tourism are discussed along with tourist motivations and types of tourism. The chapter later concentrates on an area of specialty tourism labeled sports tourism, and discusses the growth of equine activities. Consumer behavior, consumer motivations, market segmentation and personality typologies are explored. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature reviewed in the chapter drawn from several of these fields of study.

2.2 Tourism

2.2.1 What is Tourism?

The study of tourism is diverse. It draws from several fields including recreation, psychology, sociology, geography, marketing, management, urban planning and natural resource management. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (http://www.unwto.org/index.php) changed its guidelines in 2005 to define a tourist as a person who travels a distance of fifty miles one way and/or spends the
night at a destination. In 2004 international tourist arrivals reached a record 763 million while generating roughly $623 billion U.S. dollars worldwide. More than half of these international arrivals, 395 million, stated that the purpose of their travel was leisure, recreation and/or holiday. The WTO estimates that tourism arrivals will top the one billion mark by 2010 and hit 1.6 billion by 2020 (WTO, 2005). Tourism is a major component of the economy in most of the countries around the world. Locally, tourism is one of the major economic producers in the state of North Carolina. Domestic visitor expenditures to North Carolina topped $16.5 billion in 2007 (North Carolina Department of Commerce 2010).

Tourism is often defined by distance (traveling 50 miles one way) or an overnight stay, but tourism is more than either of these factors. Tourism is an experience (Madrigal, 1995). People living in tourist destinations worldwide make their living exporting experiences and memories. Humans are the only creatures on the planet that travel or move for the sole purpose of pleasure. Humans want to seek new experiences, take risks and recharge themselves. Tourism is also an economic force (McMinn & Cater, 1998). Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert and Wanhill (1993) state that tourism is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted activity that impacts many lives and many different economic activities in and around a destination. Opaschowski (2001) believes a vacation or holiday can be viewed as an event or a personal project that requires time, thought and financial commitment by individuals who are time poor and “experience hungry.” To better understand tourism one must look at the various ways it has been conceptualized by researchers.
2.3 Tourism Paradigms

2.3.1 The Tourism System

Tourism is a complex and dynamic system. Elements or components of the system involve information and promotion, the transportation industry, the service industry (which includes the lodging industry and the food and beverage industry), attractions (which include the entertainment and sports industry), governmental and non-governmental units, and destinations (Gunn & Var, 2002). Not one area can survive or even control its own destiny without a thorough understanding of the inter-relationships of the various components that form the system. The system consists of a demand element and a supply element (see Figure 2.1), features first described by Gunn in 1972.
For any market to survive there must be a balance between the supply of a given service or product and the demand for it. For tourism, the demand side relies upon four factors of an individual that must be true in order to classify that as a tourist (Gunn & Var, 2002):

- A desire to travel (for equestrians, travel to ride and/or compete).
- The financial means (discretionary income) to purchase travel-related products and services (horse trailer, hay, and other equipment to transport the horse).
- Available time in order to facilitate travel (and ride for pleasure and/or competition).
• Physical condition that allows travel (the physical condition to ride and/or compete).

If all of these factors are met, an individual meets the criteria for the demand element of the system, and therefore may make the decision to engage in travel.

The supply element consists of five components: attractions, transportation, services, information and promotion (Gunn & Var, 2006).

• Attractions provide the pull factor that influences one’s decision to travel to a certain destination. They also provide the “visitor satisfactions” or rewards for the travel. They include the destinations that have been designed and managed to meet the visitor’s interest, active involvement and enjoyment.

• Transportation is typically intermodal for tourists. Travelers may engage in travel on land by auto (taxi or rental), railcar, motor coach, or animal (horse, camel, elephant); on water (water taxi, ferry, cruise ship, or outrigger canoe), or by air (cable car, balloon, zeppelin or airplane/jet). The scheduling and reliability of the linkages of transportation are crucial for the system.

• Services are a critical component to the system. A traveler needs a place to stay, eat and shop (primary services). There are support services for all of the various primary services. And there are indirect services such as housing, food, medical and transportation for the employees of the primary and secondary services.
• Information, which includes everything from visitor centers to maps, guidebooks, videos, Websites, brochures, travelogues, magazine articles and broadcast news segments. Information content is provided for the education of the traveler.
• Tourism promotion usually takes one of four routes: advertising (paid), publicity (unpaid), public relations and incentives (gifts and/or discounts). Where information is intended to educate the traveler, the purpose of promotion is to market the destination, creating the desire to visit.

2.3.2 Tourism Linkage Model

Leiper (1979) and Boniface & Cooper (1987) describe the tourism system as a series of linkages. Leiper’s “tourist generating regions” are connected to “tourist destination regions” by way of “transit routes,” while Boniface and Cooper call the system a set of generating areas connected to destinations by routes traveled between the two locations. The importance of this model is that it graphically represents the relationships between development zones for tourism. For this study, the venues (agricultural centers and horse complexes) represent the development zones (DV), and the touring corridors are the roads/highways linking DV to the town/city and other attractions. A large part of Plog’s research concentrates on why destinations rise and fall in popularity. Understanding the destination is essential to understanding its appeal to the tourist. The development of the various equine
facilities by the state of North Carolina serves a regional (geographical) need. These facilities were built to meet the growing needs of equestrians around the state. Each facility is located to draw from a regional population of riders. Riders must still travel to the venues. The distance between the rider and the venue is shrinking and, with more venues operating, there exist more opportunities to compete.

Figure 2.2. Boniface and Cooper’s Tourism Linkage Model (Mill & Morrison, 1992).

Examples of linked destinations include Baltimore, MD. and Washington, D.C., and the cities of Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill in North Carolina.
2.3.3 Integrated Tourism Model

The Integrated Tourism Model in Figure 2.3 represents a view in which the tourist is in the center of the model surround by three large rings containing “several interdependent groups of tourism participants and organizations” (Cook, Yale & Marqua, 2002). The three rings represent tourism promoters, tourism service providers and external environments. This model represents a general overview of all the possible inter-relationships that occur in the marketplace for tourism to occur. This is important because it can identify for the researcher and/or marketer possible niches for the development of new entities to forge relationships with the traveler/consumer.
2.3.4 Other Paradigms

Other paradigms have been presented in the last twenty years. The most notable of these have involved sustainability and stakeholder involvement.
Ecotourism became the buzzword of the nineties. Ecotourism is defined by both The Nature Conservancy and the World Conservation Union (http://www.iucn.org/, 2009) as “environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples.” Sustainability and stakeholder involvement grew out of concerns for ecotourism and are now at the foundation of tourism development. Sustainability and stakeholder involvement have been treated as separate issues, but they are often heavily linked in the planning and execution of tourism, as seen in Figure 2.4.

Sustainability usually involves the environment as well as other areas. Ecotourism has flourished over the past two decades, with new ventures developing all over the globe. The “sustainability” or reduction in negative impacts on natural resources that are the basis of the tourism destination or activity seem to be the main focus of the research on sustainable tourism.
Other issues involve the sustainability or the long-term viability of the actual tourism enterprise. Businesses often refer to the product life cycle as a blueprint or generic map to follow in order to make their business sustainable. The product life cycle simply states a business goes through a natural cycle of four stages as found in Figure 2.5.
The four stages are: start-up, growth, maturation and decline. During the maturation stage a destination, business or attraction reaches a plateau, forcing it to remodel, build (add on) or re-market itself to attract return visitors as well as new ones. Las Vegas re-invented itself in the early 1990s as a family-friendly destination. The owners of Las Vegas attractions soon discovered that families who came to play together did not gamble as much as adults who visited the city without bringing children. In the last few years, business owners have attempted to re-invent the city’s image as a more “adult”-oriented destination with the ad campaign “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.”
Stakeholder involvement refers to the various entities that may need or want to be involved in the planning/decision making process for a community (see Figure 2.6). In the past, the general public and other non-government organizations (NGOs) have been shut out of the process of deciding the future of the community in terms of tourism. With the onset of instant communication, constituencies have taken an interest in what happens to and within their communities.

![Stakeholder Involvement Model](image)

Figure 2.6. Stakeholder Involvement Model (Douglas, Douglas & Derrett, 2002).

Even though Gunn’s (1972) model is more than thirty years old, I believe it is still viable today. The various equestrian styles fit naturally within the framework of Gunn’s model. Travel is an integral part of equestrian riding, especially if one competes. One must travel to the various venues to compete, travel to ride certain
trails, or to engage in specialized activities such as Fox Hunt. The distance creates an instant “travel demand” or motivation to travel for riders to compete. The marketers/managers of the venues and event producers create the “travel supply” side of the model by providing the venue, services and the event schedule. The equestrian, within Gunn’s model, makes choices based on the venue, local attractions, information (about the event, venue and destination), transportation (distance), services at the venue and promotional information. As the number of competitive events and venues built for competition increase, so do the opportunities for riders to travel and compete.

2.4 Types of Tourism

Tourism can be broken down into several types, or segments. Business tourism, mass tourism, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) are just a few segments of the tourist market. Researchers have segmented the tourist market based on geography, activity involvement, reason for travel, length of stay, mode of transportation, destination, etc. Special interest tourism (SIT) comes in many forms and segments the market based on specific interests. SIT is basically the “provision of customized leisure and recreation experiences driven by the specific expressed interests of individuals and groups” (Douglas, Douglas & Derritt, 2001). Examples of special interest tourism (Douglas, Douglas & Derritt, 2001) include:
• Cultural Tourism: The cultural, heritage or artistic aspects or experiences are the primary interests for the tourist. Total immersion within an indigenous population is an example of cultural tourism.

• Heritage Tourism: Significant identity links (personal, communal or national) are the draw. Touring a battlefield and seeing a historic re-enactment are two examples of heritage tourism.

• Environmental Tourism: The environmental aspect (education and interpretation) is the primary focus for the tourist. Visiting the rain forest or backpacking in a remote wilderness are examples of environmental tourism.

• Rural Tourism: Visitors travel to destinations outside urban and suburban population centers that offer activities, attractions and experiences pertaining to rural life. Farm tourism, agricultural festivals and fairs, corn mazes, and working ranches are all examples of rural tourism.

• Cuisine Tourism: The focus of travel is food and/or wine. Visiting vineyards and taking a “cooking” cruise are examples of cuisine tourism.

The link between sports and tourism was introduced in a paper written by Anthony (1966, as cited in Weed & Bull, 2004). It was prepared for the Central Council of Physical Recreation in the United Kingdom. Forty years later, academia is
still struggling with the field of sports tourism. For example, Douglas, Douglas, and Derritt (2001) did not even include the sports category in their book on special interest tourism.

2.5 Sports Tourism: A Special Type of Tourism

There are almost as many different points of view on what sport tourism is as there are different sports in the world. What is sports tourism? Does one engage in sports tourism by traveling to see a favorite team play? Can it be considered sports tourism when one travels to see a hallmark-sporting event such as the Olympics (Chalip, Green & Vander Velden, 1998), the Americas Cup sailing regatta or visit a sports museum (Redmond, 1991)? De Knop (1990), Gibson & Yiannakis (1992), and Nogawa, Yamguchi & Hagi (1996) all believe sports tourism is the active participation in a sport while traveling. Hall (1992) stated there are two primary behaviors involved in sports tourism. One travels away from home to observe a sport or participate in it. The level of participation seems to matter as well. There is a difference of opinion on whether one must be involved in a competition (individual or team event) or can be engaged in a sport as a fun activity (pleasure skiing or a pick-up game of volleyball on the beach).

Nogawa et al. (1996) tried to resolve the problem by combining the WTO definition of a tourist with Kenyon’s exploration of sports sociology (1969). This resulted in the definition of a sport tourist as a visitor whose primary purpose is to participate in a sports event while staying overnight at the destination, with the
destination itself being a secondary attraction. Standevan and DeKnop (1999) believe sports tourism is two-dimensional, combining the concept of sports referring to a cultural experience involving physical activity and the concept of tourism as a cultural experience of place. Finally, Kurtzman and Zauhar (1997) describe sports tourism as a term encompassing five core products: sports tourism attractions, sports tourism resorts, sports tourism cruises, sports tourism tours and sports tourism events. Hudson (2003) states: “Sports tourism refers to travel away from home to play sport, watch sport, or to visit a sports attraction, and includes both competitive and non-competitive activities.”

2.5.1 Equine Activities – A Sub Type of Sports Tourism

Over a period of 11,000 years, man’s relationship with horses has grown to include recreation, leisure and sport. The sport of Dressage dates back more than 2,000 years. Through years of constant dedication and practice, the horse and rider work together to create a precise union of movement within the competition ring. The Hunter-Jumper variation utilizes skills that historically refer back to medieval Europe and the tradition of fox hunting for the king. Rodeo skills sprang from necessity, developed by cowboys breaking horses and working steers on Western ranches. Reining is a style of competitive riding that requires the horse and rider to perform as one while turning in circles and making quick dashes or sprints and stopping instantly while maintaining a prescribed form. There are many other competitive and non-competitive styles of riding. Equestrian activities are growing
as more individuals become involved with horses throughout the United States. For amateur riders to compete, they must travel to a series of regional competitions each year while earning points toward the national finals competition. Equestrians love their animals and riding. They have a special bond with their horses.

2.6 Consumer Motivation

Motivation involves the movement of behavior, “how a behavior gets started, is energized, is sustained, is directed and is stopped” (Jones, 1995, as cited in Wilkie 1994). Motivation requires the individual to expend energy and move in a purposive direction to achieve a particular goal. The goal, in terms of consumer behavior, typically ends in a purchase (Wilkie, 1994). For tourism, this goal is manifested in the form of travel.

Nicosia (1969) believes consumers’ complexity within the framework of their behavior increases in societies at the cusp of affluence. Shultz, Kleine & Kernan (1989) state that individuals purchase and cling to certain material possessions in remembrance of cherished people or important events, using these possessions as symbols to project what they as individuals have been, what they are or what they are striving to become. For example, skiers often continue to wear their lift ticket tags on their coats long after they have left the slopes; golfers have a string of course bag tags hanging from their golf bags as symbols of where they have been. The place, or in this case symbol of the place (the lift tickets or bag tags), reinforces the self-image the individual is trying to cultivate (Belk 1988; Solomon, 2002). There
are both conscious (overt) and unconscious (hidden) motives in consumer purchasing behavior.

Based on Freud’s psychoanalytic theory (Wilkie, 2004), males purchasing red sports cars or traveling to Rio are all succumbing to their id and satisfying their pleasure principle. Lewin (as cited in Wilkie, 2004), within the framework of his field theory, believed the individual (internal forces) and their psychologically perceived environment (external forces) work together to function as a basis for purchasing behavior. This is more evident in the ways consumers react to various conflicts. Approach-avoidance conflicts produce an effect in which the consumer is both drawn to and repelled by (due to any number of perceived risks) a purchase. Approach-approach conflicts produce in the individual an effect in which the individual has to choose between two positive/attractive alternatives. Choosing between a trip to the coast and a trip to the mountains would be an approach-approach conflict. Finally, avoidance-avoidance conflicts force the consumer to choose between two alternatives, each of which is associated with a negative valence. For instance, there is the conflict between having an ailment and going to the doctor; some people will suffer through the ailment because they don’t like doctors. Consumers engage in expectancy X value theory (an extension of Lewin’s work, as cited in Wilkie, 2004) by purchasing brands with a perception that there is value gained by owning or utilizing one brand over another, like a vacationer choosing to stay at a Hilton property over a Holiday Inn. The Hilton name has an intrinsic value for the consumer because of his or her perception of the status of the
brand. Consumers want variety, usually want to feel in control of the act of purchasing and are at times guided by hierarchical needs. Consumers purchase for a whole host of reasons. In the end, whether a consumer purchases for utilitarian reasons or for reasons more attached to their psyche, there is no completely accurate method to determine the consumer’s behavior prior to the actual purchase.

2.7 Motivation and Travel

Fridgen (1991) states tourism is a purposeful, planned and motivated behavior. For American families, choosing a particular holiday or vacation is one of the most important decisions they’ll make each year. Lundberg (1971) developed a set of 18 different motivations that may influence travel. Some include seeing other cultures, attending special events, having a good time, visiting ancestral sites, weather, health and sports (Lunderg, 1971). Crompton’s (1979) nine motivations to travel, based on in-depth interviews, are split into two classifications. Seven motivations are classified as “social-psychological” and two as “cultural.” Krippendorf (1987) suggests that travel can offer the individual a sense of freedom and self-determination not usually found in everyday life. Whether making a weekend trip or taking a month away, most people struggle with deciding where to go and what to do while on a trip.

Clawson and Knetsch (1966) developed a five-phase approach to describe the total recreation experience. These five steps offer a basis for travel motivation. The anticipation of travel can be a great motivator to actually travel. The first phase
is the anticipation/planning phase in which the individual starts to build up mental images of the anticipated experiences. Next, the individual actually travels to the destination. Third is the experience the traveler has while staying at the destination. There may disappointment during this phase as traveler's on-site experiences may not live up to the earlier mental images. Returning home is the next phase as the individual begins to “relive” the experiences. Finally, the recollection phase takes over and the individual tends to remember things in a polarized way, with the good experiences becoming great and bad experiences remembered as horrible. This recollection stage becomes imprinted and stored for future access, though it may degrade over time. The experiences the traveler has can lead to future travel (motivation) to a particular destination.

An individual’s native culture plays a significant role in travel motivations. Within that culture, status and financial means play an even larger role. Individuals may visit destinations and participate in activities as a status symbol (Beedie, 2003; McKercher & du Cros, 2002). Motivation is just one piece of the puzzle in understanding how to effectively market to the traveler, and represents just one aspect of a market that could be segmented. The basis of a traveler’s motivation is important to know. If a researcher or marketer can determine underlying motivation for travelers, then they can segment the travelers into separate groups and market to each group based on each group’s wants and needs.
2.8 Marketing and Segmentation

2.8.1 Marketing and Marketing Segmentation

Marketing is the process of matching the consumer’s wants and needs with a product or service. In the past, people had to travel far and wide in order to barter or purchase the goods or services they needed, or desired. Most of today’s global economy is based on the concept of centralized exchange. Centralized exchanges are usually geographically bound, tied to a specific place, as in a flea market or particular retail establishment with modern transportation and technology, geography has become less important. A consumer can order almost anything he or she wants from a catalog, TV or online. Technology is rapidly moving the storefront from reality to virtual reality. As long as consumers have the financial means, they can purchase almost anything on the Internet. Although this is true for most people, equestrians are more constricted due to the fact that they have to travel with their horses in order to engage in their riding experience.

On the business side, it is becoming increasingly difficult to reach a specified segment of the target market. Businesses run their markets by market management. The most efficient way for marketers to reach their audience is by identifying who their audience is, and marketing to the most profitable part of that audience (target market). This is called market segmentation. There is no absolute way to segment the market (Kotler, 2002, as cited in Tkaczynski, Rundle-Thiele & Beaumont, 2008). Segmenting tourism by target markets is important (Bieger & Laesser, 2002) because the target market can be divided into more manageable
pieces, and researchers can work to identify elements of each segment. Once greater knowledge of each segment of the market is achieved, marketers can more effectively address the specific target market. Destination stakeholders must develop an inventory of attractions, natural and man-made resources, services, transportation capabilities, etc. Once the stakeholders understand their “supply,” they must develop an understanding of their market and match their efforts to meet the criteria of the target audience.

To segment the market, each segment must meet certain criteria. Each segment must be measurable, accessible, substantial, defensible, durable and competitive. Is it possible to accurately estimate the segment? Can marketers access and influence the segment through media and promotion? Is the segment large enough to support an individual marketing effort? Can the segment stand alone or is it easily melded into another segment? Is the segment durable; in other words, will it last over time? Will servicing this segment provide a relative advantage over the competition (Mill & Morrison 1992)?

McKercher (2008) states segmentation can take place before the study begins (a priori) or once the study has been completed (a posteriori). The use of demographic (age, gender, geography, income, education, family size, family life cycle, occupation, religion, ethnicity and nationality), psychographic (social class, lifestyle, personality) and behavioral (purchase occasion, benefits sought, user status, usage rate, loyalty, readiness stage and attitude towards product) data are more ways marketers may segment the market (Kotler & Armstrong 1991). Markets
can be segmented in a number of ways, and more than one base of segmentation can be used at a time (Bloom, 2005). Recently, neural networks and data sifting/mining techniques have been utilized to segment markets in an *a posteriori* method. Lifestyle typologies are among the most effective segmentation bases within the sphere of psychographic market segmentation (Lee & Sparks, 2007).

### 2.8.2 Segmenting the Market based on Psychographic Typologies

Several researchers have developed lifestyle typologies to classify individuals for market segmentation. One of the most widely used is the SRI Values and Lifestyles (VALS™) typology. The original version, created in 1978, had nine categories; it has been updated and now contains eight categories that segment the adult population in the United States. At one end lie the “innovators,” individuals with high self-esteem who are willing to accept life on the “bleeding edge” while experiencing the best life has to offer. At the other extreme are the “survivors” whose main focus is to meet their daily needs. Survivors believe the world is changing too fast and seek to meet their safety and security needs to function within the framework of day-to-day life (SRI Values and Lifestyles (VALS™) typology, 2009-2010).

Typologies have been constructed to observe more narrowly defined target markets such as those found in tourism. Cohen (1972) developed a classification system using four distinct groups along a novelty–familiarity continuum (the
organized mass tourist, the individual mass tourist, the explorer and the drifter). Perreault, Darden and Darden (1977) suggested a five-group classification (the budget travelers, adventurers, homebodies, vacationers and moderates), while Lee and Crompton (1992) developed a four-group classification system based on a novelty scale (thrill, change from routine, boredom alleviation and surprise). In addition, Mo, Havitz and Howard (1993) developed a three-dimension scale, the International Tourist Role Scale, modified from Cohen’s 1972 research. Finally, Poon (1993) draws a distinction between the old tourist and the new tourist. Old tourists search for the sun, are more cautious and tend to follow the masses; where they travel does not matter because they treat it as an escape from the everyday stress of urbanity. The new tourists are more spontaneous, plan less and have a desire for spur-of-the-moment endeavors. They want to be set apart from the crowd and experience something different. They are adventurous.

Typologies, motivation and segmentation are all interrelated. Once an individual’s motivation and/or personality typology is known, the researcher and/or marketer can place that individual into a market segment. Now that we have an understanding of segmenting the market by personality typologies, we need to scrutinize Plog’s traveler typology.

2.9 Plog’s Typology

Plog used both qualitative and quantitative methods in his research. Plog’s partner at the time was able to conduct two-hour interviews with people (qualitative
method) who had the means to fly but chose not to. Interviews covered participants’ life histories from childhood to present, and were used to determine development patterns or psychological characteristics common to this group of non-flyers. Plog then dispensed a nationwide, self-administered questionnaire to over 1,600 households. Based on the results of this dual method approach, Plog developed a model that positioned people on a Venturer-Dependable Spectrum shown in Figure 2.7.

![Diagram of Venturer-Dependable Spectrum with the Active-Mellow Component](image)

Figure 2.7. Plog’s Venturer – Dependable Spectrum with the Active-Mellow Component.

At one end of the spectrum or scale were people more willing to engage in risk taking – the allocentrics/venturers. At the other end were the psychocentric/dependable, those who were averse to taking risks. Plog’s subsequent research used 27 questions about travel and the psychological preferences of American travelers. The number of questions has since been reduced to eight (Plog, 1995). A search on Web of Science reveals that Plog’s research has been cited 140 times in various research journal articles. These
articles were segmented based on content. Forty-six of the articles were based on
general tourism, 44 of the articles’ research involved some aspect of destination
image and/or development, 23 referenced visitor behavior, 21 were based on some
aspect of visitor behavior, and six concerned sensation-seeking/risk-taking behavior.

Typologies for measuring tourist motivations have been extensively studied. Typologies based on psychographics are different than segmentation based on
activity or socio-economic attributes discussed previously in section 2.8. Plog’s
company has continued sampling American tourists, surveying approximately
10,000 people every year.

Frank Farley’s (1986) research is similar to Plog’s research. Farley’s
research continuum (Type T Personalities) moves along a line between T (big T)
and t (little t) as shown in Figure 2.8. This research was based on data gathered
from the general U.S. population. The findings indicate that a minority of people
hover at both ends, suggesting the general population’s personality typologies fall
within a normal distribution. T represents people who are more creative, take
greater risks and tend to seek a higher profile. The –T personalities tend to go to the
extreme and engage in activities that are destructive and even criminal. The t
people cling to certainty and predictability. They tend to avoid risks and the
unfamiliar. The –t personalities may even go to the extreme of avoiding all outside
contact.
Both Plog’s and Farley’s typologies have provided a macro perspective for classifying an individual’s behavior.

In 1972 Plog gave a presentation to the Southern California Chapter of the Travel Research Association (now the Travel and Tourism Research Association) (Plog, 2001). This presentation covered an area of research Plog began in 1966 that evolved into what he called the cyclic rise and fall of destinations. Plog examined why people chose not to fly commercially. At the time, jet fuel was relatively inexpensive and the airlines projected double-digit growth in seats as new aircraft were completed at a record pace.

Plog outlined a typology model based on the characteristics he observed from research on the non-flyers. He used the model in two different but interconnected applications.

In one aspect, the model shows a continuum of personality classes based on individual preferences. On one end were psychocentrics/dependables - people who exhibited behavior that indicated a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem. They
were non-flyers who took fewer risks in their everyday lives. This was attributed mostly to the psychocentrics’ belief that they had little to no influence on their own daily lives (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.9. Plog’s Psychocentric – Allocentric Model (Plog 2001).

At the other end of the spectrum were allocentrics/venturers. This group tended to be self-assured people who took on life. They made decisions quickly and accepted the results as a natural consequence of their choices and actions. They took more risks because they believed the experience gained was the important payoff. Allocentrics/venturers tended to go to destinations first, before all the amenities and infrastructure were established. Others (near allocentrics/venturers
through the spectrum to psychocentrics/dependables) came as the destination became more popular and amenities and infrastructure were added.

Destinations also could be placed on the continuum to reflect the range and type of experiences preferred by allocentrics and psychocentrics. As seen in Figure 2.10, the more risky the destination, the farther to the right the destination was placed on the continuum (for example Africa in Figure 2.10). The more the destination was seen as routine and established, the farther to the left the destination was placed on the continuum, signifying its predictability (low risk; you know what you are getting) as a destination. A destination could become too established and known, possibly resulting in reduced visitation. This is why destinations need to re-invest themselves as they move through the product life cycle. Atlantic City, with its revitalization of its famous boardwalk area, is an example of recent re-emerged destinations. Downtown Baltimore witnessed a resurgence with the redesign and rebuilding of the waterfront area, which included the National Aquarium and the building of a Major League baseball stadium, Oriole Park at Camden Yards.
New York City spent years and millions of dollars cleaning up and re-establishing Times Square area as a more family-oriented environment, although this was not truly seen as being established until The Walt Disney Company bought and refurbished the New Amsterdam Theater in 1993 (Reichl, 1999). Even mature market destinations such as Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and Las Vegas, Nevada periodically need to add properties and/or attractions to maintain their allure to keep mid-centrics and psychocentrics returning, efforts that help the destinations remain viable in the product life cycle.
2.9.2 Criticisms of Plog and his typology

There has been criticism of Plog's research. Smith (1990) argued that Plog's typology does not replicate the significant results needed to show the differences between different cultures. In fact, Smith states, “This test of the allocentric/psychocentric model fails to support the hypothesized association between personality and destination preferences.” It should be noted that Smith did not conduct primary research nor use Plog’s typology as a part of the methodology guiding his research. Instead, he used secondary data taken from the Tourism Canada/U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration’s Foreign Long-Haul Pleasure Travel Market Studies for France, West Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Singapore. He used Plog’s descriptions of personality types to select the variables from the Tourism Canada/U.S. TTRA study he felt most closely matched Plog’s questions. Although Plog’s research has been subject to critical reviews and tests such as Smith’s for almost forty years now, it is still cited and referenced. It has become accepted as a part of the foundation for tourism research. It appears to be accepted without question even though Plog’s questionnaire and the constructs behind the questions are held by his company as proprietary information. Smith had issue with the proprietary nature of Plog’s research. Snepenger (1987) noted that both Cohen and Plog’s research used the individual as the basis for the market segmentation even though behavior patterns suggest most people vacation in primary social groups. Nickerson and Ellis (1991)
tested Plog’s model with an activation theory component. Their results showed
general support for Plog’s model, but they took issue with the energy component of
Plog’s model. Plog states that the energy an individual expends during travel is
uncorrelated to the allocentric/psychocentric scale, that either end of the spectrum
can be either high or low energy. Nickerson and Ellis’s research, however, showed
a high correlation between the allocentric/psychocentric scale and the energy
expended. All criticisms question of the validity and reliability of Plog’s research
model, and the reality that the model is difficult to test due to the proprietary
constraints placed by Plog’s company.

2.9.3 Plog’s Model: Does it Apply to Equine Activities?

Plog’s model has been utilized in an ongoing effort to segment the general
population in the United States based on their responses to his travel continuum
questions. Plog segments the respondents based on their personality types as they
 correspond to points on the continuum. Griffith and Albanese (1996) found Plog’s
model to be valid and robust. They report findings that validate the constructs and
show a high correlation to actual travel behavior. In Griffith and Albanese’s
published work, however it is unclear how the application of Plog’s model was
assessed. Chandler and Costello (2002) in their research used the questions and
Rated.
I believe the nature of travel within the United States has changed over the past forty years. Traveling to a destination, even one located at a great distance, is cheaper. The number of units in hotels, motels and other lodgings has increased. Jets fly to more locations than ever. For many Americans, travel has become less an aspiration (wishing they had the time, money and/or reason to go on a vacation) and more an expectation. Plog’s model still appears to work within the parameters of his sampling of the U.S. population.

People engage in types of equine activities for various reasons. You may like to watch, ride, race, bet on, paint, photograph, work with, train or just want to own horses. There exists a whole spectrum of activities involving horses. The breadth of equine activities would match logically as an area of research within the Plog model. Based on literature searches, it appears that no one besides Chandler in his research on heritage tourists has attempted to use Plog’s model to examine a specific activity. Plog’s model needs to be re-evaluated to be determined if it is applicable to a specific area of activity involvement. Is it as robust as Griffith and Albanese (1996) observed, or is there a stronger case for Smith’s argument that Plog’s research has been accepted without enough scrutiny and attempts at replication?
Chapter Three
Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study of equestrians described in this paper took place at several venues in the states of North Carolina and Virginia during a seven-month period starting December 2005 and ending July 2006. Equestrians were given a self-administered questionnaire about their riding history, riding style and travel preferences. Questionnaires were distributed and collected at four different horse venues for competitive riders and two different horse venues for non-competitive riders.

3.2 Subjects and Venues

Based on the last U.S. Census data available (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), females comprise 51 percent of the general population of the United States. The riding population observed during the study was predominantly female. Because Plog’s research draws samples from the general population, these samples, without any corrections for gender, should be 51 percent female. Different venues were chosen because each had a range of events during the sampling period, and almost all the events scheduled were small. The small size of the events (number of riders...
available to intercept) required the researcher to sample at more venues. The venues chosen were:

- Virginia Intermont College, located in the southwestern part of the state in Bristol, Virginia, has one of the top equestrian programs in the country. The college had back-to-back winners in the Hunter Seat division of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association National Championships in 2004 and 2005.

- The Western Agricultural Center in Fletcher, North Carolina is home to a 65,000-square-foot show arena. There are more than 600 permanent stalls at the facility. The Western Agricultural Center is also adjacent to the North Carolina Mountain State Fair.

- The James B. Hunt, Jr. Horse Complex in Raleigh, North Carolina, located on the North Carolina State Fairgrounds, has a main show area that covers 81,000 square feet and is the busiest horse complex in North Carolina.

- The Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center in Williamston, North Carolina has a 108,000-square-foot coliseum arena and more than 290 permanent stalls.

- The Leatherwood Mountains Resort in Ferguson, North Carolina is a residential-vacation resort and equine community and features approximately 100 miles of trails winding through more than 5,000
acres of mountain forests. It has one of the largest equestrian trail systems in the state.

- McNair’s Country Acres Stables in Raleigh, North Carolina is located on 200 acres in southwest Raleigh. McNair’s has been educating local riders for more than 35 years.

3.3 Research Purpose and Hypothesis

The purpose of this study was to test the applicability of Plog’s Venturesomeness theory to amateur equestrians. The general research question is:

*Can different rider/riding types be identified that are congruent (correlated) with Plog’s typology, and are they influenced by different levels of risk?*

**Purpose of the Research**

- Investigate and identify the personality types of riders along Plog’s Traveler Typology.
- Identify the congruence (relationship) between Plog’s theory of Venturesomeness and the activity (commitment through competition/type of riding) of the participants.
Null Hypothesis:

There is no correlation \( (r=0) \) between people along the traveler typology continuum and the nature of their participation in equestrian activities.

1. Test Plog's theory of Venturesomeness.
2. Identify the congruence (relationship) between Plog’s Venturer-Dependable Scale and a specific activity.
3. Test for differences among participants based on riding style choice.

3.4 Test Instrument (Questionnaire)

The survey instrument consisted of:

1. Questions about riding, lifestyle, travel and general demographic information.
2. Eight questions Plog developed to determine placement on his Venturesomeness spectrum.

The questionnaire was developed using parts of previous questionnaires used in research conducted over the last ten years by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management at North Carolina State University, including The North Carolina Aquarium Study, the North Carolina Golf Study and The Institute for Outdoor Drama Study. These studies were validated through pre-testing. The eight questions used for Plog’s Lifestyle and Activity Preference Model were taken directly from Plog’s book Fieldings’ Vacation Places Rated 1995. Instructions on
how to score the respondents’ answers were followed to the letter as described in the book. These questions’ origins and how they are interpreted are proprietary information held by Plog’s company. The index score created for the analysis is based on an aggregation of scores from Plog’s eight questions. The answers to the odd-numbered questions (based on Plog’s eight questions) are added together and used to score the allocentric-psychocentric total variable. The answers to the even-numbered questions are added together to produce the active-mellow total variable. The allocentric-psychocentric total variable is the index base for the contingency tables used in the analysis. The contingency table analysis placed all variables in a table (one at a time) against the allocentric-psychocentric score total variable. A correlation score was produced.

Like Chandler’s study (2002,) the questions and their scoring were obtained from a book written by Plog entitled Fielding’s Vacation Places Rated (1995). Other than the basic scoring of the questions, no other information is provided by Plog. A summated ratings scale (Likert scale) containing four discrete choices was found at the end of each travel preference statement. The summated ratings scale offered four discrete choices based on attitude agreement. Each respondent was asked to respond to eight statements by checking the box next to the choice that most closely resembled his or her attitude (level of agreement) or feeling about the statement. Each box was associated with a number. The aggregate scores for the eight items represented the respondent’s placement on the travel continuum. The four choices were: very much (4), somewhat (3), a little (2), and not at all (1). A copy of the full
survey questionnaire is located in Appendix A. Plog’s questions are below (see Table 3.1).

The odd-numbered items (when totaled) placed subjects on a scale ranging from dependable (score of 1-8) to mid-centric (score 9-12) to venturer (score 13-16). The even-numbered items (when totaled) placed subjects on a scale between mellow (score 4-9) and active (score 10-16).

### Table 3.1

**Plog’s Venturesome/Dependable Scale Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very much</td>
<td>somewhat</td>
<td>a little</td>
<td>not at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| I prefer to visit places that have not been discovered, especially before hotels and restaurants are built. |
| I will hurry to get to places, even when I have plenty of time. |
| I am actively involved in a rigorous physical fitness program. |
| I would generally rather go for a walk than read a book. |
| I have more energy than most persons my age. |
| I get very frustrated when I am stuck in traffic. |
| I make decisions quickly and easily. |
| Crowds in shopping malls have always bothered me. |
Table 3.2 represents the independent variables, the dependant variables and their level of measurement used in the contingency tables for the analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Level of Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Participation</td>
<td>How long have you been riding?</td>
<td>Interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Type</td>
<td>Competitive/Non-Competitive Rider</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Level</td>
<td>Level of Competition</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Style</td>
<td>Class or Type of Competitive Riding</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Which category is closest to your total family income? (nine categories)</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>What year were you born?</td>
<td>Interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>What is your gender?</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education? (eight categories)</td>
<td>Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venturer/Dependable Index</td>
<td>Index based on Plog’s eight Likert type questions</td>
<td>Interval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4 Treatment of Data

Competition and non-competition riders were sampled from the attendees at each venue. Riders, when not competing or resting, congregate around their horses in the stable. Several attempts were made to draw a random sample, but the response rate was zero. Convenience sampling was used because it was the best way to sample the riders without disturbing their routine and preparation for the competition. The questionnaire was distributed at venues during the events. For the
competitive events, the researcher walked the length of the barns and gave the questionnaire to riders between events, later circulating back to retrieve the questionnaires. To sample the non-competitive group, the researcher intercepted riders either after they finished riding classes at the stables or before they left to ride trails. Sampling of competitive riders took place at the aforementioned equestrian facilities around the states of North Carolina and Virginia. The competition classes sampled were Saddlebred/Roadster, Reigning, Hunter/Jumper, Combined Dressage and Rodeo, each of which carries a different degree of risk. Sampling of non-competitive riders took place at McNair’s Country Acres Stables and Leatherwood Mountains Resort (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4). The sampling involved a two-part, self-administered questionnaire.
Table 3.3

**Venues of Competitive Events at Which Riders were Sampled**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Number of Riders (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Agricultural Center</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James B. Hunt, Jr. Horse Complex</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Intermont College</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saddlebred/Roadster</td>
<td>Dressage, Rodeo, Hunter/Jumper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reining, Dressage, Hunter/Jumper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hunter/Jumper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4

**Venues of Non-competitive Riders at Which Riders were Sampled**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Number of Riders (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McNair’s Country Acres Boarding Stables</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leatherwoods Mountains Resort</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Riding Techniques utilized in both Hunter/Jumper and Dressage classes</td>
<td>Trail Riding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basic descriptive statistics involving frequency counts, tabulations and cross tabulations were run to analyze the data.

The first limitation in this study was the use of convenience sampling. This method was used because it was difficult to keep track of the riders as they moved between the barn/stable areas, the various practice rings, the competitive ring and their cars, trailers and RVs. Riders would often congregate around their horses’ stalls. For example, one exhibitor may have brought six horses and quartered them in adjacent stalls. These six horses may have had 10-12 different riders based on class. A second limitation was the presence of more horses than riders, leading to
an inflated number of participants. At a single competitive event one person might be registered to ride three or four different horses in two or three different classes. Event managers do not register the events by riders but by horses and classes (level of competition), making it difficult to know at any one show/event how many participants were registered. This made it difficult to identify the actual number of participants in a show, which affected the attendance count and subsequently the sample size of the event. Although the return rate was high, the small sample size of the various rider styles became a concern. The refusal rate, based on direct observation, was 7 percent (17 questionnaires were not completed). This small sample size may have affected the representativeness of the sample to the general population of riders, potentially skewing the results.

3.5 Pilot Test and Distribution of Questionnaire

A pre-test was conducted with 30 competitive riders from Williamston, North Carolina at an equestrian event. Simple adjustments and modifications were made to the questionnaire after the pre-test was recorded and scored. One such adjustment occurred with questions three and eleven. The questions asked how far one usually traveled to ride (question 3) and how far one usually traveled to compete. The respondents’ answers were either based on travel time (hours and minutes) or distance measured in mileage. The question was adjusted so that the respondent would answer based on miles traveled.
The self-administered questionnaire was distributed during intervals between events. To ensure the participants did not rush, the administrator would stand or sit nearby and observe the participants as they completed the questionnaire, often answering questions posed by the participants’ friends and/or family. This type of interaction took place approximately 50 percent of the time. It should be noted that, based on direct observation and interaction, the respondents appeared to fully understand the questions being asked on the survey. This gave the researcher confidence that the questions were valid. Not one participant asked for clarification of any of Plog’s eight questions.

### 3.6 Reliability of the Questionnaire

The litmus test for reliability in social science research is based on replication. Are the results replicated by other researchers and studies? As stated in Chapter One, Plog and his companies have replicated his research continuously over the last 40 years. Two points need to be made. First, Plog’s research has been general in nature and concentrated on the population samples taken from the United States. Secondly, this research has always taken the general view of travel behavior of randomly selected individuals during a one-time sample. To further test the reliability of the research, longitudinal studies with the same sample populations need to be conducted. This would be similar to clinical trials performed in medical research, and would either confirm or refute the reliability of Plog’s work. A review of the literature suggests this has not happened.
3.7 Summary

Equestrians at six different venues were given a questionnaire developed from previous surveys utilized by the Office of Park and Tourism Research. The form also included Plog’s Traveler Typology questions. Sampling took place over a seven-month period between December 2005 and July 2006. 233 completed questionnaires were collected for the study. An analysis was performed on the data and results were reviewed.
Chapter Four

Results

4.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter Three, this study was conducted during winter 2005 and spring 2006. Data were collected from riders at venues in North Carolina and Virginia. Data were analyzed using STATA and SPSS 16, 17, and 18 to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions presented in Chapter Three (see section 3.4). Contingency table analysis was used because convenience sampling was the method of gathering information. As stated earlier, random sampling was attempted. Convenience sampling is not a random sampling method, and it limited the tools available for analysis. This section displays the results of the data analysis.

4.2 Participants: Rider and Horse Profile

A rider and horse profile developed from the data is displayed in Table 4.1. All data in the table are mean scores except for the breed and gender of the horses, for which the predominant responses are also displayed.
### Table 4.1

**Rider and Horse Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Typical n=233</th>
<th>Psychocentric n=36</th>
<th>Mid-centric n=148</th>
<th>Allocentric n=49</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>82.4% F</td>
<td>88.9% F</td>
<td>82.4% F</td>
<td>77.6% F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>26.95</td>
<td>30.73</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>84.6% Some College</td>
<td>88.9% Some College</td>
<td>83.6% Some College</td>
<td>83.4% Some College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>38.6% Full Time</td>
<td>25.7% Full Time</td>
<td>37.4% Full Time</td>
<td>53.1% Full Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Family Income</td>
<td>$44,000.00</td>
<td>$27,585.00</td>
<td>$37,359.00</td>
<td>$71,199.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Farm</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Size (acres)</td>
<td>53.23</td>
<td>24.55</td>
<td>66.83</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Time Riding (years)</td>
<td>16.85</td>
<td>18.34</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>15.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ride per Month (times)</td>
<td>18.58</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>19.02</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Horse</td>
<td>67.39%</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breed (predominant)</td>
<td>25.66% Quarter Horse</td>
<td>23.53% Thoroughbred</td>
<td>30.1% Quarter Horse</td>
<td>21.87% Quarter Horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Gender (predominant)</td>
<td>59.26% Gelding</td>
<td>62.5% Gelding</td>
<td>61.3% Gelding</td>
<td>53.85% Gelding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Age (years)</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>9.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Height (hands)</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competed</td>
<td>74.46%</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition Level</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standeven and De Knop (1999) observe that sports tourism is “an experience of physical activity tied to an experience of place.” This experience of place may represent an arena, golf course, or other venue rather than the destination itself. Based on discussion with survey participants, the investigator determined that travel, though integral to participation in the competitive side of the activity, plays a functional rather than discovery role for the rider. Travel functions as the means to get to the competition. This is similar to a businessperson who must travel to get to a meeting or sales call. There is no discovery function involved with the journey. The traveler’s primary focus is the competition, sales call or meeting. The leisure traveler maintains a discovery function within the route and/or destination. The leisure traveler explores along the way and/or explores the destination (sightseeing). I believe travel is now easier for many people due to lower costs, but also more difficult in some ways due to longer waits caused by tightened security measures.
4.3 Statistical Analysis

Research Question One

Investigate and identify the various personality types of riders based on the Plog model.

As indicated in Figure 4.1, the riders’ personality types represented a fairly normal distribution curve slightly skewed to the upper end of Plog’s continuum.

![Figure 4.1 Riders Measured Along Plog’s Traveler Typology with Normal Curve.](image-url)
The riders were also asked if they competed (yes or no) on any of five levels ranging from local competitions to international competitions. In Figure 4.2, the columns represent a “yes” response in each of Plog’s categories.

Figure 4.2 Competitive Riders Measured Along Plog’s Traveler Typology with Normal Curve.

In Figure 4.3, the columns represent a “no” response for respondents on whether they are competitive riders in each of Plog’s categories.
Table 4.2 represents the Goodness of Fit test for Plog’s Traveler Typology Total Scores. As you can see, both ends of the observed distribution curve have negative residuals compared to the expected distribution curve. The entire psychocentric area (right side) within the observed data distribution is less than expected based on normal distribution from a random sample containing 233 observations.

Figure 4.3 Non-Competitive Riders Measured Along Plog’s Traveler Typology with Normal Curve.
Table 4.2

Plog’s Traveler Typology / Goodness of Fit Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>-7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>-8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>-12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>233</td>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Plog’s Traveler Typology Total Scores / Goodness of Fit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
<td>37.746&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 2 cells (15.4%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 4.0.
Figures 4.4 and 4.5 represents results from a two-way ANOVA analysis. The Plog Traveler Typology Total Scores means were tested using a Riding Styles Risk Index and whether riders competed the competition. The Riding Styles Index was compiled from information gathered from horse show managers. They rated the riding styles as either low, medium or high based on their perception of risk to both horse and rider.

Figure 4.4 Riding Styles Risk Index Along Plog’s Traveler Typology Total Scores
Figure 4.5 Do You Compete Plotted Along Plog's Traveler Typology Total Scores

Table 4.3 represents the results of the two-way ANOVA. Both the Riding Styles Risk and Compete variables significance levels were low at .301 and .599, respectively.
Figure 4.6 represents the riders who travel to compete. When asked if they typically combine a vacation with their competition, the response was overwhelmingly no. Ninety-two percent of respondents, or 174 out of 189, reported that they do not typically combine a vacation with their competition trips. The responses were slightly skewed (negatively) to the high end along Plog’s Traveler Typology Continuum.
Chi squares were calculated between the various riding styles and personality types based on Plog's model (see Table 4.4). Rodeo was the only style that displayed a .05 or greater asymptotic significance level. There appears to be no significant relationship between what the chosen style of riding and an individual's allocentric/psychocentric total score.
Table 4.4

*Pearson chi square*
*Between the Various Riding Styles and Traveler Typology Total Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Riding Styles</th>
<th>Asymptotic Significance</th>
<th>n=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dressage</td>
<td>.428</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt Seat</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddle Seat</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Pleasure</td>
<td>.762</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Pleasure</td>
<td>.719</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrel Racing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reining</td>
<td>.464</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodeo</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roping</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Pleasure</td>
<td>.983</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harness</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadster</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Summary

The investigator had to make a choice in data collection based on past experience with this particular population source (equine events). Previous attempts at gathering data taught the investigator that most event managers did not keep computer databases of registered riders and did not maintain mailing lists they would
share. Registration at events was first come, first served. This made it almost impossible to collect a random sample of riders. The investigator also dropped surveys into both registration and veterinarian packets hanging in the horses’ stalls. Both attempts left the investigator with no completed surveys. The investigator made a conscious choice to proceed with convenience sampling as the methodology for collecting the data. This choice greatly limited the possible statistical analysis.

Chi square analysis was the primary methodology the investigator chose to perform on the data. Chi Square analysis was chosen because it was a strong tool given the methodology utilized (convenience sampling) and the binary data responses (yes/no riding style). The chi square method illustrates the strength of a relationship if one is present. A Goodness of Fit test was utilized to compare the observed responses for Plog’s Total Traveler Typology Scores to an expected distribution of Traveler Typology Scores. An ANOVA analysis was performed to check for differences between the means of two variables against Plog’s Traveler Typology Scores.

A further discussion of the results, conclusions and any recommendations for future research will be discussed in Chapter Five.
Chapter Five

Summary, Discussion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This study was undertaken to investigate the application of Plog’s traveler typology to the specific activity of riding horses. A description of the general results was stated in Chapter Four. This chapter provides a summary of both the procedures and research results, then offers conclusions drawn from the study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the challenges presented by the research and recommendations for future research.

5.2 Summary of Procedures

A questionnaire was developed from previously used questionnaires developed by the Office of Tourism Research from questions Plog has used for his Traveler Typology. Data collection took place at various equestrian facilities in North Carolina and Virginia over a six-month period beginning in December 2005 and concluding in July 2006. The data was analyzed using statistical software developed by STATA and SPSS.
5.3 Summary of Research Results

Table 4.1 represents a profile of the respondents. All the results are means except horse gender and horse breed. Some noteworthy numbers: allocentrics (average age of 36 years old) were almost 10 years older than psychocentrics, were more than twice as likely to be employed full time and earned more than twice as much in total family income. Compared with allocentrics, the psychocentrics' the rate of farm ownership was almost one and a half times greater and ownership of a horse was eight percent higher. Both allocentric and psychocentric respondents competed (71 percent) at the national level.

Plog states throughout his research that the results of the studies on American samples are normally distributed along his Traveler Typology Continuum. Table 4.2 represents a Goodness of Fit test between the sampled responses and an expected normal distribution of 233 people from the United States. The Goodness of Fit test has a significance level of .0002, which suggests that the distributions are within a low enough threshold to be considered a close fit. Figure 4.1 shows the sampled responses placed against a normal curve. The responses represent the participants' scores on Plog's Traveler Typology. These responses appear to form a normal distribution. Figure 4.2 represents the responses of the competitive participants. Once again, the data appears to form a fairly normal distribution.
Figure 4.3 represents the non-competitive respondents. Although it has a similar mean of 10.66, the distribution is shaped more like a block centered above and below the mean. Figure 4.4 displays an ANOVA graph that plots the means of the riding risk level along the traveler typology continuum. The first three plotted means for the psychocentric scores of four, five, and six are two, two point five and one respectively. These three points on the traveler typology are the lowest on the psychocentric end of the continuum and appear to have the greatest variance. From the high end of the psychocentric to the allocentric end of the continuum, the variances appear to fall within a .5 spread at the great point between the mid-centric points of 11 and 12. Figure 4.5 represents the second ANOVA graph that plots the responses to questions about whether the participants competed against the traveler typology continuum. A mean score of one represents competition, while mean scores closer to two indicate the participant group did not compete at any level. Again, there appears to be a wide dispersal of points, especially from points five, six and seven. These are the psychocentric groups, and the expectation would be that these groups do not compete. Six, seven and eight fall within an expected value, but the mean scores for groups at the four and five levels are equal to one. The mean scores for the groups at points eight through thirteen fall within a range of .1 on the scale. At points 13 to 14 there is a wider gap that is seen again at 14 to 15 and 15 to 16, which represents a group with a mean of one; therefore, all compete. With the exception of the group at 14, all the other allocentric groups’ mean scores are closer or equal to one and represent a higher response rate for competition.
Figure 4.6 represents a chart of participant responses to the question, “When you travel to compete do you include a vacation on the trip?” Ninety-two percent of the 189 respondents stated they did not include a vacation on their travels to compete.

Table 4.4 represents the significance levels from a Pearson chi square test of the relationship between the participants' riding style choice and their Plog Traveler Typology Total Score. The only riding style that exhibited a statistically significant level of relationship with the Plog Traveler Typology Scores was the Rodeo group, which exhibited a .056. It should be noted that this was a small group of only seven riders. None of the asymptotic significance scores corresponding to other riding styles were within the .05 probability level, so it seems no real relationship (other than chance) can be attributed to those scores.

5.4 Conclusions

Plog states that age, income and education all have an effect on the traveler typology. Allocentrics tend to be older and more educated with higher income levels. Table 4.1 confirms Plog’s observation that allocentrics' mean age tends to be older and their income level significantly higher than those of psychocentrics and mid-centrics. Education tended to hold steady for all three groups.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 clearly show that the sampled population was distributed fairly normally. The Goodness of Fit test was another example of the sample
resembling a normal distribution. Plog has stated his samples all fall within a normal distribution. If the general population in the United States, Plog’s samples and the data gathered for this study all fall within a normal distribution, such evidence suggest other variables affect one’s behavioral choices when it comes to travel.

The ANOVA graph (Figure 4.4) shows the means of the risk levels of the riding styles with a wide variance at the psychocentric level and a narrowing at the mid-centric and allocentric levels. Due to the lack of significance for the test, the results could be affected by either sample size or methodology. The ANOVA graph (Figure 4.5) of the compete/no compete question appears almost as a bi-modal distribution; the mean scores for the competition question for both the lowest psychocentrics and highest allocentrics on the traveler typology continuum were either close to yes or definitely yes. One would expect a linear relationship, with psychocentrics stating they compete less and the rate of competition increasing positively along the mid-centric and allocentric end of the scale. The bi-modal graphing of the responses supports the postulation that no linear correlation exists between riders who compete and their Plog Traveler Typology Scores.

Figure 4.6 shows the responses from competitive riders who were asked if they included a vacation in their trips to ride in competitive events. Overwhelmingly, the responses were no (92 percent). Conversations with respondents as they completed the questionnaire indicated that they chose their lifestyle (competing in equestrian events) and the necessary travel over a traditional lifestyle and vacation year after year.
Correlations are important because an understanding of the relationship between variables allows the successful prediction of outcomes. This is important in business and particularly in tourism. How many people are going to show up at an event? How much food do we need to prepare? How many rooms should we set aside? Tourist business owners seek answers for all these questions in order to form an estimate and decrease their potential loss of revenue. The null hypothesis stated there was no relationship between a riders' placement on Plog's Traveler Typology continuum and the nature of their involvement in equestrian activities. In other words, there is no relationship between a person's psychocentric/allocentric score and their riding style choice, and whether or not they competed. In light of the analysis, the only conclusion that can be made at this point is to not reject the null hypothesis.

5.5 Discussion

Plog's typology places people who travel along a continuum based on their personality. Competitive riders travel to stables and arenas for competition while non-competitive riders journey to locations with trails that allow them to experience nature. Riders generally must travel in order to enjoy the activity ride unless they own stables and land. The mere act of traveling to ride is an integral part of the riding experience. Travel is also a means to an end. Choice enters into the equation when a rider chooses a particular trail to ride, a specific event to compete in or a unique venue. The trail, event or venue is as important as the travel itself. Whether
competing or riding for pleasure, all of these riders must travel some distance to reach a stable, saddle their horses and engage in the riding experience. The motivation is the desire to ride at a certain locale or event. Riders therefore satisfy all Gunn’s factors on the demand side of the Tourism System. They have a desire to travel, the time and financial means, and they are in good enough physical condition to ride a horse. Both pleasure riders and competitive riders experience Clawson and Knetsch’s (1966) total recreation experience. They anticipate and plan the experience, travel to it, ride their horses, return home, and eventually reminisce about the experience. Hudson’s (2003) definition of sports tourism also describes the equestrian riding experience. His definition encompasses “travel to play or watch a sport, or visit a sports attraction and includes both competitive and non-competitive activities.” This may include equestrians. I do not believe, however, that this classification gives a complete picture of their behavior. Based on Hudson’s definition, one could bundle sports tourists all other special interest tourists such as those interested in cultural, historical or culinary tourism. These tourists travel to enjoy specific activities and interests. I disagree with Hudson and his definition of sports tourism when it comes to people engaged in competitive sports. Where the culinary or cultural tourists may travel to the Finger Lakes Region in western New York to sample its wine and meet its people, they may also visit other sites and likely have flexible itineraries to allow them to experience as much as possible during their trip. I propose the competitive sports tourist demonstrates behavior similar to that of a business traveler. Both travel to the destination, engage in specific activities and,
if time allows, possibly spend their free time engaging in general tourist behavior before returning home. The key is the availability and amount of free time allotted by the competition schedule, or the athlete’s decision to stay focused on the activity during time spent away from the competition. Generally, the event schedule is built to allow for very little free time. A business person departs once the business is completed. The competitive sports tourist may travel to the destination, compete, rest between events or games and evaluate their performance or that of their competitors before traveling back to their origination point. It should be noted that the results described in Figure 4.6 show a normal distribution along Plog’s Traveler Typology Continuum. This chart reflects the responses of both competitive and non-competitive riders when asked if they include vacations with their riding excursions. An overwhelming 92 percent of the riders said they did not include vacations with their travels to competitions. These responses lead to the possibility that one may frame their behavior as that of competitive sports tourist participants. The choices and behavioral outcomes of the competitive sports tourist participants (riders) are based on the premise that these individuals are competing to win, or at the very least competing to improve on past performance.

In almost all studies published using Plog’s continuum, there is a general consensus that the respondents from the United States form a normal distribution along Plog’s psychocentric.allococentric continuum. As is the case for the last forty years, Plog’s results have been replicated by the few researchers who have been granted access to his questionnaire (Chandler & Costello, 2002; Nickerson, Polovitz
& Gary, 1991). However, it is significant to note that Plog’s work has been basically accepted by the academic establishment (except for Smith, 1990 and 1991) without that establishment having full access to the work. Plog, by privatizing the sampling methodology and psychological basis for the questions that are the basic constructs of the survey instrument, has produced results based on the work for years. But from an academic point of view, the question that must be asked is “Is this scholarly? And will it withstand rigorous testing by and scrutiny by social scientists? Because it is impossible to gain access to the proprietary information, there is little data one can examine to gain a deeper understanding of the nature or the work itself.

Equestrians were chosen because there seemed to be significant variability among riders and among riding styles. They were also chosen because of the amount of travel involved in participating in the sport. The travel component is important because of the similarities between the travel for participation in sports and tourism. But, in the case of this study, there was very little variance between the various riding styles, and the riders’ responses were not similar to that of a general tourist. The lack of variance between riding styles could be due to the similarity of skills involved in riding. There is a significant difference in learning to ride a horse versus learning to ride a bike or drive a car. A horse is a large animal and, like most animals, usually have distinct personalities. Not everyone can become comfortable gaining the skills necessary to learn to ride. This may produce a natural self-selection of similar people gravitating toward riding and competing in equestrian
events. More variance may be observed by looking at participants in different sports and at team versus individual sports participation. Plog’s Traveler Typology could be used among a sample of golfers, whitewater kayakers, tri-athletes and surfers. These are similar to equestrianism because they are individual participant sports. The supposition that each sport draws a unique type of individual would predict possible be observable differences among various samples of the participants. One may also approach the research from the perspective of observing team sport participants (softball, soccer, team handball, rugby and cricket) versus individual sports participants such as the aforementioned golfers, surfers, etc. There may be a relationship component; in a relationship in which one person is allocentric and the other is psychocentric, does one personality type dominate the couple’s travel decisions? Take it a step further and add group dynamics to the equation with three or more people traveling together. Do allocentric personality types seek each other out? Is there another element or variable that dominates a person’s motivation to travel or, more importantly, travel when engaged in sports?

Based on more than three years of field research and more than 20 years of personal participation, I propose there may be a negative correlation between a sports participant’s willingness to engage in tourism activities while involved in a competition and the level of participation or involvement of the competition (see Figure 5.1).

The greater the level of involvement (competition level of participant), the less likely the participant will engage in tourism activities during the trip in which the
competition takes place. For example, professional athletes get on a plane, travel to the destination where the competition will take place, compete, and usually return home. If there is free time, the professional athlete or high-competition-level amateur athlete will most likely engage in activities that one would associate with any business traveler. Such activities might include eating at a restaurant, shopping and possibly spending an evening out at a local bar or club. Sightseeing and other traditional tourist activities will be put aside as distractions. The degree to which spectators at events engage in tourist activities seems to be based on the duration the event. A short event (less than three days) might be a Nextel Cup NASCAR race, a football game or a basketball game. Longer events could include Speed Week at Daytona, the Masters Golf Tournament or a college football bowl game and homecoming weekend.

Figure 5.1 The Tourism Activity Involvement Model.
5.6 Recommendations

This research has not disproved the original hypothesis to the author. The null hypothesis was not refuted. There appeared to be no correlation between the sampled population’s Traveler Typology Score and its choice of riding styles. The basic premise that participants who prefer to engage in vastly different activities may be driven by personality differences and thus can be segmented based on a system such as Plog’s Traveler Typology. Future research could focus on studying participants in different types of activities; one could look at team sports versus individual sports, for example. A researcher could survey respondents who participate in football, volleyball, baseball and soccer versus participants who enjoy whitewater kayaking, skydiving, golf and fishing. Another possibility is breaking down the activity further in terms such as activity versus sport. Within a category such as motorsports, one may expect differences between racecar drivers who favor oval tracks, road courses, cross-country and rally racing. Are people who play games for recreation different (based on personality) from those who participate in competitive sports? Does personality influence the participation time frame? Are there generational differences? Do respondents change over time? Does Plog’s typology only work with large samples, such as those used by his company, and not smaller samples that use a limited sampling methodology (activity-based or other limited populations) such as those used in this study? The use of a random
sampling methodology, which would allow a more robust analysis of the responses, would benefit future research in this area.

There are many potential questions that could be explored regarding personality, activity preference and travel. Finally, a question that needs to be is whether scholarly work, published in peer-reviewed journals, should be allowed to hide behind a veil of privacy. I believe all scholarly work published in academic journals should be easily accessed by anyone who wants to independently verify the published results.

This study was important because it took a widely accepted area of research (Plog’s Theory of Venturesomeness) and applied it to a specific area of sport. What was discovered was that the respondents’ answers to the Traveler Typology Score resulted in a fairly normal distribution. That outcome leads to the question of whether Plog’s Traveler Typology actually works if it always produces a normal distribution. This requires further research. The general population in the U.S. is 51 percent female and 49 percent male, based on the 2000 Census. Are there male/female differences? Do other traits override the allocentric/psychocentric personality type in the decision-making process? Do we need to take a more thorough look at the instrument itself and check it out independently? The results may help other researchers decide where to go next with Plog’s typology.
REFERENCES


Appendix
The purpose of this study is to gain information on competitive and non-competitive riders and their travel preferences. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses to this survey and return of this form indicate your consent to participate voluntarily.

Ricky L. Hardy  
Ph.D. Candidate, NCSU

RIDER & HORSE INFORMATION

How long have you been riding? ____________

How many times during a typical month do you ride (practice or pleasure)? ________________

How far do you usually travel to your stables/barn to ride? _______ miles

Do you own a horse? Yes _________ No _________ (if no please skip to question 6)

What type of horse do you own?

Breed ____________________________

Gender __________________________

Age of horse ______________

Height of horse _____________

Do you ride competitively? Yes_____ No____ (if no please skip to question 17)

At what level do you compete? (please circle highest level you have competed)

International Regional Local

National State
What are the three primary disciplines you compete? (please list top three in order)

Dressage  __   Barrel Racing

Hunt Seat  __   Cutting

Saddle Seat  __   Reining

English Pleasure  __   Rodeo

Hunter Pleasure  __   Roping

Please circle the month(s) during which you usually compete.

1  2  3  4  5  6

How many competitions did you compete in during the past 12 month period? ______________

a. What is the minimum distance you traveled in the past 12 months for a competition? __ miles

b. What is the maximum distance you traveled in the past 12 months for a competition? __ miles

c. What is the distance you traveled for a typical competition in the past 12 months? __ miles

What type of accommodations do you use for overnight travel to competitions?
(please check the one most often used)

Lodging property __________
RV __________
Horse trailer __________
Please estimate how much you typically spend during a competition trip?

a. $___________ lodging 

b. $___________ food/meals 

c. $___________ attractions/amusements 

d. $___________ shopping (souvenirs) 

e. $___________ shopping (tack &/or supplies) 

f. $___________ transportation, fuel, airfare, etc. 

g. $___________ show/event fees & costs

Including you, how many people are usually in your travel party? 

a. ______ # adults  b. ______ # children

(under 18 years old)

Are you the primary planner for this trip? Yes_________ If not then who?________________________

What mode of transportation did you use to travel to this competition?

a. automobile/track

b. RV/Camper

c. Other____________________________________________

PERSONAL TRAVEL PATTERNS AND PREFERENCES

Do you typically include your vacation with a competition? Yes____ No____

What were the sources of information you utilized to plan your last vacation trip?

____________________________________________  ______________________________________

____________________________________________  ______________________________________
very much  somewhat  a little  not at all

I prefer to visit places that have not been discovered, especially before hotels and restaurants are built.

I will hurry to get to places, even when I have plenty of time.

I am actively involved in a rigorous physical fitness program.

I would generally rather go for a walk than read a book.

I have more energy than most persons my age.

I get very frustrated when I am stuck in traffic.

I make decisions quickly and easily.

Crowds in shopping malls have always bothered me.
Please circle the month(s) you typically vacation. (circle all that apply)

1  2  3  4  5  6
7  8  9 10 11 12

What mode of transportation do you generally use during your vacation travel?

a. automobile/truck
b. RV/Camper
c. Other:______________________________________________________

Please estimate how much you typically spend during a non-equestrian vacation trip:

a. $_________ lodging
b. $_________ food/meals
c. $_________ attractions/amusements
d. $_________ shopping (souvenirs)
e. $_________ transportation, fuel, airfare, etc.
NOW, THESE LAST FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOU.

YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL

Do you own a farm/ranch? Yes____ No____ If yes, how many acres? ______

What is your gender? ______ Male ______ Female

What year were you born? ______

What is your zip code? ______

Education? (circle highest level completed)

1 – high school graduate 3 – some college 5 – some graduate school

2 – technical school 4 – college degree 6 – graduate degree

What is your employment status? (circle one)

1 – unemployed 4 – full-time homemaker

2 – employed part-time 5 – student

3 – employed full-time 6 – retired

7 – other__________________

What is your occupation? ________________________
Which category is closest to your total family income? (circle one)

1 - less than $20,000
2 - $20,000 - $39,999
3 - $40,000 - $59,999
4 - $60,000 - $79,999
5 - $80,000 - $99,999
6 - $100,000 - $119,999
7 - $120,000 - $139,999
8 - $140,000 - $159,999
9 - $160,000 - $179,000
10 - $180,000 - $199,999
11 - $200,000 - $229,999
12 - more than $230,000

Thank You For Your Help!

If you would like to receive information on the results of this research please supply your:

Name: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

City: ______________ State: _____ Zip Code: __________