

POST-TRAVEL DEPRESSED FEELINGS

Student Spring Break at UW-Stout


by

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ABSTRACT

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When tourists return from travel and readjust themselves to ordinary life, they may experience depressed feelings: Post-Travel Depressed Feelings (PTDF). The purpose of this study was to examine how PTDF of college students are different by travel type, enjoyment level, and time pressure. Based on supporting theories and a sample of UW-Stout students, the study results shows that those who went home for their spring break had less depressed feelings than others who took vacation trips. Further, the more students enjoyed their travel during the spring break, the more PTDF they experienced. The findings suggest that there are travel strategies that students, or even tourists in general, can adopt for a less PTDF-impact on their ordinary lives.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

When tourists come back from travel and readjust to ordinary life, they may experience depressed feelings. Jafari's (1987) Tourist Model, using a springboard metaphor, suggests the tourist finds himself/herself in the depressed or the "emulsion" state of mind upon return. The depression may represent not only the pressure of landing (physical "exhaustion") but also the state of the mind (which has been on a "trip") and the "shock" of re-entry. Graburn (2001) comments on tourists' psychological flows, using tourism structure as a ritual. The special human feeling of *communitas*, may be examined and understood in a variety of ways. Such experience may be called "high" after which there is a "let down" or "come down". But there are not many studies that explain the reason why they feel depressed on returning home and which factors contribute to the level of depression.

Statement of the Problem

The reasons why the tourist feel depressed when they come back can be categorized in two processes according to the tourist model.

- 1) Physical and psychological "falling down" on returning.
- 2) The "shock" of re-entry and adaptation process to ordinary life.

The first process, which is a physical and psychological "falling down" on returning from non-ordinary/*communitas* magnet, is caused by physical exhaustion and a change in a state of mind which has been on the trip (Jafari, 1987). The physical and psychological "falling down" cannot be understood separately, as they affect each other. Most psychological phenomena can be also approached physiologically (Myers, 1999).

In addition to the physical and psychological factors, Opponent Process Theory (OPT) provides the psychological explanation of the “let down” after travel. OPT (Solomon & Corbitt, 1974) explicitly deals with the dynamics of affective states across time. The theory suggests that when a stimulus situation produces an affective reaction of a particular quality, it also produces an “opponent” affective reaction that increases in strength as long as the triggering situation remains in effect. This opposite hedonic process will eventually return an individual to a more neutral feeling state. Thus, initial positive or negative reactions to a stimulus situation will become less positive or less negative as the opponent process increases in strength. (Conlon & Porac, 1986). Travel is considered positive stimulus. It starts when tourists realize they are leaving ordinary base. When they return, which means the stimulus is terminated, they can feel negative emotion (depressed feelings) by the opponent process.

As with the second process, the “shock” of re-entry and adaptation process to ordinary life can be caused by various factors, such as stress from the changes of life cycle and the burden of work ahead. Early stress researchers Holmes and Rahe (1967) believe that any change that required adjustment of behavior and lifestyle would cause stress. According to the Social Readjustment Rating Scale, vacation itself ranked high as a stressful event. However, researchers have found that negative life events have the greatest adverse effects. In contrast, positive or desirable events are much less likely to affect health adversely (Taylor, 1995).

As explained above, tourists may feel depressed when they come back to ordinary life. But the depressed level also can be experienced differently by tourists. People can vary a great deal in the way they respond to the same stressor. In part, individual

differences in reacting to stressors are due to how people appraise a stressful event and the resources that they have available to cope with the stressful situation (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 1997).

This study focuses not only on internal (individual) factors, but also on external factors that can affect the differences of depression level. One possible factor is the type of travel practiced. The tourist can gain different experiences by the type of the travel. Those who visit their family or friends and who went to the major spring break destination, such as a Florida beach can have a totally different vacation experiences that can affect depressed feelings. The second factor is the enjoyment level during the trip. According to OPT, if the stimulus is stronger, the opponent emotion is deeper. This means, especially for the pleasure tourist, if they experience much “high” time during the vacation, they can get a greater “low” emotion after they return to ordinary life. And for other types of tourists, enjoyment levels can determine whether the travel was successful or not. Another factor which this study considers is the time constraint. For the student who went on a trip during spring break upon returning to school, the time left before classes start again can be used to measure their time pressure. To adapt themselves to ordinary life after travel, tourists need time to change “gears” in order to set their mind back to work and study.

Objectives and Hypothesis

The primary objective of this study is to identify the factors that contribute to the Post-Travel Depressed Feelings (PTDF) and to examine how they influence the PTDF level.

Specific objectives that guide this study are to:

1. Identify the factors that affect the depressed level of students returning from spring break
2. Examine whether types of travel are related to the depressed level
3. Examine whether the time pressure affect the depressed level of students
4. Examine whether the enjoyment level of the trip affect the depressed level
5. Assess whether the activities during the spring break affect the depressed level

The review of theoretical and applied studies about PTDF provided the three main hypotheses of this study:

1. Students who go on vacation travel have more PTDF than those who go home (their permanent/parent address).
2. Students who experience much enjoyment have more PTDF than those who experience less.
3. Students who have high time-pressure upon their return experience more PTDF than those who have low time-pressure.

The target subject of this study was the University of Wisconsin-Stout (UW-Stout) students. Survey questionnaires were distributed to them after spring break 2004.

Definition of Terms

1. *Tourist Magnet* refers to the individual host community/destination (the micro scale) in the tourists network plane (Jafari, 1985).
2. *Play* is a behavioral disposition, characterized by pleasure, enjoyment, freedom, and spontaneity, which elicits engagement by participants, and which is manifest in a variety of different forms.
3. *Liminality* refers to any condition which is unconcerned with the basic economic and political events and processes of day to day existence (Lett, 1983).
4. *Communitas* is a state of mind sought outside of home and work structures that produce a special feeling of excitement and close bonding among the participants (Turner, 1974).
5. *Depressed feelings* in this study is distinguished from general depression in psychology, even though both concepts share many of the same features. Depressed feelings in this study can be explained as situational feelings of depression or a low, or let down, as the word suggests.
6. *Post-Travel Depressed Feelings (PTDF)* is the condition characterized by depressed feelings on the return from the travel. In this study it can be expressed by the degree of feelings after travel, the amount of depressed feelings before travel is subtracted.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, articles relating to the tourist model and other psychological theories, explaining Post-Travel Depressed Feelings are examined. Furthermore, the existing literatures describing the spring break are introduced with a view to explaining the main characteristics of student tourism during this period.

Tourist Model for Post-Travel Depressed Feelings

Tourist model presents basic concept and some of the key issues about tourists' psychological flow. Through discussion about psychological flow of tourist, this study try to identify why they feeling "low" after the travel and what could be the main factors contributing to it.

Tourist model

Jafari (1987) suggests a tourist model based on the springboard metaphor. In the pattern of this springboard metaphor, the six components and processes involved in the construction of the model can be proposed: the corporated body of the ordinary life which breeds the need or desire to leave the springboard behind (Figure 1, WA); the process of emancipation which includes the act of departure and the sense of freedom from the basal confinement (AB); the tourist doing tourism in his animated world which is a distinctly nonordinary, outer time and space (BC); the process of repatriation which is the inevitable return from the temporary tourist position to the constant reality of the base (CD); the homeward touristic flow which is incorporated into the ordinary mainstream (DX); and the interim ordinary life which has continued despite the tourist's absence from home (AD).

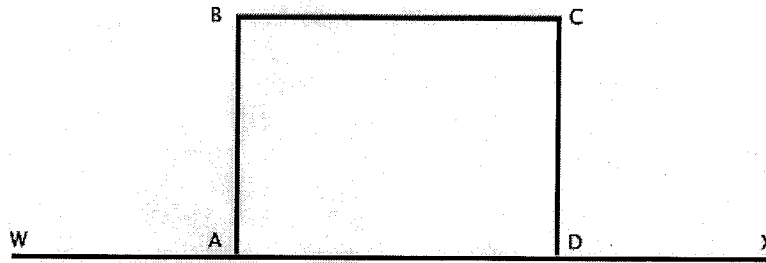


Figure 1: The Springboard Metaphor (Jafari, 1987)

In terms of this model, the individual, upon his/her return from the trip and touchdown, finds him/her in the depressed or the “emulsion” space (Figure 2). The depression may represent not only the pressure of landing (physical exhaustion) but also the state of the mind (which has been on a trip) and the shock of re-entry (Jafari, 1987).

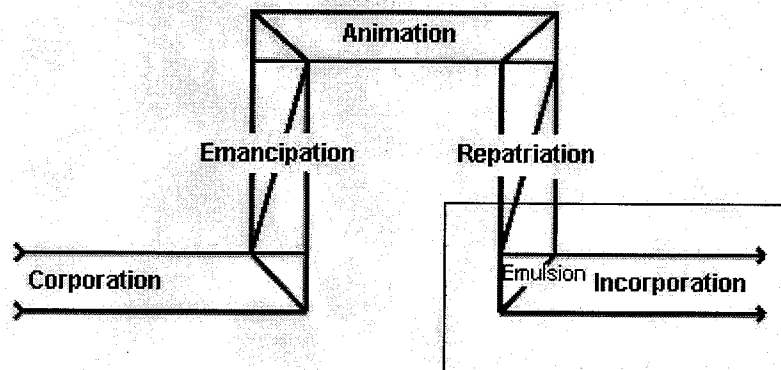


Figure 2: The Incorporation Component (Jafari, 1987)

There are some other models that try to give flexibility according to tourists' psychological flow. For example, by viewing the model from a distance, its specifics fade away and instead the contour of an overpass or “rainbow” emerges (Figure 3). This

abstracted whole captures the depressions on the springboard caused by the departure and return of the tourist. It denotes that:

- the tourism rainbow arises from and sets in the ordinary horizon;
- it best appears from the depths (depression points) of the mundane world; and
- it projects an added dimension to living.

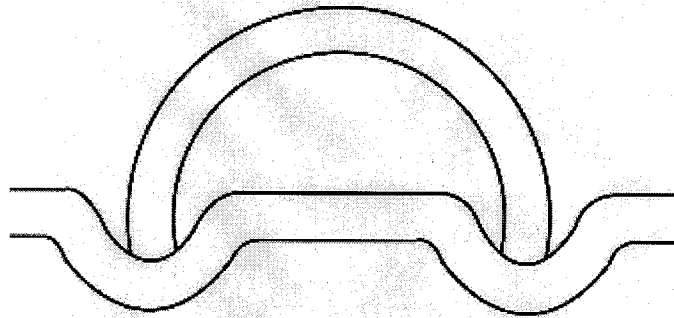


Figure 3: The Tourism Overpass (Jafari, 1987)

The ritual of tourism

Graburn (2001) also mentioned psychological flows of tourists using the structure of ritual and tourism. He noted that each festive or tourist event is a miniature life, with a happy anticipation, A-B, an exciting middle, C-D, and a bittersweet ending, D-F. The periods before A and after F are the mundane, everyday life (Figure 4). The incorporation stage in Tourist Model corresponds to E-F period. In Graburn's model, the C-D period, the metaphorically "sacred," the "liminal" out-of-the-ordinary period, is the time of pilgrimage, travel, or tourism. These changes in moral and spatial states are usually accompanied by aesthetic changes and markers.

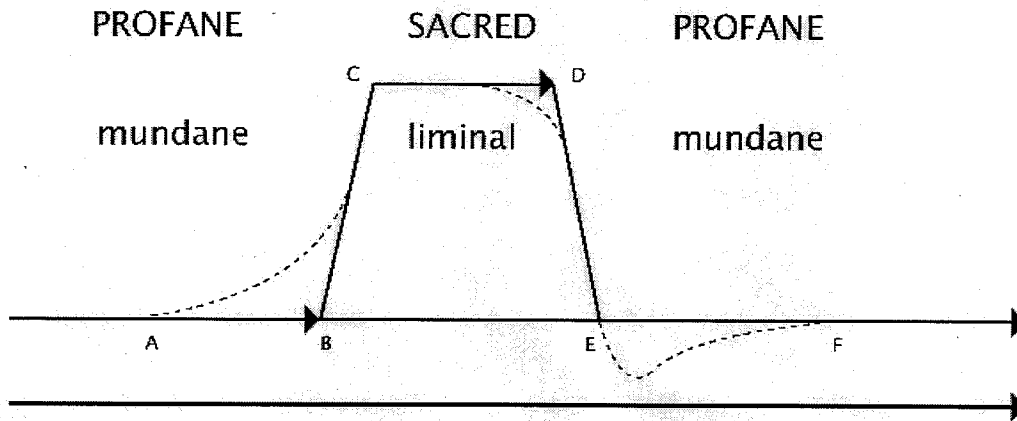


Figure 4: The Ritual of Tourism (Graburn, 2001)

This liminal state(CD), this special human feeling of *communitas*, may be examined and understood in a variety of ways. Such experience may be called “a high” after which there is a “let down” or a “come down” (period C-D followed by D-F in Figure 4), and a “high” is opposed to a feeling of depression or a “low,” the negative “altered state of consciousness” can be experienced in period E-F.

Opponent Process Theory

Opponent Process Theory (OPT) attempts to account for such diverse acquired motives as drug addiction, love, affection and social attachment, and cravings for sensory and aesthetic experiences (cases in which the initial reinforcers are positive). This also includes such acquired motives as parachuting, jogging and running a marathon, sauna bathing, and a variety of self-administered, aversive stimuli like electric shocks (cases in which the initial reinforcers can be negative) (Solomon, 1980).

As the name implies, opponent-process theory holds that there are opposing processes for dealing with emotional states. For example, whenever people are extremely happy, there is a mechanism that automatically attempts to keep that happiness from

getting out of control. Conversely, when people are unhappy, there is a mechanism that opposes that emotional state and attempts to bring the individual back to some neutral level. This mechanism sounds somewhat mystical, but in actuality it is thought to be a central nervous system function. The theory assumes that extremely emotional states (either positive or negative) are damaging to the individual and that physiological mechanisms attempt to protect the individual from these extreme states. This certainly fits in well with current conceptions of stress and mechanisms for coping with stress (Frankenhauser, 1974; Selye, 1974).

After few stimulus presentations

Figure 5 represents the way the opponent process works. There are three components in the figure: primary emotion, opponent process, and stimulus. The figure suggests that when a stimulus is introduced, it produces an emotion, either positive or negative. Once this primary emotion passes some threshold, an opponent process is automatically activated to bring this primary emotion under control. When the stimulus disappears, the primary emotion disappears immediately, and the opponent process disappears more gradually. Figure 5 shows each of the two processes independent of each other.

Figure 6 represents the actual changes in the emotional state of an individual during and after stimulus (reward or punishment) presentation. This suggests that shortly after the presentation of a reward, an individual is elated. This elation levels out after a period of time, and when the stimulus that originally elicited the elation disappears, the individual is somewhat depressed or unhappy. This can be seen by the fact that the curve

representing the emotional state of the individual dips below the line representing emotional neutrality (Landy, 1985).

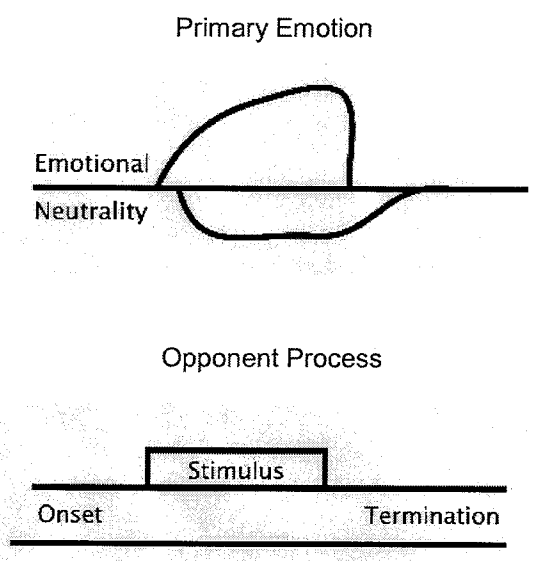


Figure 5: Underlying Opponent Processes after Few Stimulus Presentations (Landy, 1978)

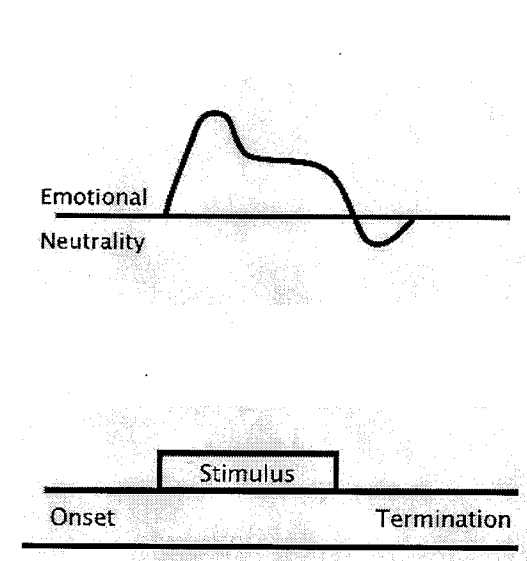


Figure 6: Emotional Response after Few Stimulus Presentations (Landy, 1978)

After many stimulus presentations

It is assumed that the opponent process becomes stronger each time it is activated. Figure 7 presents a picture of what the primary emotional state and opponent process might look like after many presentations of the same reward or punishment. The primary emotion remains exactly the same as it was in Figure 5, but the opponent process has grown dramatically in strength. Figure 8 represents the changes in emotional state that the individual would be likely to experience during the presence and disappearance of the stimulus (reward or punishment). The initial presentation of the stimulus has little observable effect on the individual, but the termination of the stimulus has a rather dramatic effect (Landy, 1985).

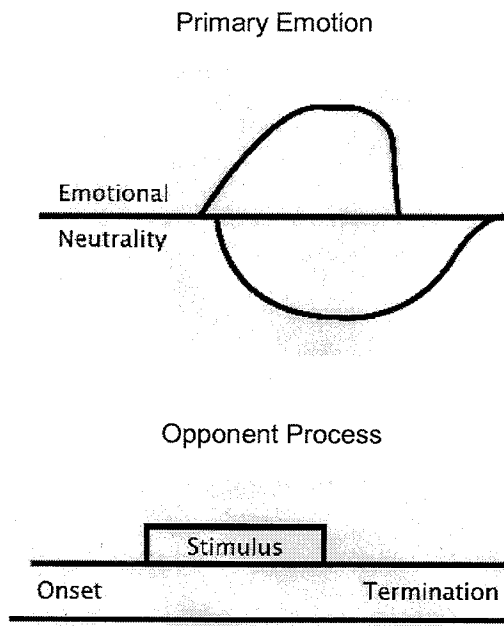


Figure 7: Underlying Opponent Processes after Many Stimulus Presentations (Landy, 1978)

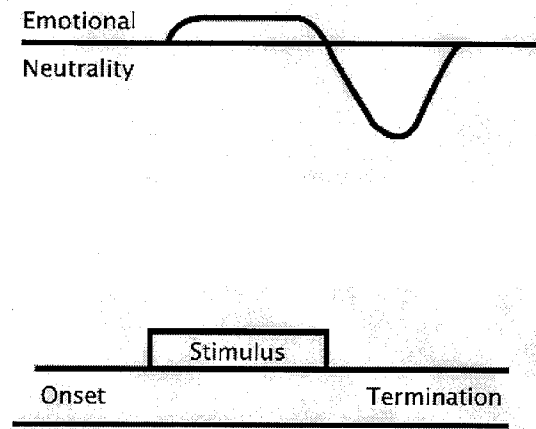


Figure 8: Emotional Response after Many Stimulus Presentations (Landy, 1978)

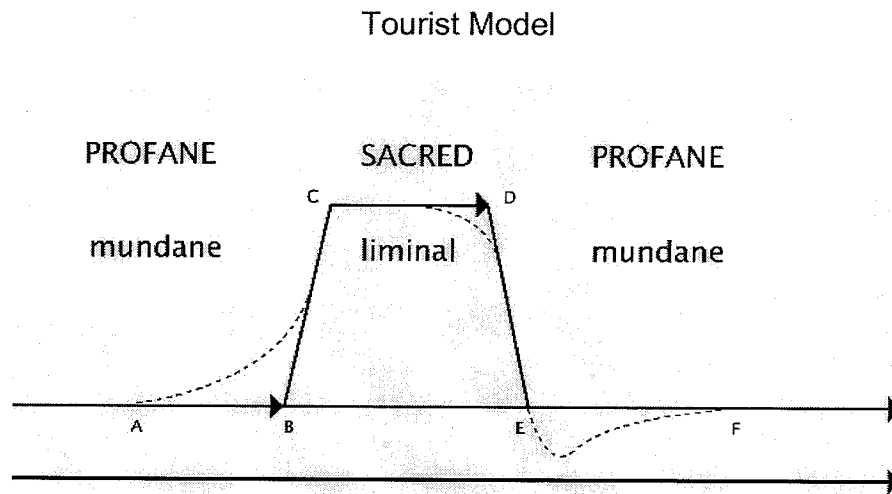
Staats and Pierfelice (2003) suggest this theory as a pleasure-protecting one for the traveler because of environmental habituation. When tourists go to the same place many times, their pleasures are diminished by opponent process. But they also explain that it may be possible to diminish the effects of habituation by experiencing positive events in a series of novel situations. Because recreational travel is often to different places (e.g., “We want to visit all of the state parks in Midwest”), habituation is minimized. But the repeat travel in itself reduces the level of novelty of this nonordinary experience. To the degree that the places traveled are different, the pleasure and memories of those pleasures may be protected from habituation and diminished affect (Staats & Pierfelice, 2003).

Tourist Model and Opponent Process Theory

The Tourist Model explains why the tourists get depressed after travel through emulsion procession. Graburn (2001) also notes that a feeling of depression or a “low” when tourist come back to ordinary life is opposed to a “high” feeling of *communitas*.

Opponent Process Theory adds an explanatory psychological dimension to tourist model. When travel is considered positive stimulus, the negative emotion presents as opponent process. Tourists get “high” while they stay in tourism destination. However, even the tourists return to the ordinary life, they get depressed feelings by Opponent Process.

But some explanations need to be added for applying OPT to the tourist model. For tourism, the emotional process starts a little before the stimulus, because tourists know that the stimulus – the travel – is coming. It starts when tourists realize they are leaving ordinary land, happy anticipation (A-B process in Figure 4). After the tourist has arrived to their destination, their emotion reaches its highest point for a while and then goes down a small amount. Opponent process shows this change, but the graph for the tourist model in Figure 4 does not show this. Except these differences, the graph for ritual of tourism and emotional responses after few stimulus presentations shows almost perfect accordance (Figure 9).



Opponent Process Theory

(Emotional Response after Few Stimulus Presentation)

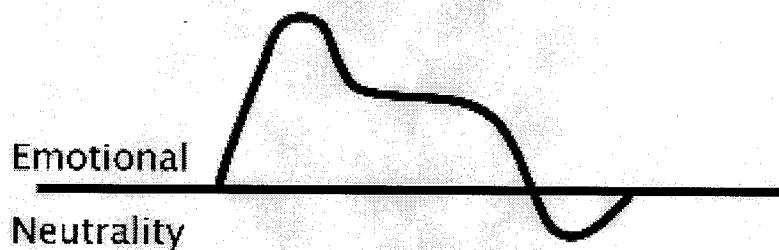


Figure 9: Comparison of Tourist Model and Opponent Process Theory

Other Explanations for Depressed Feelings in Psychology

Besides OPT, there are other explanations about the reasons why people experiences depressed feelings in psychology studies. Even though depressed feelings are to be understood differently from general depression in psychology, those explanation can help to understand the causes of PTDF. The term “depression” encompasses several different conditions with a range of causes. What unites them is an interaction between

genetics and environmental factors such as stress and substance abuse (Rovner, 2004). Among those factors, there are some possible psychological explanations for the student tourists during spring break such as stress and Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Stress is widely defined as a negative emotional state occurring in response to events that are perceived as taxing or exceeding a person's resources or ability to cope (Cohen & Herbert, 1996). Early stress researchers Holmes and Rahe (1967) believed that any change that requires behavior adjustment and lifestyle would cause stress. Leaving ordinary land is also a change of life. And according to the *Social Readjustment Rating Scale*, vacation has an even higher score. However, researchers have found that negative life events have the greatest adverse effects. In contrast, positive or desirable events are much less likely to affect health adversely (Taylor, 1995).

Seasonal Affective Disorder also can provide psychological explanation of the reason why people can get depressed feeling after travel, even though SAD would only result in PTFD if one leaves a dark place to vacation in a sunny place. SAD is a mood disorder affected by the lessening sunlight received in a day (Kirby, 2000). According to the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia & Depression, approximately 6% of Americans are experiencing SAD (Rovner, 2004). Some of its major symptoms in the behavior of sufferers are increased depression, loss of energy, anxiety, irritability, increased sleep, loss of interest in sex, overeating, weight gain and difficulty concentrating and processing information.

In this sense, the factors that the tourists feel depressed when they come back can be categorized in two process according to tourism model, OPT, and other psychological explanation as noted above.

A) Physical and psychological “falling down” or “let down.”

B) The shock of re-entry and adaptation process to ordinary life.

The first process, as discussed before, physical and psychological “falling down” from non-ordinary/communitas magnet, is caused by physical exhaustion and change of state of mind which has been on the trip (Jafari, 1987). This physical and psychological “falling down” cannot be understood separately, in a sense that they affect each other, because not only emotion but most psychological phenomena can be approached physiologically (Myers, 1999).

In addition to the physical and psychological “falling down,” Opponent Process Theory provides the psychological explanation of “let down” after travel. OPT (Solomon & Corbitt, 1974) explicitly deals with the dynamics of affective states across time. The theory suggested that when a stimulus situation produces an affective reaction of a particular quality, it also produces an “opponent” affective reaction that increases in strength as long as the triggering situation remains in effect. This opposite hedonic process will eventually return an individual to a more neutral feeling state. Thus, initial positive or negative reactions to a stimulus situation will become less positive or less negative as the opponent process increases in strength (Conlon & Porac, 1986). Travel is considered positive stimulus. It starts when tourists realize they are leaving ordinary land. When they return, which means the stimulus terminated, they can feel negative emotion (depressed feelings) by opponent process.

As the second process, the shock of re-entry and adaptation process to ordinary life can be caused by various factors individually. But it can be found in the push factors that “pushed” the people leave the ordinary life. As Dann(1981) suggested, tourists are

simultaneously “pushed” from their homes by the desire to escape what Graburn terms the “profane” and are “pulled” by the destination and its attractions, to fulfill some vague illusory expectations. Tourist motivations are thus a mix of push-pull and multiple other factors (Smith, 2001). For the college student, the push factors can include work and daily tasks.

Stressors categorized under Factors A and B portrays pre and post PTDF effects, respectively (Figure 10). Sudden withdrawal from elation (Factor A stimuli), pushes PTDF forward causing specific emotional disturbances. Factor B stresses prevent the movements toward the alleviation of the PTDF symptoms. There is a premature onset of a particular stress for the future. A backward force is thus exerted, aggravating the already depressed status.

The model below characterizes the occurrence of PTDF as a result of the simultaneous actions of factors A and B on an individual. As it can be seen, PTDF (as represented by the curve) is pushed by the inward movements of both factors.

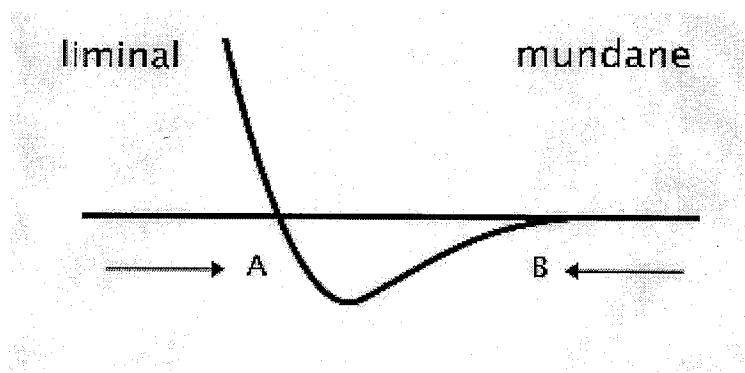


Figure 10: Directions of Two Processes for PTDF

Spring Break

Spring break and youth tourism

Spring break is a North American phenomenon, occurring on an annual basis. During this break thousands of students migrate from their college campuses to relax, explore, and enjoy a different part of the country. Spring break may therefore provide researchers with a snapshot picture of one segment of youth travel (Josiam, 1998).

Youth tourism generally relates to the group between teenage and adulthood. The age categories for the youth vary considerably for the different countries as per their sociocultural conditions (Rajadhyaksha, 1992). The expanded definition of youth tourism given by the World Tourism Organizations' International conference on Youth Tourism is: "... a segment of the domestic and international tourism market that requires the provision of sustained budget services" and includes the age categories of 15 to 29 years, taking into consideration of the demographic and socioeconomic changes (New Delhi Document on Youth Tourism 1991).

College age youth is an extremely large and important part of the youth market, since they take most interest in travel, are not burdened with the family and monetary responsibilities, and have disposable income for travel (Kreul, 1991). This group does not have to be sold on any particular travel concept but may be compelled to take psychocentric-type vacations because of the income constraints (Rajadhyaksha, 1992).

The most evident difference of youth tourism from older adults tourism is simply the chronological age of the tourist. But Clarke (1992) also mentioned differences by referring to "youth" as a person's social position which may be partially determined by age, but not completely by it (Josiam, 1998).

Travel motivations may also be somewhat different. Typical travel motivations for adult travelers can be categorized as escape from a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, return to childhood, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction (Crompton, 1979). However, Clarke (1992) indicates that youth need satisfaction centers around; need for a “fun time”; and need for companionship of people their own age, availability of nightlife, and value for money. Youth are typically looking for a novel experience, low cost, easy access to culture, entertainment, places of historic interest, and youth-oriented tourist information (Ravon, 1991). Youth is a stage in the lifecycle which allows the individual a greater amount of disposable time, a relative absence of responsibility and, typically, a lack of mental and physical constraints. While money may be limited for many youth, they typically have little commitment to housing or children and appear to be willing to pay for travel that holds the promise of adventure (Josiam, 1998). Travel also allows the individual the opportunity to express their drive for independence from all sources of authority (Clarke, 1992; Jafari, 1991).

Hartman (1991) categorized the young travelers into seven segments, based on their varying experiences and travel motives: The moratorium traveler – for whom, travel is a planned and orderly life-project undertaken before entering a career and family life. This traveler avoids non-calculable adventures and chooses a comfortable way of traveling. The ascetic traveler – a lonely traveler, who does not plan at all where to stay or live, spends little money as possible, accepts whatever he finds and tests the limits of his endurance. The adventurer – with financial resources and long-time planning, is constantly looking for new “unconquered” areas. The goal-directed traveler – believes in

careful planning and defining goals for each travel. The journey itself is not a sufficient reason for traveling; there should be material or cultural profit by which to motivate the travel. The party traveler – considers travel as a large party where one meets new people and does things one never would dare to do at home. No further program is needed at the destination. The alternative traveler – looks for new experiences by avoiding main stream tourism and following a alternative lifestyle. The Peter Pan traveler – around 40 years of age, tries to find a “second youth” by abandoning normal life and joining young people (Rajadhyaksha, 1992). Many of the college student tourists who go on a vacation during spring break can be considered the party traveler. However, the sole “party” motivation of spring breakers seems to be changing (Josiam, 1998).

Spring break student travel

Spring break student travel has unique features, comparing to other vacations. It could be the first and the last travel for the student can get most “high”. The destinations provide various event and attractions that make student enjoy. However, the spring break experience depends on the type and activity of their travel.

Much of the initial attraction of spring break is about getting away from college and the “winter-blues” for a week. However, in more recent times spring break has become known for more extreme behavior such as binge drinking, taking drugs, and sexual promiscuity. Despite such problems, the spring break ritual has continued to gain popularity with students from across the United States participating. For students going on spring break, there is often a great sense of anticipation of the vacation (Josiam, Hobson, Dietrich & Smeaton, 1998).

In an exploratory study looking at spring break travel of college students, Hobson and Josiam (1996) found that the 55 % of student either stayed on campus or went home. They pointed out that their study begins to dispel the myth that spring break tourism is one homogeneous market and that this market can be seen to be considerably more heterogeneous and fragmented than was initially perceive. The students who did travel during the spring break period, 23 % was found to have visited the popularly recognized and well-known spring break destinations.

Destination choice will be influenced by various factors, such as availability of packages, price, and the image of the destinations. Within the United States, Florida has maintained its place as the most popular destination for spring breakers. But within this state, destinations such as Daytona Beach and Panama City have been battling it out for market share. While destinations in Florida are infighting, it appears that foreign destinations are quietly stealing market share (Hobson & Josiam, 1996).

Summary

Post-Travel Depressed Feelings is the condition characterized by depressed feelings on the return from the travel. In tourism study, Jafari (1987) and Graburn (2000) mentioned this process through Tourist Model. Opponent Process Theory and other explanation of depression provide psychological explanation. According to the theoretical explanation, PTDF can be contributed by the travel experiences and the stress from the ordinary work ahead.

Spring Break travel for the college student is about getting away from college and the “winter-blues” for a week. However, in more recent times spring break has become

known for more extreme behavior that make student get “high” during the travel (Josiam, Hobson, Dietrich & Smeaton, 1998).

CHAPTER III: STUDY METHODOLOGY

The scope of this chapter includes the description of participants, the instrument design, and statistical analysis employed in this study.

On the basis of the literature review, the purpose of this study is to examine how tourism type and form during the spring break affects Post-Travel Depressed Feelings (PTDF) level. Tourism forms in this study refer to visible institutional arrangements and practices by which tourist organize their journey: length of trip, flexibility of the itinerary, visited destinations and attractions, means of transportation and accommodation, and so forth. Types refer to less tangible psychological attributes, such as tourists' attitudes toward fundamental values of their own society, their motivations for travel, and the meanings they assign to their experiences (Uriely, Yonay & Simchai, 2002). Among those components, this study selected travel type, enjoyment level, and time pressure as the factors that can affect depressed feelings after travel.

To achieve this purpose, specific objectives of the study are to examine, as already discussed, travel type affects PTDF level, enjoyment level affects PTDF level, and time pressure affects PTDF level.

A survey questionnaire was used for the main instrument of this study. In addition, an interview with a college consultant was performed after the survey to understand related information about the depressed feelings of college students after spring break.

Survey Method

Subject selection and description

The subjects for this study were UW-Stout students who had spring break in 2004. Sixteen scheduled classes were chosen to conduct the survey, considering size of the class and students' diversity (such as the year of school and major). The classes which were surveyed include General Psychology, Social Cognition and Behaviour, Personality and Mental Health, Introduction of Tourism, Nutrition for Healthy Living, Research Foundation, Human Resources Management, Drawing and Fleet Risk Control Management.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used for this study was a paper-based questionnaire. It was developed to examine the PTDF based on both tourism and psychology.

For the pilot study, in February 2004, students in the Social Cognition and Behavior class were asked to give opinions about the instrument without completing it. Feedback obtained was utilized to improve the questionnaire.

The study instrument was developed to examine the three basic independent variables including: type of tourism, enjoyment level, and time pressure. Dependent variables included depressed feelings level and length of depressed feelings.

The structured questionnaire was divided into basically five sections covering questions on a) demography, b) travel type including enjoyment level and activities, c) depressed feelings symptoms, d) time pressure, and e) length of depressed feelings and other possibilities (Appendix A).

The first section was used for the demographic profile of the sample. For the demographic question, the gender and the age were asked. Questions on the year of school and study major were excluded after the review of questionnaire by UW-Stout's Institutional Review Board for protection of human subject (to prevent tracking the subject).

The second section was to group the subject by travel type, the enjoyment level and the activity. The travel type questions consisted of "Stayed in Menomonie", "Went Home", "Went on a Vacation" and "Other" columns. Subjects were allowed multiple answers. Further, the subjects were asked to write down places visited during the break.

Questions regarding the travel type, the enjoyment level, and activity were asked. The scale for the enjoyment level consisted of "very much", "much", "neutral", "little" and "very little." The components of activity questions included "study", "work", "relax", "recreation" and "other."

The third section was targeted to examine depressed feelings. To examine this, a checklist of depression symptoms was provided. The list was based on the symptoms of depression found in the National Institute of mental health's (NIMH) website. The same checklist was utilized to identify the presence of depression before, during, and after spring break. For all items, the 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (none) to 4 (very much) was used to specify the level of symptom.

The fourth section had two questions: the date of return to UW-Stout and the date of the first class after spring break. The dates obtained from the difference between these two questions can tell the time pressure that the subjects possibly had after their trip.

The last of the section of the questionnaire had two questions. The respondents who experienced depressed feelings after spring break were asked to indicate the length of the feelings. The second and last question for this survey was to identify the other possibilities contributing to depressed feelings other than spring break

Data collection procedures

The survey was distributed for nine days from March 22 to March 29, 2004, which was one week after spring break (March 6 – March 14). The survey period was determined by considering the possible length of PTDF (at most one week). Graburn (2001) implied “let down” after the travel will last the half of the travel length; and Opponent Process Theory (OPT) also shows opponent emotion after the few stimulus does not last long especially after the few stimulus. In addition, the survey was conducted within this period to prevent lapses in how the subjects remember their experiences before and during spring break.

The questionnaires were distributed to the selected classes at the beginning of the sessions. Prior to this, appointments with the professors were made at least one week before the class through email or personal contact. Both the distribution and collection was facilitated by the investigator. To avoid any possible duplication of data, the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires only once.

Data analysis

A total of 413 responses were collected. This represents 5.79% of the total 7130 UW-Stout population (Registration and Records Office of UW-Stout, 2004). Seven questionnaires, which were insufficiently completed, were excluded for the analysis. Consequently, there were 406 valid responses used for analysis of this study.

The first question for the second section asked the type of tourism. To analyze multiple answer, the students were categorized by 13 possible combination, including “Stayed in Menomonie (A)”, “Went Home (B)”, “Went on a Vacation (C)”, “Other (D)”, “Stayed in Menomonie and Went Home (AB)”, “Stayed in Menomonie and Went on a Vacation (AC)”, “Stayed in Menomonie and Other (AD)”, “Went Home and Went on a Vacation (BC)”, “Went Home and Other (BD)”, “Went on a Vacation and Other (CD)”, “Stayed in Menomonie, Went Home and Went on a Vacation (ABC)”, “Stayed in Menomonie, Went on a Vacation and Other (ABD)”, “Went Home, Went on a Vacation and Other (BCD)”, and “Stayed in Menomonie, Went Home, Went on a Vacation and Other (ABCD).”

The depressed feelings level of the travel group was expressed by the degree of feelings score after travel, the amount of depressed feelings before travel is subtracted. The depressed feelings length was valued according to the questionnaire: 1=less than a day, 2=1-2 days, 3=3-4 days, 4=5-6 days and 5=7 days or more (Appendix A).

The independent variables consisted of type of travel, enjoyment level, and time pressure. For the analysis of data, type of travel was categorized by “non-travel”, “home travel”, and “vacation travel”. Enjoyment level was grouped by “very much or much” and “very little or little”. “Time pressure” was divided by “0 or less”, “1” and “2 or more”. The reason and the way how those groups are categorized will be discussed in chapter 4.

The collected data was entered into a data file and analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Basic descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviations along with frequency distributions were computed for each variable.

In this study, an Independent Sample T-test and ANOVA was employed for comparing independent variables, including type of tourism, enjoy level and time pressure.

Interview

A college consultant at the UW-Stout Counseling Center was selected as interviewee of this study. An interview schedule was sent to the Counseling Center with the request of interview. The interview took place on April 8 and lasted for 90 minutes. There were five questions regarding to the depressed feelings of college student after spring break (Appendix B). The first question was for identifying the general number of student who had depressed feelings and had contacted counseling center. The second question was to narrow the first question to who had depressed feelings after spring break and to ask the consultant's opinion why they had those feelings. The third equation was about the treatment for the students who had depressed feelings, and the last question was for other comments about this study.

CHAPTER IV: STUDY RESULTS

Two dependent variables and three independent variables were examined. The dependent variables identified were the level and duration of Post-Travel Depressed Feelings (PTDF). The independent variables consisted of type of travel, enjoyment level, and time pressure. First, the PTDF is analyzed by each independent variables and seasonal affect of the *vacation* group is discussed in addition.

In this chapter the three objectives are addressed and compared with the results of the survey. The three objectives included identifying the following: how the depressed feelings of total respondents are different by each variable, how the depressed feelings of non-travel group are different with travel group, and how the PTDF of travel groups is different by each variable.

There were two dependent variables and three independent variables. Two dependent variables identified include the depressed feelings level and the depressed feelings length. The depressed feeling level and its length for travel group was specified as PTDF level and length. The independent variables consisted of type of travel, enjoy level, and time pressure. First, the PTDF is analyzed by each independent variables and the result of seasonal affect is discussed for the *vacation* group.

Respondent Profile

The first section of the survey consisted of two demographic questions, which were gender and age (Table 1). The gender of the respondents had approximately equal representation of male (47%) and female (53%). For the age, the mean was 22.43 and standard deviation was 5.39. Even though the age range was quite wide (18-53 years old), the respondents for this study were predominantly 18-25 years old (88.6%). Because this

study is about college students, the age groups were broken down based on the percentage of respondents in the predominant age.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

| Demographic Variable | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Gender (n=387) | | |
| Male | 182 | 47.0 |
| Female | 205 | 53.0 |
| Age (n=186) | | |
| 18 or19 | 76 | 19.7 |
| 20 | 90 | 23.3 |
| 21 | 67 | 17.4 |
| 22 | 51 | 13.2 |
| 23 or 25 | 58 | 15.0 |
| 26 or older | 44 | 11.4 |

Based on the travel-type questions, student group were categorized by 13 possible combinations, as explained in Chapter 3 (Table 2).

Table 2: Student Group by the Response for Travel Type Question

| Student Group (n=406) | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| A | 52 | 12.8 |
| B | 183 | 45.1 |
| C | 85 | 20.9 |
| D | 20 | 4.9 |
| AB | 25 | 6.2 |
| AC | 3 | .7 |
| AD | 5 | 1.2 |
| BC | 21 | 5.2 |
| BD | 8 | 2.0 |
| ABD | 4 | 1.0 |

*A = "Stayed in Menomonie"

B = "Went Home"

C = "Went on a Vacation"

D = "Other"

The diversity in the respondents' spring break destination was different in the two *travel* group: *home* group and *vacation* group. All of the respondents in the *home* group took travel within United States except unknown responses. But the destinations for the *vacation* group were more various than the *home* group, even though frequency for each country was extremely small. Mexico (15) was found to be a main destination of the college students from UW-Stout (Table 3).

Domestic destinations also showed much difference across travel types. For the *home* group, Minnesota and Wisconsin were predominant destination states. Students of *vacation* group went to various states for their spring break, especially to Florida (24) and Texas (7) (Table 4).

Table 3: Destination of Travel Groups by Country

| Travel Group | Country | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Home Group (n=220) | U.S. | 212 | 96.4 |
| | unknown | 8 | 3.6 |
| Vacation Group (n=109) | Bahamas | 1 | .09 |
| | Canada | 3 | 2.75 |
| | Dominica | 1 | .09 |
| | Europe | 1 | .09 |
| | Jamaica | 1 | .09 |
| | Mexico | 15 | 13.76 |
| | Spain | 1 | .09 |
| | U.K. | 1 | .09 |
| | U.S. | 80 | 73.39 |
| | U.S. & | 1 | .09 |
| | Mexico | 4 | 3.67 |

Table 4: Domestic Destination of Travel Groups by States

| Domestic Tourist Group | States | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Home Group (n=220) | AR | 1 | .05 |
| | MI | 1 | .05 |
| | MN | 66 | 30.00 |
| | WI | 152 | 69.09 |
| Vacation group (n=83) | AL | 1 | 1.2 |
| | AZ | 3 | 3.6 |
| | CA | 7 | 8.3 |
| | CO | 4 | 4.8 |
| | FL | 24 | 28.6 |
| | GA | 2 | 2.4 |
| | HI | 1 | 1.2 |
| | IA | 1 | 1.2 |
| | IL | 4 | 4.8 |
| | IN | 2 | 2.4 |
| | LA | 1 | 1.2 |
| | MI | 2 | 2.4 |
| | MN | 4 | 4.8 |
| | MO | 3 | 3.6 |
| | MS, IL, IN | 1 | 1.2 |
| | MT | 1 | 1.2 |
| | NC | 1 | 1.2 |
| | NV | 5 | 6.0 |
| | NY | 1 | 1.2 |
| | SC | 1 | 1.2 |
| TX | 7 | 8.3 | |
| VA, OH, IN | 1 | 1.2 | |
| WA | 1 | 1.2 | |
| WI | 5 | 6.0 | |

Categorizing Independent Variables

Travel type

For the further analysis of the study, student group was categorized by *non-travel* (A) group and *travel* group. *Travel* group also consisted of *Home* (B, AB, BD, and ABD) group, and *Vacation* (C, AC and BC) group (Table 5). “Other” group (D) was excluded for the analysis because there were not enough similar answers that can be grouped as another travel type.

The Went Home (B) group composed almost half respondents (45.1%) (Table 2), and if other groups such as Stayed in Menomonie and Went Home (AB), Went Home and Other (BD), and Stayed in Menomonie, Went on a Vacation and Other (ABD) were included, *home* group were up to 57.74% of all respondents.

Most of the students (86.35%) took a travel during the spring break, either going home or on vacation. The students who did not travel and stayed in Menomonie (A) – *non-travel* group – were only 13.65%.(Table 5). Figure 11 presents chart of sample categories by travel type.

Table 5: Travel Type

| Type of Travel (n=381) | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Non-Travel Group (A) | 52 | 13.65 |
| Travel Group | 329 | 86.35 |
| Travel group (n=329) | | |
| Home Group (B, AB, BD and ABD) | 220 | 66.87 |
| Vacation Group (C, AC and BC) | 109 | 33.13 |

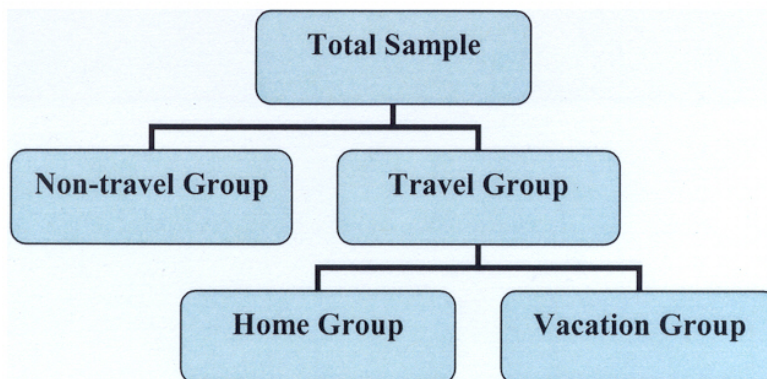


Figure 11: Sample Categories by Travel Type

Enjoyment level

Enjoyment level was categorized by *very much or much* and *very little or little* groups. The neutral respondents were not included for the analysis. Most of the students (87.5%) indicated that they enjoyed the spring break (Table 6).

Table 6: Enjoyment Level

| Enjoy Level (n=264) | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Very Much or Much | 231 | 87.5 |
| Very Little or Little | 33 | 12.5 |

Time pressure

The *Return* days for measuring time pressure, was calculated using the responses for question 6, “When was your first class after spring break?” and question 5, “When did you come back to Stout?” The latter was subtracted by the former (Appendix A). By this, *Return* days showed the number of days the respondents were on campus prior to their first class.

Considering the number of respondents, they are divided into three groups, which are *0 or less*, *1*, and *2 or more*. The reason that there are negative numbers can be explained as those students skipped their first class. More than half of student returned to school 1 day before their first class (Table 7).

Table 7: Return (Time Pressure)

| Return (n=354) | Frequency | Percent | Return (n=354) | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| -2 day later | 1 | .3 | 0 or later | 82 | 23.2 |
| -1 day later | 1 | .3 | | | |
| 0 | 80 | 22.6 | 1 sooner | 199 | 56.2 |
| 1 day sooner | 199 | 56.2 | | | |
| 2 days sooner | 30 | 8.5 | 2 or sooner | 73 | 20.6 |
| 3 days sooner | 21 | 5.9 | | | |
| 4 days sooner | 6 | 1.7 | | | |
| 5 days sooner | 7 | 2.0 | | | |
| 6 days sooner | 6 | 1.7 | | | |
| 7 days sooner | 2 | .6 | | | |
| 8 days sooner | 1 | .3 | | | |

Post-Travel Depressed Feelings

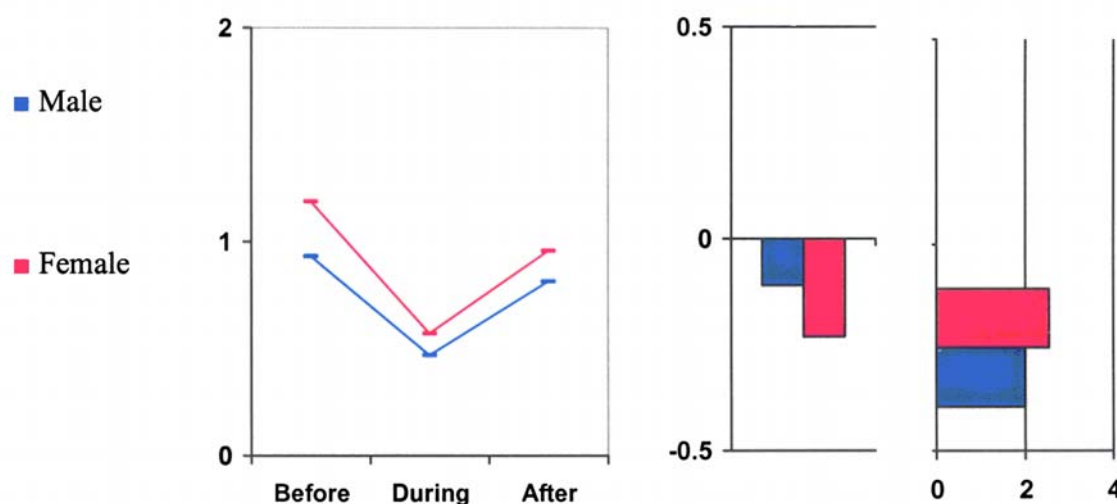
Post-Travel Depressed Feelings were assessed utilizing Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS-PC) software. PTDF levels for the *travel group* are analyzed across each variable. There were significant differences in gender, enjoyment level, and travel type.

Table 8 show the effect of gender on PTDF level, length and changes of depressed feelings. The *female* respondents in travel group felt more depressed feelings before spring break than *male* respondents, and felt longer PTDF than *male* respondents.

By enjoyment level, the average score of depressed feelings before spring break for the respondents who enjoyed *little or very little* was significantly higher than those who enjoyed *much or very much*. The PTDF level for *much or very much* group was significantly higher than the *little or very little* group. The average score of PTDF level for the *little or very little* group was almost significantly higher than the *much or very much* group (Table 9).

Table 8: The effects of Gender on PTDF

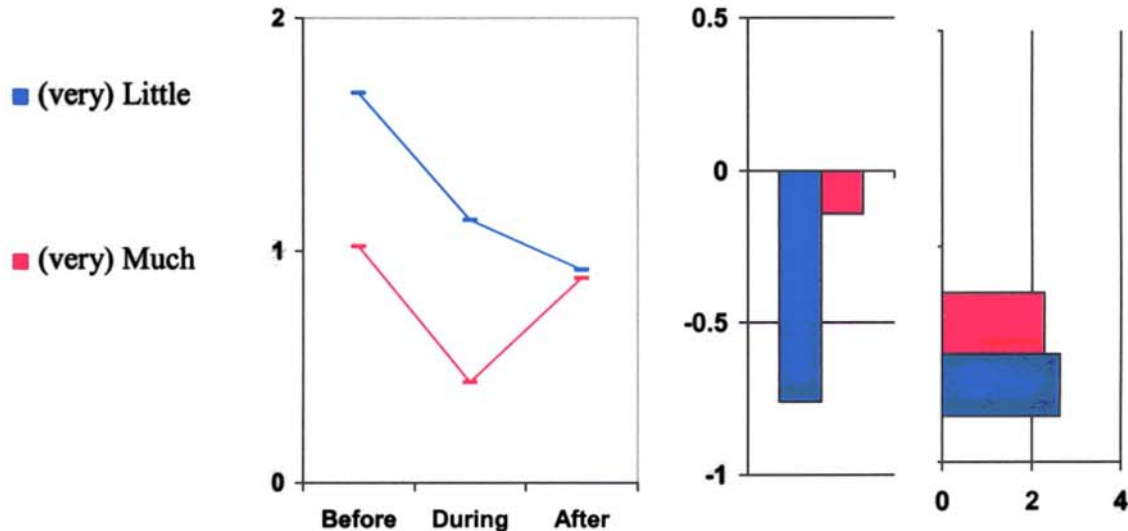
| Time Period | Mean (Standard Deviation) | | <i>t</i> -value | <i>P</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Before | .9254 (.7910) | 1.1885 (.8370) | -2.861 | .005 |
| During | .4604 (.6151) | .5724 (.7296) | - | N.S. |
| After | .8152 (.7399) | .9576 (.8313) | - | N.S. |
| PTDF level | -.1103 (.8070) | -.2309 (.8734) | - | N.S. |
| PTDF length | 1.99 (1.176) | 2.54 (1.419) | -2.795 | .006 |



| Gender | Depressed Feelings Change | PTDF level | PTDF length |
|--------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
|--------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|

Table 9: The effects of Enjoyment Level on PTDF

| Time Period | Mean (Standard Deviation) | | <i>t</i> -value | <i>P</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| | (Very) Much | (Very) Little | | |
| Before | 1.0241 (.8036) | 1.6796 (1.0689) | -2.895 | .004 |
| During | .4337 (.6127) | 1.1349 (1.2647) | -2.059 | .059 |
| After | .8829 (.8172) | .9206 (.8872) | - | N.S. |
| PTDF level | -.1412 (.8183) | -.7589 (.8032) | 2.740 | .007. |
| PTDF length | 2.28 (1.362) | 2.54 (1.419) | - | N.S. |



| Enjoyment Level | Depressed Feelings Change | PTDF level | PTDF length |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|

Regarding *Return* day for measuring time pressure, the result showed the later the respondents came back to school, the more depressed feelings they had, even though the difference was not significantly different.

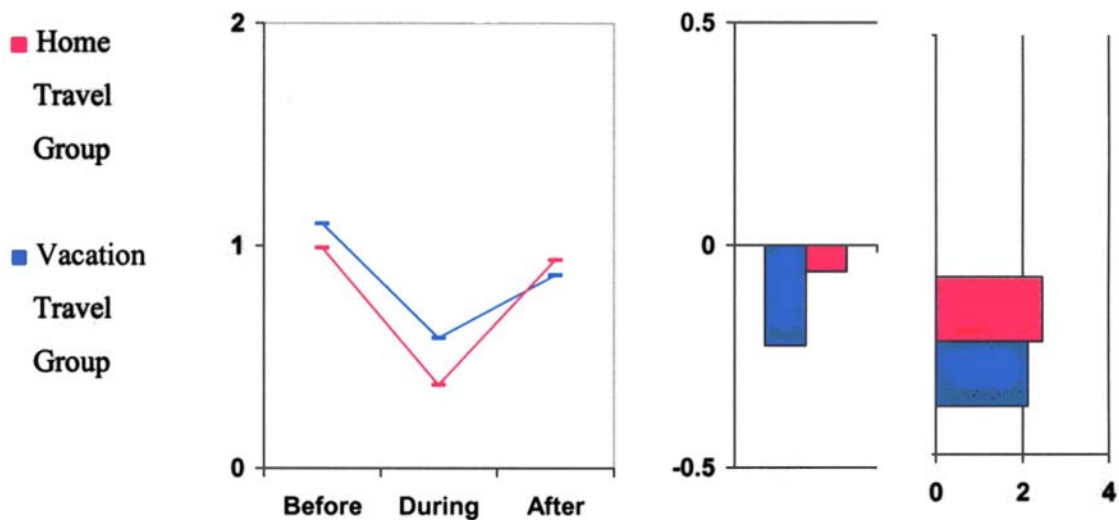
Table 10 shows that PTDF of the *home* group and the *vacation* group. The result showed there were significant differences in the depressed feelings during the break,

PTDF level and length. Figure 16 provides the graph for the depressed feelings of *home* and *vacation* group by time period, level and length.

For the further analysis, PTDF of *home* group and the *vacation* group was compared across each variable. However, there were no significant interaction between travel type and variables.

Table 10: The effects of Travel Type on PTDF

| Time Period | Mean (Standard Deviation) | | <i>t</i> -value | <i>P</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|
| | Home | Vacation | | |
| Before | 1.0935 (.8745) | .9967 (.7322) | - | N.S. |
| During | .5805 (.7240) | .3759 (.5237) | 2.910 | .004 |
| After | .8679 (.8402) | .9372 (.7008) | - | N.S. |
| PTDF level | -.2256 (.7930) | -.0594 (.9083) | -1.695 | .091 |
| PTDF length | 2.12 (1.275) | 2.47 (1.376) | -1.698 | .091 |



| Travel Type | Depressed Feelings Change | PTDF level | PTDF length |
|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|

PTDF of travel group by seasonal affect

In addition, the seasonal affect was examined for the *vacation* travel group. To examine the seasonal affect for the tourist, the *vacation* travel group categorized by the *sunbelt vacation tourists* and *snowbelt vacation tourists*. Sunbelt is defined as southern tier of the United States, focused on Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California, and extending as far north as Virginia (The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2001). The term gained wide use in the 1970s by the economic and political impact of the nation's overall shift in population to the south and west, but as the name implies, the Sunbelt states are located in the southern part of the United States, which has a lot of sunshine during the day. According to a answer by the *vacation* travel group, the *sunbelt vacation travel* group includes the vacation travelers who went to AL, AZ, CA, FL, GA, HI, LA, MO, NC, NV, SC, TX, or VA. The *snowbelt vacation travel* group includes the vacation travelers who went CO, IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MS, MT, NY, WA, or WI. Almost 70% of the vacation travel group went to the Sunbelt states for their destination (Table 14). However, the result showed that there were not significant differences of PTDF. This suggests there were no seasonal affects to the PTDF.

Table 11: Sunbelt and Snowbelt Vacation Travel Groups

| Vacation Travel | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Sunbelt Vacation Travel | 58 | 69.9 |
| Snowbelt Vacation Travel | 25 | 30.1 |

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This study assumed that tourists would experience depressed feelings after returning home. But the study result showed that the respondents had less depressed feelings after the spring break than before the break. It might be because even though the respondents had depressed feelings after trip, there was also a vacation effect affecting their feelings after travel. Vacations and other periods of rest result in a decrease in perceived job stress and burnout (Westman & Eden, 1997). Individuals who feel that they sufficiently recovered during leisure time experience a higher level of work engagement during the subsequent work day (Sonnentag, 2003).

Even though the result did not obviously support the theoretical premise for this study, there were differences in the depressed feelings across the variables. In this chapter, the study hypotheses will be discussed first, and other interesting result will be highlighted.

Comparison with Hypothesis

There were three main hypotheses in this study.

The first hypothesis was that the PTDF of vacation travel group was higher than the home travel group, and it was supported even though the difference was not statistically significant. The PTDF level, which was calculated by the difference between depressed feelings before the spring break and after the break was higher for the vacation travel group (-.0594) than the home travel group (-.2256). It means that the students who went on vacation had more depressed feelings than the student who went home for their travel. The main reason for this result would be the several changes that the respondents needed to adapt to. Compared to the home travel group, the vacation group experienced

more changes in everything including new people, new places, and even new weather. The result that only 10.8% of the vacation travel group stayed in Wisconsin or Minnesota area supports this explanation, while it is 99.09% for the home travel group.

For the second hypothesis, the study assumed that the respondents who enjoyed their travel have more PTDF than those who enjoyed their travel a little, and this was supported. The students who enjoyed their travel very much or much had higher PTDF levels (-.1412) than who enjoyed their travel little or very little (-.7589). As the study explained, it would be because the vacation group had a greater *high* for their travel than the home group. Opponent process theory suggests that when people get emotionally higher, they experience lower emotion after the stimulus ends.

Moreover, when enjoyment level was considered by each travel type, the result showed more obvious differences. The vacation group did not have respondents who enjoyed travel “little” or “very little”, even “neutral”. All of them answered enjoyed travel “very much” or “much” for their travel. The result of the home travel group who enjoyed travel “little” or “very little” had the lowest PTDF level among travel groups. Because they did not enjoy much for their travel, coming back to school might not be the negative event for them any more.

The last hypothesis was not supported statistically. Although the tourists who had high time pressure did not experience significantly higher PTDF than who had low time pressure, the students who had more time to prepare for their class experienced less depressed feelings than those who had less time to prepare. The vacation travel group showed most differences in PTDF level when they came back after the day of their first class or later.

Besides study hypotheses, there were notable results observed regarding the gender. Female respondents had more and longer PTDF than male respondents. PTDF length particularly showed significant difference only for the gender variable. However, this is not surprising result regarding to other depression studies. For example, studies using self-report measures have found that females report higher mean levels of depressive symptomatology and a greater proportion of females scored above the standard cut-off points for identifying depression compared with males (Allison, Roeger, Martine & Keeves, 2001).

Interview with a Consultant at Stout Counseling Center

The interview with the counselor at UW-Stout's Counseling Center provided additional explanation about depressed feelings of college student after spring break.

UW-Stout Counseling Center had 105 individuals who reported problems with depression in the year 2003. For the year 2004 through March, the Counseling Center has coded some sort of mood disorder for 58 out of 660 students (262 were seen for individual counseling). In March alone, the number was 5 out of 26 new intakes. With the move to using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders this year, depression may also be hiding in other places, such as adjustment disorder, etc. It still rises to one of the top presenting issues, which is consistent with national trends at university counseling centers.

For the depressed feelings after spring break, the consultant basically agreed that spring break travel can make the student have depressed feelings. Many students think they did not really have a break and they did not want to stop having a break. Even though the spring break ended, they still wanted to drink and have parties. But they

gradually realize that the spring break ended and they needed to prepare for studies, especially for the midterms, and those realizations made them feel depressed.

Seasonal Mood Disorder and alcohol consumption can also attribute to why students get depressed. If the student had a break at a sunny place and came back to UW-Stout, where the weather is still cold even after spring break, some felt seasonal differences and felt depressed. Those who consumed much alcohol during spring break had depressed feelings for physiological reasons.

Expectations for spring break also made a difference in depression levels. Before the spring break, each student had different expectation levels for their spring break. Rather than how much they had good time for the break, how much it was different from their expectation mattered for their depressed level. Even though the one who expected little had his/her expectations met and wanted to be satisfied, this is not the case with an individual with higher expectation with the same level of enjoyment.

People have certain expectations from their trips, especially those who are pleasure oriented (Selanniemi, 2000). These are influenced by promotions such as advertisements, brochures, prior experience, and even myths. This is further conditioned by the desire for a certain level of service or quality from a given tourism product business or destination at large. As these expectations are related to the nonordinary aspects of life, satisfying them is a challenge in tourism.

The way the Stout Counseling Center treats the student who had depressed feelings starts from identifying what they did and how things could be changed. That makes the student realize the main reason they feel depressed. If the students need medical treatment, they are introduced to the campus physician.

One of the important needs for the student who is depressed is internal or external support. Even though depressed, the student who had friends or family support could be better much sooner and easier than those who did not have any.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

There were three main independent variables to compare the PTDF in this study: travel type, enjoyment level, and time pressure. Study result showed significant differences for the travel type and enjoyment level. As the study assumed, the student who went on a vacation felt more depressed feelings than who went home for the spring break. The student who enjoyed much during their travel felt more depressed feelings than those who enjoyed it little.

Regarding time pressure, the student who came back late also had more depressed feelings than who came back early. However, the result was not statistically different. In addition, female had more PTDF than male and there were no seasonal affect for it.

Recommendations

Based on the study results, the following recommendations are made:

1. For the tourist, who has depression or do not want to have much PTDF it is better not go on a vacation travel in which they can get too “high”. They are better off to take a calm and supportive trip, such as visiting their friends or family members.
2. This result also can be useful for the vacation destinations that provide a relaxed atmosphere for their strength rather than parting and getting high. For marketing purposes, they can promote the tourists who want to feel better and get charged and feel better after their travel.
3. With this result, “after travel” can be suggested for the tourist and also for the tourism market. Tourists can have after-travel for the purpose of preparing their mind to adjust to the ordinary life after vacation travel, which can make them have high PTDF. This travel need to provide relaxing and supporting atmosphere.

4. Though this study focused on spring break market, it can contribute to other situations. For example, companies sending their employees on trips may also have to consider giving them some time to prepare for work. They need more attention for the female employees regarding to the PTDF.

Limitations

1. Sample Population: UW-Stout is a rural mid-western university campus, some 70 miles from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Many US destinations are accessible by direct road and air links, and access to international destinations is possible from the international airport in the nearby metro area. There are bound to be geographical differences as a result of location (Josiam, 1998). Because this study was restricted to one campus and a limited sample size was drawn, conclusions cannot be generalized.
2. Survey Period: This study asked depressed feelings of student before, during and after the spring break at the same time. Though this may be a good idea, because they can compare their feelings at those time and respond to the survey but on the other hand, the respondents could have hard time to remembering their feelings especially before spring break
3. Other factors: For the stressors after travel, this study considered time pressure and seasonal change. But there are other important factors that this study did not examine, such as the amount of workload after travel and alcohol consumption during the travel.

Future Research

As the limitation explained, this study focused on the depressed feelings of one college student after spring break travel. For the further study on PTDF;

1. This research could be replicated among other schools to see if there are similarities or differences compared to this study.
2. Comparative studies about international and American students can reveal not only the differences by location of the schools but also cultural differences.
3. Comparative study of PTDF for vacation in another time of the year can also be useful for examining other differences including seasonal. Such results can also be compared with this study result.
4. Professions other than students can be used for the subject of the research to investigate the differences.
5. Regarding the survey administration, it is better to ask the depressed feelings questions three times with regards to each time period – before, during, and after the spring break.
6. As to ways to improve the quality and flow of the questionnaire(Appendix A), several recommendations come to mind:
 - Age question would be better if replaced with “what year of school are you in.” Because the year of school can affect college students life more than age (except alcohol consumption).
 - With regard to the activity question, “5-point scale” asking how often the respondent did would be better if changed to “circling” the activity that they

did for the statistical analysis. For example choose two activities that you did most often.

- The respondent who only answered “Stayed in Menomonie” for question 3 needs to be asked to skip to question 5 and 6.
- Both the question 7 and 8 need to be separated. For the first question, the column that the respondent can check yes or no needed to be placed. And “If yes,…” would be better if replaced by:

If no, please skip this question.

If yes, how long did it last? (for the question 7)

If yes, what was it? (for the question 8)

While people travel for a variety of reasons, they all wish to have enjoyable trips. However, there are some negative parts in travel, and Post-Travel Depressed Feelings is one of them. This study was to investigate the factors that contribute to the PTDF for the purpose of reducing those feelings in the long run. Present study result can be useful not only for the tourist, but also for the tourism industry to build up marketing strategy as it shown above.

The PTDF study also helps complete understanding of tourists’ psychological flows. The travel does not end when tourists just come back to ordinary life physically, but when they adjust themselves to their normal life psychologically also.

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APPENDIX A**Survey Questionnaire**

SPRING BREAK

The purpose of this study is to assess the feelings of UW-Stout students after the spring break. Your responses to the questions are extremely important for this study. All the answers will be treated confidentially. There is a risk to depressed subjects. If you are feeling depressed, participation in this survey may reinforce these feelings. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you do choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, there is no way to identify your anonymous document after it has been turned into the investigator. If you are not willing to complete the survey (takes less than 10 minutes), please return the questionnaire to the investigator. Thank you.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about the research study should be addressed to JinOh Hur, the researcher, Graduate Student, UW-Stout Hospitality and Tourism Program, 233-7037, or Dr. Jafar Jafari, the research advisor, 232-2339. Questions about the rights of research subjects can be addressed to Sue Foxwell, Human Protections Administrator, 232-1126.

1. Gender : Male Female

2. Age : _____ years old

3. Where did you spend your spring break and what did you do?

| Where did you go? <i>(please, check all that apply)</i> | How much did you enjoy it? | What did you do? | Frequency | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------|--------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| | | | never | rarely | sometimes | vry often | often |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stayed in Menomonie | <i>very much</i> | Study..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>much</i> | Work..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>neutral</i> | Party..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>little</i> | Relax..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>very little</i> | Recreation (eg. bowling, skiing...) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Other _____.... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Went Home <i>Where was it?</i> (City) _____, (State) _____, (Country) _____ | <i>very much</i> | Study..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>much</i> | Work..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>neutral</i> | Party..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>little</i> | Relax..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>very little</i> | Recreation (eg. bowling, skiing...) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Other _____.... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Went on a Vacation <i>Where was it?</i> (City) _____, (State) _____, (Country) _____ | <i>very much</i> | Study..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>much</i> | Work..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>neutral</i> | Party..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>little</i> | Relax..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>very little</i> | Recreation (eg. bowling, skiing...) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Other _____.... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other : _____ <i>Where was it?</i> (City) _____, (State) _____, (Country) _____ | <i>very much</i> | Study..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>much</i> | Work..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>neutral</i> | Party..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>little</i> | Relax..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | <i>very little</i> | Recreation (eg. bowling, skiing...) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Other _____.... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

4. Check the following symptoms you experienced **before, during & after** spring break.During the week **BEFORE** spring break (March 1st – 5th)

| Symptoms | none | some- what | moderately | much | very much |
|---|------|---------------|------------|------|-----------|
| Sad, anxious, "empty" mood | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies/activities once enjoyed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down" | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Insomnia, early-morning awakening, oversleeping | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Appetite/weight loss or overeating/weight gain | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Restlessness, irritability | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Overall depressed or down feeling | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

DURING spring break (March 6th – 14th)

| Symptoms | none | some- what | moderately | much | very much |
|---|------|---------------|------------|------|-----------|
| Sad, anxious, "empty" mood | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies/activities once enjoyed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down" | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Insomnia, early-morning awakening, oversleeping | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Appetite/weight loss or overeating/weight gain | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Restlessness, irritability | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Overall depressed or down feeling | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

During the week **AFTER** spring break (March 15th – 19th)

| Symptoms | none | some- what | moderately | much | very much |
|---|------|---------------|------------|------|-----------|
| Sad, anxious, "empty" mood | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies/activities once enjoyed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down" | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Insomnia, early-morning awakening, oversleeping | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Appetite/weight loss or overeating/weight gain | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Restlessness, irritability | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Overall depressed or down feeling | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

5. When did you come back to Stout?

March _____

March, 2004

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |

6. When was your first class after spring break?

March _____

7. **After spring break**, have you had more depressed or “down” feeling than before the break?

If yes, how long did it last?

Less than a day

1-2 days

3-4 days

5-6 days

7 days or more

Has any other experience/life event (besides spring break itself) contributed to this feeling?

If yes, what was it?

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire.

If you need assistance to deal with depressed feelings, you can contact the UW-Stout Counseling Center. (tel: X-2468)

APPENDIX B

Interview Questionnaire

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How Many students contact Counseling Center for “depressed feelings”? (/year or /month) And among them, how many students turn out they have real depression?

2. Were there any students reporting “depressed feelings” (or other problems) after Spring Break?
 - a. If yes, about how many? And how is this number different from past years?
 - b. What is the reason that students have those problems after spring break?

3. How do you treat students with “depressed feelings”?

4. Other comments?