

# **UNDERSTANDING TOURISM MOMENTS AND THE IMPACT OF SMARTPHONE DOCUMENTATION**

by

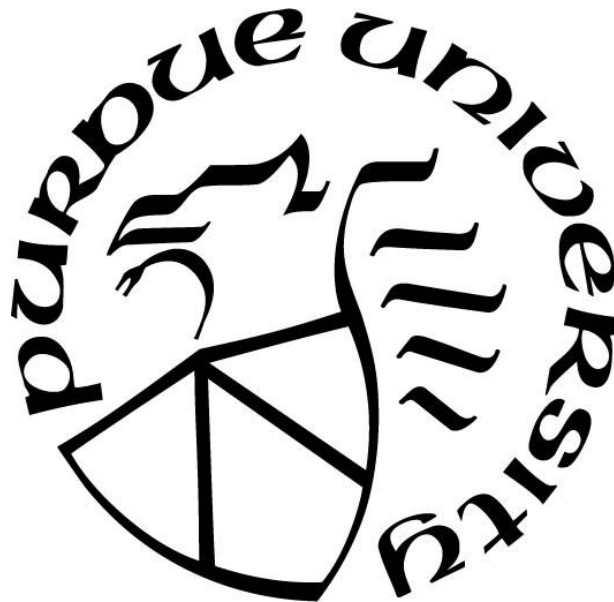
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*Dedicated to my mom.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The focus of this dissertation was the study of the fleeting and incredible experiences that occur during a tourism experience that this paper refers to as Tourism Moments. In study 1, a qualitative inquiry was conducted to gain an understanding of Tourism Moments. The findings produced a conceptualization and description of the Tourism Moment experience. Four different types of Tourism Moments were identified. Further, insight was gained regarding the memorability of Tourism Moments specifically, and tourism experiences at large. In study 2, the impact of smartphone documentation on the experience and memorability of Tourism Moments was conducted. Utilizing an experimental design, several hypotheses regarding the latter were tested. First, the results showcase evidence that travelers who document their Tourism Moments with a smartphone camera negatively impact their consumption experience. Interestingly, the findings also indicate that the use of smartphone documentation significantly improves the memorability of Tourism Moments later. Additional results identified that enjoyment is a significant predictor of memory, and that sharing a Tourism Moment online does not improve its memorability. Together, study 1 and study 2 contribute greatly to both theory and industry stakeholders.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Tourism scholars with a pointed interest in tourism experiences have generally approached the topic in a few nuanced ways. First and foremost, there has been an overwhelming interest in trying to understand and describe what a tourism experience is in the first place. In a sense, this line of research has been dedicated to detailing ‘what a tourism experience is’ and ‘what it is like’. In the first regard, two broad camps exist: psychological or management-oriented (Quan & Wang, 2004). Each camp grounding their interpretations of what a tourism experience represents in their respective bases: psychological camp believing a tourism experience to be the sheer polar opposite experience of everyday life (Uriely, 1990, 2005), whereas the management-oriented views the tourist experience as a transaction-based consumption of some tourism-related product (Tasci and Knutson 2004; Woodside 2000). As such, the tourism literature has been, and continues to be strongly invested in determining how the tourism experience ought to be conceptualized and represented. In a similar yet distinct line of inquiry, research has focused on describing the experiential phenomenon of tourism and travel – or, how is tourism experienced. Research in this area focuses on highlighting the affective (Nawjin, Mitas, & Kerstetter, 2013), cognitive (Moscardo, 2017), spiritual (Chen, Scott, & Benckendorff, 2017), or any other experiential aspects of any given trip (e.g. Kinetics: Chronis, 2015). For instance, Small (2016) conducted a study on how tourists experience time during extended trips. Even today, interest still remains in making sense of what exactly represents a tourism experience, and how it is experienced. This dissertation is in line with this critical pursuit by emphasizing the importance of more discrete level experiences as Tourism Moments.

A different area of concentration in the tourism experience literature has focused on the identification of outcomes for tourism experiences. Much like the contentious topic of how best to conceptualize a tourism experience, there are sharp disagreements for how to ‘measure’ whether a trip was successful or not, from a tourists point-of-view. Historically (and from a management-orientation), satisfaction has long been utilized as the dominant measure of tourism experiences (del Bosque & San Martin, 2008; Žabkar, Brenčič, & Dmitrović, 2010). Scholars stemming from the psychological/social science camp have challenged this unidimensional and

narrow take suggesting the interpretation of a successful trip can be captured through alternative means as well (Chen, Prebensen, & Uysal, 2014; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). This perspective presumes that the culmination of a trip should not be comprehensively summed in terms of a satisfying/dissatisfying continuum. Largely stemming from the Experience Economy theorizing of Pine and Gilmore (1999), and subsequent Experiential Marketing literature (Hudson & Ritchie, 2009; Schmitt, 1999), attention turned to memory, and memorable experiences as a more appropriate measure of outcome. Such that, it is not enough that your customers/tourists walk away satisfied, but that they can retain a vivid recollection of the experience. Alternative determinants of outcome have also been suggested as well. A tourism experience as restorative (Lehto, 2013), or transformative (Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017), stand as appropriate metrics in which a tourist determines the value of a trip. Along these same lines, attention has also turned to a eudaimonic interpretation, arguing that experiences can also be measured in terms of the degree of self-fulfillment realized on a trip (Filep, 2016; Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017). As evidenced by this brief discussion, there exist various positions on how tourists assess the outcomes of a tourism experience, and thus, varying ways in which the industry can create experiences deemed valuable. In this dissertation, memorability is selected as the target construct in which to understand the outcome of a tourism experience. As grounded in experiential marketing terms, experiences are only as valuable as how well they are engrained as a memory (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). As such, this dissertation will focus more sharply on the memory component of memorable tourism experiences.

The influence of social, political, and other societal-level environmental factors have also been researched regarding their effect on tourism experiences specifically, and the industry at large. For instance, research topics in political-environmental factors affecting the tourism industry have included the relationship between political restructuring of a nation and subsequent changes to tourism experience planning (Altinay & Bowen, 2006). The core objective driving this line of research is the identification of external factors capable of influencing how tourism experiences unfold. The technological environment has long proven to be a pivotal factor affecting both how tourism businesses conduct their operations, and how tourists interface with the experience of tourism (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Xiang, 2018). A recent surge of interest has emerged in chronicling the impacts of contemporary technology (Dickinson et al., 2014; Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2012; Tussyadiah, 2013). A rapid acceleration in various segments

of the technology landscape related to the industry witnessed tourism research scrambling to keep up in making sense of its continuously changing influence on the tourism experience. Collectively, the combination of social media platforms, smartphones, and mobile networks launched a new era in which technology was conceived as more intimately intertwined with experience (Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2013). Within this research stream, much attention has focused on the ‘mediating’ effects of smartphones (Wang, Park, & Fesenmaier, 2012). Accordingly, one of the driving underlying motives of this dissertation concerns investigating one of the most current and salient environmental factors impacting the experience of travel. Due to its universal adoption, and ubiquitous nature, the usage of smartphones is the focus of this research (Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2016).

Overall, the global pursuit of this dissertation is three-fold. First, to forward a novel perspective and articulation of how to make sense of a tourism experience as discrete experiences. Secondly, to explore a more appropriate conceptualization and operationalization of memorable tourism experiences as outcomes of trips. Third, to provide an account of the implications of contemporary technology, such as smartphones, on the both the consumption and memory of tourism experiences. Figure 1 depicts an overarching conceptualization of the underlying foundation driving this research – the investigation of discrete tourism experiences (i.e. Tourism Moments), and their corresponding relationship to contemporary technology and memorability.



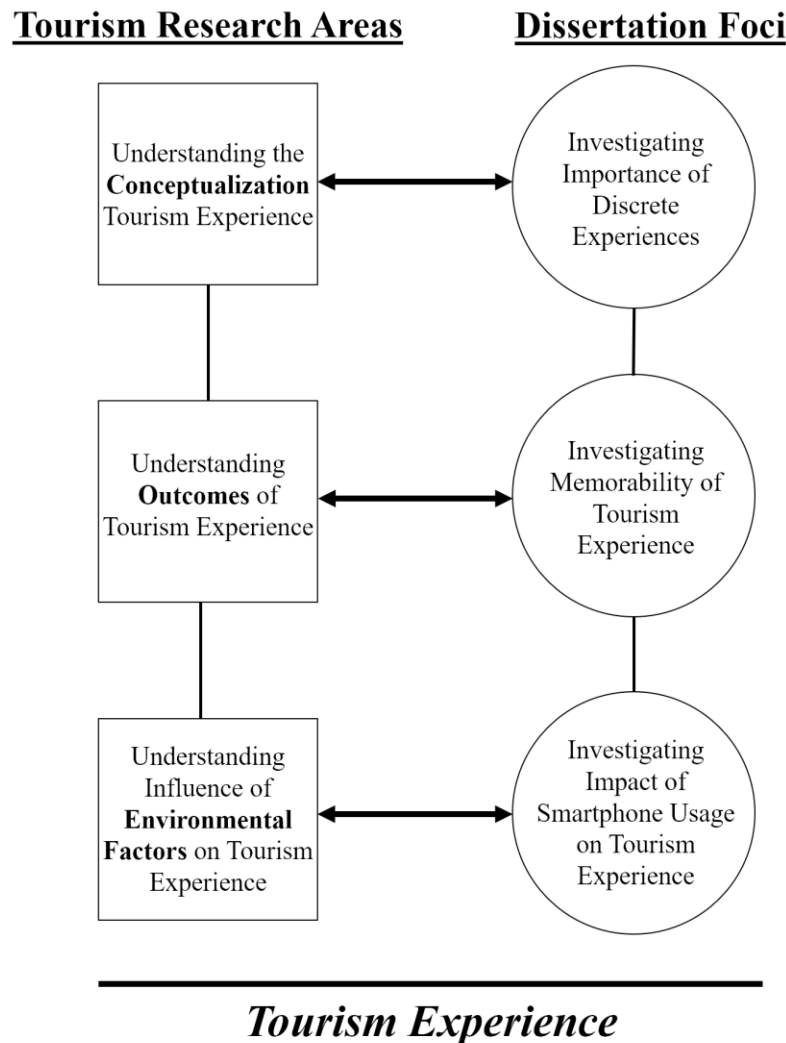


Figure 1. Theoretical Background of Dissertation

## 1.2 Defining the Problem

### 1.2.1 Addressing the Temporality Concern in Tourism Experience Research

Despite decades of discourse and empirical contributions from scholars globally, the conceptualization of a tourism experiences continues to be one of the most debated topics in the field (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017). A wide variety of interpretations and beliefs leaves very little agreeance among tourism experience researchers, and much confusion as a result (Adhikari & Bhattacharya, 2016). A likely source for this seemingly widespread disconnect and

ambiguity stems from the lack of consistency in what constitutes the experience in the ‘tourism experience’ lexicon. Tourism experience definitions in the literature have been interpreted and operationalized experience in at least three manners.

First, tourism experiences can be regarded as the total set of activities and sub-experiences embedded within the bounds of a single trip. Much research seems to be grounded on this definition, emphasizing the entirety of a trip as the level of abstraction (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015; Nawijin, Mitas, Lin, & Kerstetter, 2013; Noy, 2004; Pagán, 2015; Wang & Alasuutari, 2017). Along these same lines, experience then is bounded from the arrival until the departure at the destination of interest (Park & Santos, 2017). Secondly, although much less prevalent, experience has been reflected in a more narrow scope at the episodic or activity level. In direct opposition to the prior standpoint, Larsen (2007) stipulates “The tourist experience should also not be considered to be any or all of the various events taking place during a tourist trip...” (p. 8). At this event level, experience happens within a matter of minutes to hours, and can be represented as one discrete scene. For instance, Lynn, Chen, Scott and Benchendorff (2017) studied tourism experiences as episodes by examining short fleeting instances in which a tourist reported being mindful. Finally, there exists certain research that interprets the experience loosely by investigating tourism experiences with a seemingly absent sense of temporal specification. This pertains to research that investigates experiences at the trip-level and episodic-level interchangeably, or without a clear determination of either (Pearce, Strickland-Munro, & Moore, 2017; Volo, 2009).

It is this lack of attention to the importance of temporal specificity that may attribute to the continual ambiguity in the tourism experience conceptualization. More pointedly, it is perhaps the over-emphasis of the trip-level abstraction that has seemingly proven to be the dominant paradigm grounding tourism experience research. Tourism experience is thus generally regarded in terms of the culmination of all that is experienced within a trip. As such, perhaps more research should be tailored to consider experiences at a more micro-level of temporal consideration and analysis. From a psychology perspective, it may be actually less externally valid to study tourism experiences at a broad-grain of temporal duration such as an entire trip. This is because it is established that people experience life as a series of discrete events during on-line perception, and are also more likely to recollect life experiences as bits of experiences via episodic memories (Conway, 2005; Zacks, Speer, Swallow, Braver, & Reynolds, 2007). If this is

case, why is there such a strong emphasis on investigating tourism experience at the trip-level, and ignoring the nuances of experience that occur within a trip?

In the annals of tourism, some discourse has shed light on the position that a trip is not experienced as one continuous stream of uniform experience. Instead, there are certain spikes, peaks, or points of heightened interest that end up being the most cherished outcomes of a trip (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012; McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009; Williams & Harvey, 2001; Quan & Wang, 2004). This body of tourism research has brought attention to the realignment of representing tourism experiences not as one continuous and holistic phenomenon, but in a segmented fashion. In a recent article, Kim and Fesenmaier (2015) stress the following, “we argue that identifying discrete “events” within the overall trip experience enables us to better understand how travelers deconstruct or represent various aspects of their trip as a series of “acts” or “scenes”” (p. 426). While fruitful strides have been made in recognizing the importance individual and discrete tourism experiences within a trip (e.g. Cutler, Carmichael, & Doherty, 2014), there is still much more research to be conducted on this topic. That is, a clearer distinction of these discrete tourism experiences must be made in order to advance this line of research. Due to the over-emphasis in the literature of treating tourism experience as representing the entirety of a trip, less conceptual development has been advanced in tourism experience interpreted at a more micro level of temporality. Accordingly, I wish to study one particular type of discrete tourism experience: a Tourism Moment. The underlying belief of this approach is that it will contribute more broadly to a better understanding and description of the tourism experience moving forward.

### **1.2.2 Lack of Memory in Memorable Tourism Experience Research**

Of the varying outcomes of a trip, one of the most important is the degree to which a tourist remembers their experiences in the future. A well-remembered experience is valuable to both tourists and tourism providers alike (Hoch & Deighton, 1989; Manthiou, Kang, Chiang, & Tang, 2016). For tourists in particular, the intangible nature of experiences means that memories are only what remain long after trips are over (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). As such, it would be imagined that the study of memory and tourism experience should stand as one of the top priorities in tourism research. In regards to this topic, a line of research on ‘memorable tourism experiences’ or MTEs has emerged within the last decade. Largely spearheaded by the efforts of

Jong-Hyeong Kim, Vincent Sun Tung, and J.R Brent Ritchie, MTEs represent a unified conceptualization meant to address the need for memory research in tourism. Although no official definition has been forwarded, a memorable tourism experience, as these researchers regard it, alludes to a meaningful experience that is high in memorability (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The subject of MTEs has gained considerable traction in the literature, yet suffers from a few key issues. If the subject of MTE is the tourism literature's primary line of work considering memory research pertaining to tourism experiences, then there is much more research needed to address this critical research agenda.

There is concern that although embedded in its label, the subject of MTE may actually have little to do with memory at all, and simply functions as a way to describe a very special experience. One of the most telling evidence of the latter is that the term memorable tourism experience is often roped in along with a slew of other 'special' experience constructs such as peak experiences, extraordinary experiences, or transformative experiences (Ali, Ryu, & Hussain, 2016; Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2014; Lee, 2015). In fact, tourism researchers have used memorable tourism experiences interchangeably along with the prior terms, or it has functioned as a proxy to describe an experientially rich experience (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Zhong, Busser, & Baloglu, 2017). Said differently, MTEs are merely represented as a particular type of tourism experience. Evidence to the latter may be understood when considering the theoretical roots of MTE research - experiential marketing. Both seminal contributors to experiential marketing principles utilized language in their writings of experiential marketing of alluding to memory such as the need to curate 'unforgettable memories' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999). Yet clearly, these authors were utilizing such language to simply color their descriptions of special experiences, and not to literally base their arguments on memory theories. What has resulted then is perhaps a semantic oversight such that although its label alludes to memory, its conceptualization is much more oriented to describing a sort of ideal experience, rather than the study of memory. For instance, in their work on memorable destination experiences, Hudson & Ritchie (2009) interview tourism business leaders and marketers to learn about how they curate 'memorable experiences'. Interestingly, there is nothing remotely related to memory in their research, as 'memorable' seems to be used as a tagline to qualify the experiential nature of the experience. Perhaps, this is why the bulk of the research on MTEs has been concerned with identifying the salient experiential characteristics of

such an experience (Chandralal, Rindfleish, & Valenzuela, 2015; Kim, 2010; Lee, 2015). For example, this research would suggest that memorable tourism experiences feature some degree of novelty and meaningfulness (Kim, 2010).

As such, there is concern that the MTE literature is not truly about the study of memorability. In fact, of all the research claiming to study MTEs, not a single one actually measured memory in any form or fashion. Psychologists thus would find the topic of MTE misleading, as the study of memories typically involves memory functioning as an outcome variable (e.g. Bernstein, 2001). As it stands, MTE research presumes that the degree to which a tourist remembers their experience can be predicted by a tidy set of experiential elements (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Even more so, memorability is only assumed in the recall of experience, as interview participants are generally just asked to describe their ‘memorable experiences’, without actually validating if in fact that memory is vivid or rich. With that said, the study of memory and tourism experiences needs to be reconsidered, with research bringing focus back to investigating factors that affect the memorability of any given experience. The scientific study of memory has been long investigated in the field of psychology, and as such, memory research in tourism stands to benefit when adhering to these already established principles and theories. Akin to the initial efforts of Tung, Lin, Zhang, and Zhao (2017) this dissertation seeks to reorient the study of memorable tourism experiences back into focus, by examining and testing factors that may actually influence the long-term memorability of experience. More specifically, participant’s memory of their tourism experiences will be explicitly measured in order to study memorability in a more objective and appropriate manner.

### **1.2.3 Limited Empirical Research on the ‘Mediating’ Effects of Technology**

Technology plays an inevitable role throughout the various stages and components of the tourism system. Xiang (2018) regards the last 20 years as representing two eras of technology: 1) Era of Digitization (1997-2006) and; 2) Era of Acceleration (2007-2016). While research in the digitization era focused on understanding the pre-adoption factors (e.g. attitudes towards technology), research agendas in the acceleration era turned to understanding the post-adoption manifestations of technology usage by travelers/customers as a result of the increasing intensification of technology. Due to the acceleration and proliferation of technology in the modern era, much research focused on pinpointing and unpacking the affordances granted by the

advanced technology. With such a focus, research was dedicated to a descriptive level delineation of the novel technology-induced behaviors and practices. For example, one new phenomenon revealed was the mobile connectivity due to the inception of the smartphone and social media platforms, such that tourists can maintain connected to their everyday life (Molz & Paris, 2015; White & White, 2007). That is, mobile connectivity is the affordance which spurred a new manifestation of tourist behavior. A recent study by Wang, Xiang, and Fesenmaier (2016) is yet another example of this research, as their findings revealed an array of smartphone usage types in travel, and their corresponding changes to common tourist practices. It is believed that the dominant research paradigm in the literature within the last decade has been concerned with chronicling the unique behavioral changes brought upon by technology (Xiang, 2018).

An alternative, yet less prevalent emphasis has dedicated in going further by investigating the consequences to tourism experiences of such new practices and behaviors afforded by contemporary technology. This research goes beyond just making sense of what new practices technology has granted. It looks at revealing more closely how these new practices and behaviors have affected the experience of tourism and travel. Researchers towards the tail end of the digitization era began recognizing the lack of attention in examining how technology usage is intimately influencing the experiences of tourists (MacKay & Vogt, 2012). In response, much discourse has centered on the ‘mediating’ effects of the advanced technology available in recent years (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009; Wang, Park, & Fesenmaier, 2012). Yet, research on the technology-mediation of tourism experiences still largely remains at a conceptual level, with more empirical research needed on understanding exactly how technology is mediating experiences, and to what extent (Yoo, 2010). Some exceptions in the literature exist, with recent research efforts zeroing in on studying the consequences of specific technology practices on the tourism experience. Regarding the consequences of the novel affordance of mobile connectivity cited earlier, Song & Kim (2017) discovered that compulsive usage of social media leads to less fulfilling and enriching tourism experiences. Similarly, Kirillova and Wang (2016) investigated the implications of smartphone-enabled connectedness, and found that the restorative qualities of destination experiences are better preserved when tourists use smartphones to maintain connected to their everyday lives.

It is in the spirit of this line of research that this dissertation seeks to continue forward. There is a fairly good understanding of the changes technology has brought upon the travel sector, but not enough to further reveal the nuanced implications of such changes to the tourism experience. In one regard for instance, there is inconclusive evidence as to whether the novel technology-enabled practices carry positive or negative implications to tourism experience (Song & Kim, 2017; Tribe & Mkono, 2017; Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018). Attributing to the inconclusive nature of the evidence is perhaps the overemphasis in researching exclusively the positive impacts of technology. Accordingly, this dissertation identifies the documentation of experiences as one of the most prevalent and pervasive behaviors brought upon by the inception of the smartphone (Morris, 2015). More pointedly, to investigate the ramifications of such tech-mediated behavior on the consumption and memorability of tourism experiences. The efforts of this research should offer partial evidence regarding the ‘mediation’ of tourism experiences, and the benefit or detriment of such mediating effects. In turn, this research should contribute to the imbalance in the over-emphasis of research on adoption factors and changes to behavior, and under-emphasis on identifying the consequences of the behavioral changes.

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## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Tourism Experience Research**

The attempt to understand the concept of the ‘tourism experience’ features a long and diverse history. Seemingly from the outset, scholars dedicated efforts to unravel and discover not only why people travel, but more simply trying to understand what a tourism experience is. Early scholars such as MacCannell (1973), forwarded propositions aligning tourism experiences as a pursuit for the authentic, or Cohen (1972) who focused on categorizing the range of possible tourism experiences. These early tourism scholars sparked subsequent generations of research and discourse surrounding the topic of the tourism experience.

Multiple decades after some of the early work on tourism experience, the subject still remains highly debated, complex, and with little resemblance of an agreed upon conceptualization or even understanding of the tourism experience phenomenon. In fact, the only agreement lies in the acceptance that there may never exist a single unified and conclusive description of what a tourism experience entails (Li, 2000; Chhetri, et al., 2004; Selstad, 2007). As a result, tourism experience research is broad and diverse, so often in summarizing the research on this topic, researchers have recognized the various overarching categories of interest pertaining to the tourism experience (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004; Volo, 2009). In a similar vein to what others have proposed (e.g. Cutler & Carmicheal, 2010; Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011), tourism experience research can be best presented as pertaining to any of the following overarching research categories: 1) definition/conceptualization; 2) phenomenology/nature of the experience; and 3) peripheral aspects of the tourism experience.

The definition/conceptualization area of the literature is characterized as research which attempts to establish definitional and conceptual parameters to the tourism experience. Typically, the objectives underlying this area of tourism experience research aim at conclusively determining how to best portray and describe the tourism experience. Not surprisingly, a seemingly infinite number of definitions or conceptualizations have been proposed over the years. As will be discussed in greater detail, there exist various camps within the definition/conceptualization research stream, each establishing specific doctrines for the tourism experience (Volo, 2009). The following series of tourism experience definitions and

conceptualizations are included to showcase just a small sample of the wide variety. For many, the tourism experience constitutes everything that can occur within the traditional three-stages of travel (e.g. pre-trip, during-trip, post-trip) (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010; Park & Santos, 2016). Others pinpoint the ‘reversal of everyday life’ as being the ultimate distinguishing characteristic bounding the definition of the experience (Cohen, 1972; Graburn, 2001). Using a psychology lens, Larsen (2007) proposes a tourist experience to only be those “travel-related” events that make it into one’s long-term memory (p. 15). For Andersson (2007), a tourism experience is best projected as a ‘consumption project’ in which tourists enact their own resources in order to produce and actualize an experience (of tourism) that is all their own. Taking a much more abstract approach, the tourism experience is simply understood as the culmination of the tourists’ feelings and attitudes (Page, et al., 2001), or overall takeaway impression towards their trip (Walls, et al., 2011). The fundamental pursuit of this line of research is best captured by Volo (2009) who asked “That is, what does it take for a visit, an activity, an event, a view, a gelato, a feeling, knowledge or learning to become experience, the tourist experience?”, highlighting the field’s perpetual pursuit of defining what is (and is not) a tourism experience (p. 119).

In a similar yet distinct fashion, another category of tourism experience research focuses more on uncovering and understanding what a tourism experience is like. Rather than being primarily concerned with the definitional parameters of the term, research in this area aims to delineate and describe how the phenomenon is experienced from the tourist’s perspective. As argued by Ek, Larsen, Horskov, and Mansfeld (2008) “[...we know little about how tourists actually experience – or perhaps better put, do – tourism” (p.124). One of the early and most influential descriptions of the tourism experience portrays the tourist as one who gazes upon a destination’s attractions and landmarks, a sort of romantic notion that the intake of visual stimuli is at the heart of the experience (Urry, 1990). Through a different approach, some focus on the biological and physiological processes that tourists undergo throughout the tourism experience, such as the central role of perception in the experience (Larsen, 2007; Selstad, 2007; Volo, 2009). For researchers such as Wearing and Foley (2017), the tourism experience is a process wherein tourists’ encounters with the place are what culminate in an experience. Rather than provide a sweeping description of the phenomenon, other research spotlight certain types of tourism experiences. Examples of the latter include the adventure tourism experience (Wu & Liang, 2011), backpacking tourism experience (Germann Molz & Paris, 2015), family tourism

experience (Lehto, Lin, Chen, & Choi, 2012), or the urban tourism experience (Sternberg, 1997). Though not always, research that zeros in on specific types of tourism experiences has a strong focus on bringing to light how the tourists experience what they go through. For instance, sometimes specific activities represent the focal experience of an entire trip for some tourists. Flamenco dance is one such activity, and thus, qualitative research has been conducted to gain a more in-depth understanding, learning from tourists who describe their flamenco tourism experience as deeply spiritual and emotional to the extent that it can contribute to a sense of self-fulfillment (Matteucci, 2014; Matteucci & Filep, 2017). This category of tourism experience research is generally explorative in nature, seeking to understand the phenomenon of tourism, simply for the sake of knowing how tourists live through their experiences.

The last category, ‘the peripheral aspects of the tourism experience’ is distinguished by its absence of concern for both defining what a tourism experience is or understanding what the experience is like. That is, this category essentially represents all other tourism experience research in which the focus is not primarily on either of the previous two category’s objectives. Rather, this richly diverse body of literature pertains to research in which the tourism experience is the just phenomenon or product of interest, and thus explores a variety of topics that are associated to tourism experience. For instance, a long-standing line of research within this category has centered on identifying the driving motivators for why tourists travel (Prentice, 2004), with the desire for escape as one of the staple motivators (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). Other research within this category take a model-centric approach in identifying all or if not the most important themes/dimensions that make up the tourism experience. Nickerson (2006) projects the tourism experience as encompassed by only three overarching elements of the tourist, the destination as the product, and the local residents, whereas Mossberg (2007) concludes that the major influencing elements are the physical environment, service personnel, other tourists, and the tangible products/souvenirs. Cutler and Carmicheal (2010) forwarded a fairly comprehensive model depicting the various dimensions of the tourist experience, with overarching dimensions such as the ‘influential realm’ and ‘personal realm’, and sub-dimensions within these such as topics related to social aspects or outcomes. Naturally, research has often isolated certain aspects or dimensions of the tourism model. The social environment is considered one of the major domains at play in a tourism experience with topics ranging widely within this area (María, Kr, & Jacobsen, 2014; Schänzel & Smith, 2014;

Tussyadiah, 2013). For instance, the tourist-local dynamic is a research topic given much attention (Woosnam, Norman, & Ying, 2009). Oftentimes, certain themes rise as dominant and popular aspects typically associated with the tourism experience. The topic of authenticity is one such topic. Whether pertaining to either objective or existential authenticity, it has been shown that tourists seek authenticity in their tourism experiences in one way or another (MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). In other words, the element of authenticity is now understood as one of the critical elements associated with the tourism experience. The outcomes of tourism experiences is most certainly one of the most popular aspects of the tourism experiences over the years. Tourism experiences have been shown to enhance our knowledge of the world (Li, 2000), fortify self-realization (Desforges, 2000), and even be transformative to our everyday lives (Kirillova & Lehto, 2015).

It is important to note that within the proposed category of ‘peripheral aspects of the tourism experience’, certain research is qualified as being more managerial or business-centric. This characterizes research agendas grounded from the perspective of the supplier, business, or management (Andersson, 2007, Ellis & Rossman, 2008; Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, 2007). In relation to the outcome aspect of the tourism experiences touched on earlier, the central determinant of a tourism experiences lies in the degree to which a tourist is satisfied or dissatisfied with their trip (Pearce, 2005). Similarly, business-centric research also pinpoints revisit intention as a measuring stick of the tourism experience outcome (Hung, Lee, & Huang, 2016; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006; Wu, Li, & Li, 2018).

As evidenced here, the third category of tourism experience research is multifaceted, with less interest in defining or understanding the nature of the experience and aimed more at identifying and studying the aspects that accompany and are believed to be important to the topic of the tourism experience.

## **2.2. Overemphasis of Trip/Peak Experience Perspective**

Across the three categories previously discussed, there have been a number of dominant perspectives that have grounded much of the research. These perspectives have been used as a means in which to demarcate and characterize the various lenses in which the tourism experience has been historically viewed across the tourism experience literature. Quan and Wang (2004), for instance, refer to these perspectives as ‘general approaches’ which dictate the manner in which

the tourism experience is viewed and interpreted by researchers. I believe that these perspectives have produced the academic tourism field's overall image of the tourism experience. In the section to follow I will detail how three of the most established perspectives in the tourism literature have collectively depicted the tourism experience as represented by the following overarching conceptualization:

*a peak uniform experience that transpires over the course of an entire trip*

### **2.2.1 Modernistic Perspective**

Across its history, tourism experience discourse has followed the overlying paradigm influence of its corresponding time. As such, researchers such as Natan Uriely have taken notice and analyzed the nuanced distinctions in the development of the tourism experience conceptualization. Uriely (2005) proposes that tourism experience research can be summarized as pertaining to one of two theoretical camps: 1) modernism; 2) postmodernism. These function as a “style of academic theorizing” which underpins the dominating perspective onto which tourism experience research is analyzed and conceptualized (p. 200). He argues that modernism is associated with many of the early tourism experience theories and ideas, whereas postmodernism perspective is aligned with more contemporary conceptualizations. The modernist perspective is believed to have dominated the first era of tourism experience research, represented by the seminal work of researchers such as Cohen (1979), MacCannell (1976), and Boorstin (1964). While postmodernistic ideals began to surface as early as the 1990s (e.g. Lash & Urry, 1994), Uriely appears to align the presence of the true postmodernism tourism era as emerging around the turn of the century. Accordingly, the modernistic perspective of tourism experience is not only associated with the inception of tourism experience theory, but seems to have a longer presence in the historical timeline as well. It is also crucial to clarify, as Uriely does himself, that postmodernism has not necessarily replaced modernism in today's tourism academic landscape. That is, much research today and within the last decade still corresponds closely with principles of the modernistic perspective. For instance, the Memorable Tourism Experience topic that has emerged in recent years is one steeped in the belief that all tourists will perceive a tourism experience as memorable so long as it features one or more of a tidy set of dimensions proposed (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; J.-H. Kim & Ritchie, 2013). As has been criticized by some, this indicates there exists one ideal type of memorable tourism experience for



all tourists, a notion which parallels with a modernistic take on the tourism experience (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2014). It can then be argued that modernism has been one of the most dominant perspectives on the tourism experience historically – it was the focal perspective during the inception stage of tourism experience theorizing, and has had a longer tenure of presence than its postmodern counterpart. In that sense, the modernistic perspective has potentially had a stronger and more persistent influence on decades of tourism experience research.

Given its dominance as a theoretical perspective shaping tourism experience research, modernism holds certain principles which have helped feed the bigger picture of the tourism experience conceptualization presented earlier. As I will detail in the subsequent discussion, the modernistic perspective as presented by Uriely (2005) has assisted in painting the tourism experience as being uniform in nature and consisting of all that is experienced throughout the trip.

The subject of differentiation is one of the staple principles governing the modernistic perspective (Uriely, 2005). Uriely credits seminal scholars in the inception stage (e.g. 1970s) that all equally emphasized the distinctive nature of the tourism experience as the opposite of everyday life (Cohen, 1972, 1979; MacCannell, 1973; Smith, 1978). At the heart of the tourism experience is the physical displacement from home, and in turn, the ensuing flow of experience that occurs in the new foreign environment (Ryan, 2002; Selstad, 2007; Turner & Ash, 1975). It is due to the novel nature of the circumstance that a tourism experience can be underway. From a modernistic perspective, a tourism experience in the simplest sense then was the demarcation point in which a person was no longer in the context of everyday life (Turner, 1969). This rather intuitive distinction on what is (and is not) a tourism experience has remained as one of the most prevalent and accepted conceptual parameters. In this being the case, I propose this has indirectly created an implicit understanding of the tourism experience as representing the entire trip of a tourist. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2008) defines a trip as follows: “A trip refers to the travel by a person from the time of departure from his/her usual residence until he/she returns...].” Certainly, trips can range in duration from day trips to even as long as several years, though typically trips researched pertain to much shorter intervals of time. Nonetheless, so long as the tourist is not in the context of their everyday life, and situated within a tourism-related environment, then they are in a tourism experience. A tourism experience as a trip then

theoretically begins as soon as one physically departs from their 'home' and concludes upon return. Hence when modernistic tourism scholars refer to a tourism experience, they are indirectly also referring to the entire scope of time elapsed between these two beginning and end points of demarcation. Supporting the latter is the field's practice of using the term 'tourism experience' and 'trip' interchangeably. For instance, the paper by (María et al., 2014) titled 'Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media' refers to the popular three-stage model of the trip as representing the tourism experience that is being shared on social media. Though certainly not always explicitly stated as such, it becomes apparent that the modernistic perspective has influenced a generally implicit view of equating the tourism experience as consisting of all that is experienced throughout a tourist's entire trip.

Modernism, as one of the most dominant perspectives in the tourism literature can also be attributed to projecting a tourism experience as homogenous and uniform in nature. That is, suggesting that any given trip is experienced in a roughly similar manner by all tourists. The modernistic perspective plays a role in such a view due to two primary reasons. Uriely (2005) identifies the interpretation of authenticity within the tourism context as another distinguishing factor of modernistic ideals. Specifically, objective authenticity and constructive authenticity as central viewpoints. Objective authenticity concerns the degree to which a displayed (touristic) object is genuine to its original form – i.e. how real is it? Constructive authenticity also regards the judgement of assessing originality, but permits room for interpretation regarding its degree of genuineness – i.e. how real do I believe it is? Central to both forms of authenticity lies the notion that authenticity stems squarely on the attractions and activities delivered by a destination/industry (Uriely, 2005). In that manner then, any given tourism experience can boil down to a measure of the collective perceived level of authenticity displayed by a destination. For example, Tourist A and Tourist B, if visiting the city of Rome, should have a very similar overall impression of how authentic the destination is if they visited the same landmarks. Thus, with authenticity as the key marker, every tourist's experience of a destination should be roughly the same because the destination's delivery of its authentic objects is a static and consistent performance (Wang, 1999). A tourism experience is effectively uniform as each tourist's encounters with a destination's displayed objects should contain the same degree of authenticity – in turn, the same staged tourism experience for all (Boorstin, 1964; MacCannell, 1973). The 'modern' tourist's quest for authenticity ultimately stipulates that destinations can consistently

fulfill this demand across the board for the masses (Wang, 1999). The projected uniform characteristic of a tourism experience is thus established due to the impression that every tourist will perceive the authenticity of a destination's contrived attractions in the same manner (Cohen, 1995).

Fueling the projection of a uniform tourism experience is the modernistic practice of viewing tourism experiences from either a mass tourism perspective or typologies. True to its principles, modernism is founded upon a grand design approach wherein phenomena functions within a tidy and total system (Denzin, 1991). Naturally, modernistic tourism scholars "presented homogenizing portrayals of it [tourism experience] as a general type" (Uriely, 2005, p. 204). This became known as a mass tourism interpretation where tourism experiences were predetermined and commodified (Wearing & Foley, 2017). In this light, tourists go through the same tourism system, and thus, experience tourism in the same way. In countering against a mass tourism approach, yet still within the modernistic perspective, typologies emerged that aimed at providing a more complete and diverse picture of tourism experiences. This research aimed at identifying and describing the different forms/types/categories of tourism experiences so as to showcase that the experience of tourism varies widely (Zotic, Alexandru, & Dezsi, 2014). The work by Cohen (1972) represents one of the earliest efforts at recognizing the diversity in tourism experiences by suggesting five modes of tourist experiences. These modes spanned on a spectrum between the quest for pleasure or meaning as the end poles. Effectively, this relegated any tourism experience as needing to fall within one of these modes on the spectrum. From this perspective, tourism experiences are thus uniform as one tourist may only incur pleasurable experiences, and another, only meaningful experiences. With time, typologies become more refined and specific, identifying and classifying specific segments of tourists (e.g. backpackers). Yet again however, this typology approach indirectly projects tourism experiences as homogenous nonetheless as it puts tourist's into neat boxes classifying them as one type over another – backpackers vs. urban tourists, group tour vs. individual, etc. (Wickens, 2002). In other words, a backpacking tourism experience is only about backpacking. Within this view, tourism experiences come to become uniform and homogeneous for each classification of tourism experience.

### **2.2.2 Social Science Perspective**

Another notable perspective proposed is that of the social science approach to tourism experience research. The seminal paper by Quan and Wang (2004) is one of the most cited in the tourism literature suggesting many of the ideas put forward are generally agreed upon (e.g. Volo, 2009). Central to their argument is the proposition that tourism experience literature can be classified as either aligned with a social science or marketing/management approach. The social science perspective represents a general set of principles and beliefs that collectively present a view of the tourism experience as an event that is parallel with a peak experience. Said simply, research within the social science perspective spectrum has created a description in which an entire tourist's trip is conceived as one long 'peak experience' from beginning to end.

From the social science view, the essence of the tourism experience originates purely from its distinction from everyday life. Tourism experiences function as the polar opposite to the everyday experience (Cohen, 1972, 1979). Tourism experience represents extraordinary phenomenon, as opposed to the ordinary phenomenon experienced when not on a tourism experience. Tourism experience is "essentially a temporary reversal" to what is experienced in the everydayness of life (Cohen, 1979, p. 181). In a similar light, the grandiose-esque depiction of the experience is also illuminated by its alignment with the 'sacred journey' in which a tourist undergoes the ritual of displacement from everyday life and into the religious-like phenomenon of travel, and the cyclical transition back into everyday life (Graburn, 1989; Hennig, 2002; Jansson, 2007; Kirillova & Lehto, 2015; MacCannell, 1976; Rickly-Boyd, 2012). With such definitive and grand analogies, it is no wonder the tourism experience is raised to such a high level of unique and amazing stature. From this perspective, all that is experienced on a trip is significant and powerful simply due a person's transient role as a tourist, as opposed to their everyday role.

This differentiation effect to everyday life comes with a number of connotations such that the tourism experience is associated with peak and extraordinary experiences (Quan & Wang, 2004). Peak experiences have been described as rare instances in which one reaches the highest degree of happiness and fulfillment, typical of deeply enriching revelations (McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009). Similarly, extraordinary experiences are those events that are the most memorable, special, and emotionally charged (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012). The tourism social science spin on these two terms focuses on attributing these experiences of elation to the

attractions and activities encountered within a trip (Quan & Wang, 2004; Volo, 2009). That is, only tourism experiences permit access to such attractions and activities as they are absent in the everyday context life, explaining the inability to obtain such a peak experience in everyday life.

Though a tourism experience is not always just about these peak-eliciting attractions and activities, Quan and Wang (2004) argue the entirety of a tourist's trip is often characterized as a peak or extraordinary experience. Tourists experience only the exotic, rather than anything that may resemble the ordinariness of everyday life. Accordingly, the social science perspective not only projects the tourism experience as uniform in nature as does the modernistic perspective, but places emphasis on qualifying the entire experience as a peak experience. This alludes to a theoretical switch that is automatically activated in which any given tourism experience is instantly peak-like once one has departed from home. The tourist essentially experiences one long euphoric 'high' where their arousal, awareness, and intrigue is captivated at all times during the trip. Due its dominance as one of the most prevalent perspectives in the literature, it becomes evident that this has been one of the most established characteristics of the tourism experience.

### **2.2.3 Touristic Gaze Perspective**

John Urry's 'Tourist Gaze' is perhaps known as one of the most recognizable and leveraged lenses in which tourism experience research is conducted. In defining the original iteration of the tourist gaze, tourists core form of consuming the tourist experience was through a systematic and guided visual consumption of destination-related landmarks and attractions (Urry, 1990). Not only utilized as a theoretical foundation in many tourism experience studies, the tourist gaze has also spawned a multitude of other gaze perspectives such as the family gaze (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003). Even today, Urry's tourist gaze remains as an active and influential theory or lens. For instance, an e-mediated gaze is believed to better capture today's technological environment in which tourists' consumption of the tourist experience is always facilitated by technology (Robinson, 2016). As will be argued next, due to its extensive influence in the literature Urry's tourist gaze has played an instrumental part in feeding the bigger picture of the tourist experience as a uniform and peak phenomenon.

The tourist gaze privileges a particular manner of consumption which depicts the tourist as a passive consumer of the tourism experience. Urry bases his initial tourist gaze description with the notion of the flâneur who is portrayed as follows: "The flâneur was seen as a new kind

of city dweller who had the time to wander (practising *flânerie*), idly observe and browse in the public spaces of the modern city” (Wearing & Foley, 2017, p. 101). In this light, the tourist is akin to a zoo visitor whom is able to wander through and idly ‘take in’ the visual stimuli that is before them. Tourists witness experience, but do not really participate (Larsen, 2001). Key to the *flâneur* depiction in the tourist gaze is the tourist’s proposed detachment with what they are experiencing (Shortell & Brown, 2014; Wearing & Wearing, 1996). The destination environment that a tourist wanders through and witnesses is static. Tourists are free to gaze upon this static environment (e.g. landscapes, landmarks, sites, people, etc), but are always at a distance from what it is they are gazing. The culmination of such a view is that it removes subjectivity out of the equation. Although the role of subjectivity has been recognized as central to the tourism experience, Urry’s tourist gaze disregards the tourist as having any influence on how their individual experiences manifest – because what tourists gaze at is the same (i.e. destination environment). With this passive-oriented form of consumption, and without subjectivity, there is only room for a homogeneous view of the tourism experience.

The tourist gaze view of the tourism experience is thus deterministic and commodified, likening it to an experiential system that all tourists experience in the same fashion. Tourists’ gaze is institutionalized to the degree that the tourism experiences is able to be commodified and predetermined in advance (Wearing & Foley, 2017). Destination marketing is able to dictate and direct the ‘image’ of their place through media for the sake of “...[influencing tourists’ perceptions of what they look at and what they should be experiencing while at a destination” (Gretzel, 2010, p. 7). From this logic, destinations and industry stakeholders function as a factory which generate an experiential product that features the same specifications and features to all tourists. Through various sources of media, tourism marketers have the power to reinforce and promote the same generalized view of their tourism experience offering (Urry, 1990, 2002). Urry goes as far as characterizing the tourist gaze as existing within a bubble (Urry, 1992). Within this systemized bubble, you can just plug in any given tourist, and they will experience the bubble all the same.

To an extent, the tourist gaze perspective has also helped fuel the romanticized image of the tourism experience as a peak experience. Referring back to Urry’s *flâneur* analogy, this represented one who for a temporary period of time is able to escape the everyday routine of life (Urry, 1990). In a foreign tourism environment, the *flâneur* takes great pleasure in simply taking

in the visual spectacle of their foreign place. A tourism experience as a spectacle is so experientially rich that one is afforded an extraordinary and delightful experience through merely wandering (and gazing upon) a place. Tourism experiences are thus inherently picturesque, and thus everything that is encountered throughout a trip is worthy of a tourist's gaze. To this effect, tourism experiences can only contain the incredible and grandiose or else wandering and gazing alone would not be enough.

### **2.3 Tourism Experience – A Collective Viewpoint**

In analyzing and reconciling the three dominant perspectives previously covered, it becomes evident that they collectively project a global depiction of the tourism experience. Perspectives, as they are discussed here, parallel paradigms which represent the underlying set of beliefs and assumptions that underly researchers' efforts – their 'worldview' (Patton, 2002; Guba, 1990). Paradigms play a very critical role in influencing generations of researchers, in not only how they execute studies (i.e. methodology), but in how they believe concepts and theories to be (Vargo, 2008). As influential paradigms, the modernistic perspective, social science perspective, and tourist gaze perspective have collectively and indirectly created a generalized view of the tourism experience for the academic tourism field. This does not necessarily suggest that each and every tourism researcher subscribes to this generalized conceptualization. Rather, it represents a conceptualization that most tourism research has generally aligned with across the history of the literature. It is a sort of generalized impression of the tourism experience given off by the academic discipline as a whole. In other words, assuming one were to read every research article about the tourism experience that exists in the tourism literature, they would walk away with a single (though generalized) understanding of the tourism experience.

Specifically, the field's collective conceptualization is that the tourism experience constitutes a peak uniform experience that transpires over the course of an entire trip. First, tourism experiences simply represent everything that the tourist undergoes from the beginning of the trip to the end. This means that tourism experiences have fairly definitive temporal and spatial boundaries to what is and is not part of the tourism experience. Though a trip may contain visits to several destinations, so long as the tourist is not within the spatial confines of 'home', the tourism experience is still active. Tourism experiences are also akin to a peak experience which are regarded as extraordinary, incredible, transcendent, and awe-like. The tourist is afforded a

unique level of quality experience that cannot be found elsewhere. Due to its experiential richness, tourism experiences tend to be some of the most memorable experiences in our life (Tung, Lin, Qiu Zhang, & Zhao, 2016). As a peak experience, it represents a deep and heightened sense of sensory, emotional, and cognitive stimulation for the tourist. Tourism experiences are inherently and automatically assumed to always reach such heightened levels of experiential richness. Additionally, tourism experiences are also uniform and consistent. Accordingly, this accepts an understanding “to equate the whole tourist experience [i.e. trip] to the peak experience” (Quan & Wang, 2004, p. 299). Projecting a fantasy portrayal of sorts, the tourist experience is homogeneous to the extent that they only experience peak-like events throughout. In this light, every encounter, interaction, and observation of their touristic environment resembles a peak experience – the tourist maintains the same high degree of experiential quality at all times ended only by their return home. This uniformity characteristic ultimately stipulates that a tourist experiences no dull moments, or lapses in their euphoric experience.

## **2.4 Argument Against the Traditional Tourism Experience Conceptualization**

Although an overarching conceptualization has loomed over the field of tourism, some discourse has emerged in challenging some of the fundamental characteristics. To many it appears, the idea of the tourism experience as a uniform peak experience at the trip level does not project an appropriate image. While it is generally accepted that the tourism experience can represent the entire trip, contention primarily stems from the uniform and peak-like portrayal. Challenged is the notion that tourists all experience a trip in fairly the same fashion, and that the tourism experience parallels the peak experience in its entirety.

### ***2.4.1 The Case against Uniformity***

Central to the counterargument against the overemphasize of uniformity is its blatant omittance of subjectivity. As opposed to the tourist gaze’s flaneur, the analogy of the choraster highlights the interactive role of the tourist such that it is through their interaction with space in which experience is actualized (Wearing & Foley, 2017). It is through place-tourist interaction in which experience materializes. Rather than the static view of destinations that are to be gazed upon,



Wearing and Foley (2017) emphasizes the “arena of interactions” tourists engage with (p. 99). With a uniform view, tourism experiences can be mass produced and mass marketed online and in travel magazines, waiting to be delivered upon arrival. Instead, Ek, Larsen, Hornskov, & Mansfeldt (2008) suggest destinations are simply places for tourists to enact their own stories upon. Similarly for (Volo, 2009), tourism represents a marketplace of experiences, and tourists bring the mental places where experiences come to be. The exaggeration of the uniform characteristic presents a ‘vacuum effect’ such that experience are pre-determined, and neither internal or external effects play a role in the actualization of experiences (Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011). Tourism experiences are thus not foregone conclusions. There is inherent fluctuation built in to every tourism experience, as no two tourists will experience the same thing. In fact, two tourists going through the exact same event/activity will walk away with two very different experiences all their own (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015).

In direct contrast to the modern perspective discussed earlier, the post-modern perspective view on the tourist experience typologies popular in modernistic research is rooted in challenging the unidimensional boxes that typologies create. The typologies popularized in the literature tend to assume that tourists’ pertaining to a particular category such as backpacker all experienced their backpacking tourism experience in the same manner – i.e. to describe one backpacker tourism experience is to describe them all. (Uriely, 2005) argues this running assumption – that tourists in the same typology category share the same experiences – is invalid. Uriely references two key articles to support this conclusion. Wickens (2002) indicates that tourists classified under the mass tourist category, seek out micro-types of experiences that are not in line with their prescribed category. Similarly, Uriely, Yonay, and Simchai (2002) discovered that tourists’ undergoing a backpacking tourism experience represent their experiences within a range of different modes, from pure pleasure to a search for meaning. From the notion of authenticity, the post-modern perspective further debunks the impression of uniformity within tourism experiences as reflected in typology-centric research. Regardless of the type of tourism (e.g. nature, beach, family, urban), sources of authenticity do not necessarily stem only from physical objects, but rather, tourists reach instances of existential authenticity that are separate from toured objects (Wang, 1999). For instance, although all tourists at a particular destination may encounter the same objectively authentic landmarks within an urban tourism experience, they each will experience their own distinct moments of existential

authenticity. Accordingly, this debunks the notion of a uniform tourism experience as the overarching purpose/classification of a tourism experience does not dictate the entirety of the tourism experience – encountering one’s authentic self is independent from any pre-scribed categorizations as well as destinations’ physical and cultural offerings. In other words, the backpacking tourism experience for Tourist A is different from Tourist B simply due to their individual experiences (or lack thereof) of existential authenticity.

#### ***2.4.2 The Case against the Peak Experience***

The fantasized and glorified view in paralleling the entire tourism experience to a peak experience is also problematic in a few aspects. In critically reviewing the tourist gaze perspective, one can see how destinations and tourism experiences are given too much credit. From the tourist gaze perspective, the name of the game for destination marketing is promoting and providing aesthetically pleasing environments (Urry, 1990). In that regard, the ‘best’ tourism experiences are those that maximize tourists’ gazing of a place. This supports tourism experiences as a peak experience because it seemingly assumes everything at a destination can and should be worth gazing at. It paints a romantic notion that everything at a destination is fascinating and worth a tourist’s gaze. The notion of the ‘performance turn’ emerged in direct opposition to the tourist gaze (Ek et al., 2008). Rather than a perspective which privileges the eye and the visual, the performance turn “highlights how tourists experience places in more multisensuous ways that can involve more bodily sensations, from touching, smelling, hearing and so on” (p. 125). This goes against a peak experience portrayal of the tourism experience because meaningful or intriguing experience is only derived when and in how tourists perform upon places – tourism experiences are thus not inherently peak-like, and thus gazing alone would not suffice.

Perhaps one of the most incriminating evidence against the peak experience conception is the presence of everyday life elements during tourism experiences. On one side of the coin, the popular ritual/sacred journey analogy of the tourism experience suggests this ritual is only obtained through the physical displacement away from home (MacCannell, 1976). However, travel and tourism is now so engrained within the everyday fabric of life that one can achieve tourism experience elements in the everyday context (Andersson, 2007). On the other side of the coin, it is now widely recognized that many everyday life activities are conducted during trips

(Schänzel & Smith, 2014; Uriely, 2005; D. Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2016; White & White, 2007). The differentiation of everyday life and tourism experience is thus problematic. Quan and Wang (2004) highlighted the importance of very home-like activities such as sleeping and eating, and forwarded a depiction of the tourism experience as including both peak and supporting daily experiences. Perhaps one of the most notable ‘everyday’ activities present in tourism experiences is the act of working while away. Especially due to the advancements in information and communication technologies, it has become commonplace for tourists to engage in work activities during a leisure trip (Kirillova & Wang, 2016). This alone contradicts ascribing the entire trip as a peak experience, and instead as proposed by Walls, Okumus, Wang, and Kwun (2011), recognizing that tourism experiences feature elements of both extraordinary and routine experience.

From a different approach, yet still in line with the latter, tourists’ cognitive engagement with their trips must also be considered. From one of the most seminal definitions of experience in the consumer literature, a tourism experience represents tourists’ private and personal events that occur as a response to some trip-related stimuli (Schmitt, 1999). At least as it regards to a cognitive stimulation, a peak tourism experience then would be one in which a tourist’s arousal and attention is captured wholeheartedly throughout the entire trip. In other words, a tourist arousal and attention remains at a high level at all times during a trip. Yet, such sustainment is not likely as tourists’ flow of perception is governed by experiences of novelty and familiarity (Selstad, 2007). Regarding arousal levels, in order to reach a heightened, peak-level, it stipulates that basic level human needs must be satisfied (Andersson, 2007). Hence, activities which satisfy such basic needs (e.g. sleeping, eating) can hardly be considered as peak-like, and highly arousing. Scholars thus recognize that many activities that take place on a trip are quite low in experiential richness or intrigue (Volo, 2009). That is, because ‘true’ experience is only acquired when it is vividly recognized and “translated into knowledge”, a great deal of what is experienced on a trip is simply a lived occurrence that goes otherwise unobserved (Carù and Cova, 2003, p. 269). Cognitively, it is inappropriate to assume that a tourism experience provides a high level of arousal that fully captivates a tourist’s attention at all times. As argued by Filep (2014), people are not experience machines, and thus the tourism experience is not experienced as one big high of happiness and engagement.

### ***2.4.3 The Episodic and Fluctuating Nature of Tourism Experiences***

In light of the previous discussion, it is reasonable to suggest the tourism experience is not experienced as one big peak experience, but rather, in a more rhythmic fashion. As opposed to attributing the entire trip to a peak-experience, tourists' may only come to reach such heightened experiential richness at certain instances throughout a trip. From a hedonic standpoint, happiness and pleasure have served as a barometer of such experiential richness (Filep & Deery, 2010). A tourist's emotional involvement with their trip at hand is telling of how peak-like their experiences have been (Graefe & Vaske, 1987). As confirmed by a recent study, a tourists' emotional involvement with their trip is quite variable. Using a wrist-worn electrodermal activity device to measure emotional responses, Kim and Fesenmaier (2015) conducted a case study to investigate tourists' 'real-time' emotional reactions within a natural tourism environment. Their findings reveal that tourist's emotional involvement vary widely not only within a trip, but also within a single discrete activity. For instance, within the one-hour activity of 'visiting a park', one participant's emotional arousal spiked to a heightened level at three different instances. Based on their results, (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015) concluded that it is important for further research "to better understand how travelers deconstruct or represent various aspects of their trip as a series of acts or scenes" (p. 426).

As alluded to previously, not all that occurs on a trip is noteworthy or cognitively stimulating enough to spike a tourist's arousal and attention. Said simply, not everything that occurs on a trip matters. Volo (2009) speaks to this matter in a discussion on the role of perception in tourism experiences:

"When perceiving and interpreting the incoming stream of information about the external world, the novelty of the perceptions and the novelty of the external events that gave rise to them, acts as a driver that allows, in fact directs, the human mind to differentiate between external occurrences and how they are experienced." (p.120)

Here, Volo suggests it is only that which tourists are truly receptive of that should count as enriching experience – the emergence of novel stimuli is one source capable of spawning meaningful experience. This places perception and cognitive sensory at the heart of qualifying peak-like experiences. Not surprisingly, the importance of engagement has long been considered a distinguishing factor in tourism experiences (Moscardo, 2017). Yet, a destination's role in producing sensory input substantial enough to elicit a sharp sense of perception (i.e. engagement)

is grossly exaggerated (Larsen, 2007). Accordingly, there is no one-to-one formula suggesting simply being at a destination results in a heightened, sustained level of cognitive engagement with one's trip. Instead, there may be fluctuating swings in engagement such that tourists' continuous flow of perception features a low to 'normal' level of arousal disrupted by instances of increased cognitive stimulation.

The episodic and fluctuating nature of the tourism experience also stipulates that experientially rich experiences can occur anywhere and anytime on a trip. Events, activities, or occurrences resembling a peak experience come to be the spontaneous moments which are greatly cherished. Central to their core thesis, Quan and Wang (2004) argue peak-like experiences cannot be pre-determined as only including tourists' original motivations of sightseeing (e.g. city tour). Otherwise ordinary activities such as food consumption may emerge as reflecting characteristics associated with a peak experience. Along the same lines, mobility research indicates that meaningful experiences are independent of touristic landmarks/sites, giving credence to the idea that spikes in experiential richness can occur at any moment in space at a destination (Urry, 2007). In that sense, the crux of tourism experiences is not always about the 'stereotypical' leisure activities or popularized landmarks/sites marketed to tourists – hence, the quality of an experience is not necessarily dependent on the destination. As exemplified simply by Selstad (2007), the “Experiences anticipated by tourists do not always materialize, and unexpected events are integrated as a part of experience” (p. 30). There then seems to exist a special form of experience which occurs sporadically (and sometimes unexpectedly) within a trip.

Together, the prior points suggest the tourism experience should be depicted as experiencing fleeting instances of peak-like experience within an otherwise continuous flow of ordinary phenomena (in terms of emotional involvement and cognitive engagement). Explicitly, I propose the existence of 'Tourism Moments' as representing these fleeting instances of spiked intrigue. In direct opposition to a uniform peak experience trip representation, this proposition is grounded in embracing the fluctuating nature of tourism experiences which contain elements of mundane experience, ordinary experience, and extraordinary experience. An entire trip is not one big euphoric monolithic experience. Rather, tourists come to encounter clearly sharp and discrete moments within a trip that reach a particularly higher quality of experiential richness. Even if one accepts that the trip represents a particularly unique period of time that is generally more

intriguing than what is experienced at home, Graburn (2001) reminds us that even within this ‘heightened time’ tourists encounter both high (i.e. the extraordinary, exciting, deep relaxation, etc.) and low (i.e. the ordinary, mundane, unintriguing, and everydayness) points of experience. As such, and as will be further discussed next, the tourism literature and other fields have been implicitly alluding to the existence of Tourism Moments as these high points for some time.

## **2.5 Evidence for the Existence of Tourism Moments**

In reconciling the literature in the areas of tourism, leisure, sociology and psychology studies regarding moment-like experiences, it is possible to recognize the Tourism Moment exists as a discrete and concrete experience all its own. The experience of a Tourism Moment has been cloaked in a slew of different terms and types of micro-experiences such as epiphanies, flow, or extraordinary. Each of the different types of experiences presented in this section feature their own distinct characteristics. Yet, together there is indication they may all be referring to the same phenomenon in one way or another. To follow is a brief review of various types of moment-like experiences that have been identified which bear evidence to the existence of Tourism Moments.

### **2.5.1 Flow**

The experience of flow is perhaps one of the most recognizable experience types there is. Credited for its inception is the psychologist Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi who sought to understand human’s pursuit for optimal experiences in even the trivial activities of everyday life. Experiencing flow involves reaching an optimal psychological state in which one is completely absorbed in a task or activity resulting in heightened levels of fun and enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Reaching such an optimal state requires a harmonious balance between how challenging an activity is, and the level of skill required to meet the challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). For many, an experience of flow is one of the most enriching and immersive experiences possible. Flow is characterized by a combination of discrete features. As a mental state, people experience effortless involvement, deep immersion, and a hyper-sense of consciousness in the present (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Elkington, 2010). A distorted sense of place and time underlies the experience in conjunction with lack of self-awareness where outside concerns have no bearing (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Rickly-Boyd, 2012). As its name suggests,

an experience of flow is a dream-like state of mind where present consciousness reaches a peak level of immersion and enjoyment. Beyond its description, flow experiences are also typically meaningful and eudaimonic in nature (Filep, 2008). Traditionally, flow is believed to stem from circumstances found during ‘free time’ or leisure activities (Carli, Dell Fave, & Massimini, 1988). While often found in these carefree and intrinsic-centered experiences, flow is not a forgone event – in fact, experiencing flow is quite rare (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Flow does not just happen. Although flow can occur anywhere and anytime, this form of experience only materializes intermittently at best within a given activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1992). Perhaps one of its most distinguishing characteristics is its transient nature. For Csikszentmihalyi (1997), flow occurs “in moments” (p. 29). Referring to a rhythmic fashion, flow interrupts fairly ordinary lived experience but only for a moment’s notice. In other words, it is not possible to be in a state of flow for a prolonged period of time once it is initially obtained (Elkington, 2010). Understood within a tourism setting, moments of flow are those fleeting instances of pure and out-of-the-ordinary experience. For instance, Larsen (2013) recognized that family vacations may occasionally reach instances of ‘family flow’ in which an optimal social balance is struck between parents and children such that each obtain their respective experiential peaks – relaxation for parents, excitement for children. Yet again however, instances of family flow are few and far between as reported by one of their participants: “We have a glass of wine, talk...however it is rare that they [the children] allow us to sit quietly.” (Larsen, 2013, p. 167). Flow then ultimately speaks to those elusive moments of deep engagement and enjoyment which emerge unexpectedly and dissipate just as quickly.

### **2.5.2 Awe**

While flow is generally regarded more as a cognitive-oriented experience, the experience of awe represents the emotionally charged spikes which arise within the continuous lived experience. To clarify at the onset, awe can be discussed as a discrete emotion humans experience due to some stimulus (e.g. Shiota, Keltner, & Mossman, 2007). However, awe as an experience embodies its own distinct event by itself. Awe-experiences refer to such a powerful positive, yet complex emotional reaction that it is capable of shocking the body and mind. The source of this is attributed to the notion of vastness, pertaining to those instances in which one confronts

something that is symbolically bigger than oneself, resulting in feeling overwhelmed through such an encounter (Keltner & Haidt, 2003).

In further unpacking the experience of awe, Schneider (2009) identified 10 fundamental dimensions of the experience which include: profoundness, connectedness, numinous, vastness, existential awareness, openness and acceptance, ineffable wonder, presence, heightened perception and fear. Awe-experiences can be brought upon by a variety of different events and occurrences (Keltner & Haidt, 2003). Typically however, the extant literature has recognized the aesthetic role of nature, landscapes, landmarks, and other physical environments for offering up the beautiful and exotic. Regardless of the causal agent, awe is typically experienced spontaneously (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012). Even within the context of tourism in which tourists expect and seek out the extraordinary and fascinating, the actualization of an awe-experience is so profound that it always seems to catch the tourist off-guard. In essence, tourists come to sporadically stumble across moments of awe within their physical touristic journey as well as their 'inner journey' of the mind (Picard, 2016). Through a study of awe-experiences in a nature-based tourist destination, Pearce, Strickland-Munro, and Moore (2016) shed light on the surprise element of this experience. Their interview participants disclosed how awe-experiences opened opportunities for self-reflection. Certainly, for many of these tourists, they did not go into their trip expecting to encounter such life-altering moments of emotionally-charged experience. Crystallizing the spirit of an awe-experience is the mystery and wonder embedded within events such as tourism experiences where experientially intriguing and meaningful situations seemingly arise out of 'mid-air' (Picard, 2016).

### **2.5.3 Existential Authenticity**

Belonging to the same 'special experience' category, instances of existential authenticity surface within the context of both everyday and tourism experiences. In a nutshell, when a person reaches a point at any instant and in any situation in which they are being completely genuine to themselves, it is said they experience existential authenticity (Wang, 1999). If existential questions include those such as who am I?, What is my place in the world?, then existential authenticity reflects responses where one is fully aware of their most genuine inner-self, and is also comfortable with this inner-self as situated within the world (Brown, 2009). Not surprisingly, experiences are the central mechanism in which this state of being can be reached,



and in line with the previous two types of experiences discussed, existential authenticity is experienced in moments. As reminded by Rickly-Boyd (2012), [...existential authenticity is not something that is realized or enduring, but is momentary] (p. 88). In addition to its fleeting nature, moments of existential authenticity are also quite rare in their occurrence (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). Particularly due to its liminal characteristic, tourism experiences foster a particularly fruitful ground for existential authenticity moments to emerge. Accordingly, people undertake tourism experience for this reason - for the off-chance that a situation arises within this break in everydayness for them to find a true sense of self (Knudsen, Rickly, & Vidon, 2016). In delineating the vacation cycle through an existential lens, Kirillova and Lehto (2015) denote the 'peak' phase as the ultimate culmination and recognition of an intensified existential authentic self as contained within the temporal boundaries of a moment. Based on an in-depth theoretical exploration of existential authenticity in the tourism experience, they proclaim "We contend that existential authenticity does not just happen to tourists on vacation, but a vacation environment can foster temporary [emphasis added] growth in existential authenticity via particular mechanisms" (Kirillova & Lehto, 2015, p. 114). Not surprisingly then, when such unexpected, rare, and fleeting moments do surface within the confines of a trip, it is no surprise tourists prioritize savoring at the utmost importance.

#### **2.5.4 Cary's 'Tourist Moment'**

In a slightly different nature, the 'tourist moment' presented in the essay by Stephanie Hom Cary (2004) further supplies evidence to the existence of momentary-like events in tourism experiences. Cary was motivated by the lack of humanistic-oriented inquiry into the tourism experience, and thus put forward an intriguing discussion in spotlighting how the tourist-as-subject is negotiated and understood through the manifestation of what she referred to as a 'tourist moment'. While a significant portion of her essay concerned the explanation regarding the difference between the tourist moment as the lived on-site experience and its (re)presentation in later narrative, the tourist moment as its own discrete event is of particular interest here. At the heart of the tourist moment as an experience is serendipity. Unexpectedly and serendipitously, tourist moments spring up as surprising and special occurrences within a trip. In referencing travel experiences found in other studies and papers, Cary recognizes the appearance of tourist moments in shared excerpts alluding to its serendipitous character: "[Travel provides] the

opportunity, even accidentally, to bump into parts of yourself...]”, “I drew near and discovered that the light came from...]”, “Suddenly, I heard singing...]”. Tourist moments are serendipitous moments, and vice versa. In one regard, the spontaneity of the occurrence holds value simply due to its ‘shock value’. Pointedly however, Cary explains it is precisely because the experience is rooted in such a serendipitous fashion which allows a subsequent realization and acceptance of this occurrence as only being genuine and authentic. Rather than a contrived experience delivered by a tourism provider, tourist moments are better reflected as gifts from the universe, and as so, can only be considered as authentically valid. Encountering a Tourism Moment means encountering that which is hidden beyond the contrived stage of the destination as a product, and revealing hints at the true genuine destination at hand. Together, the serendipitous discovery and the subsequent assignment of authenticity ultimately renders and bounds for the tourist this moment as their own. Included in the experience of a tourist moment is also the element of self-discovery in conjunction with the release of the tourist role. Given the significance and experiential richness of the moment as previously highlighted, tourists come to acquire an existential authentic self in lieu of their self-perception as a tourist. Yet in line with the previous experiences discussed (e.g. flow, awe, existential authenticity) the temporal nature of the experience is one bounded in liminality. Tourists in these experiences are typically described as being in an extremely conscious state of awareness and immersion due simply because they implicitly recognize they must seize the moment as it unfolds. Perhaps best captured by Cary (2004) herself, “It is a moment where she perceives that she has gone beyond mere tourist representation and gotten “inside the myth,” and like the Cuban dancers, the mattanza [the touristic moment] has become her entire world at that particular moment.” (p.71). In summary then, tourist moments are serendipitous, rare, authentic, self-reflective, and always fleeting.

### **2.5.5 Other Moment-Like Experiences**

The previous four experience types were spotlighted to showcase how moment-like events are present and prominent during tourism experiences. Each experience type stands as their own distinct phenomenon, yet collectively they appear to depict a shared common experience. Yet, further exploration of the tourism literature, and its related disciplines reveals a multitude of similar moment-like events found during tourism experiences. Table 1 features eight additional experience types which are known to be experienced in the same momentary-like fashion. In

reconciling these eight experiences, in addition to the four prior experiences discussed in greater detail, there is evident indication they may all be referring to the presence of one overarching yet distinct type of micro-experience. These special experiences share much more in common than what distinguishes them from one another. As such, there is sound reason to propose that they may all be pertaining to the same phenomenon here forth described as a ‘Tourism Moment’.

Table 1. Examples of ‘Moment-Like’ Experiences

Experience Type	Description	Tourism Experience Application	Sources
<i>Aesthetic Experience</i>	A peak visual experience characterized by intense visual attention towards an aesthetically pleasing sight resulting in a sense of harmony and self-discovery.	Aesthetic experience dimensions (e.g. active discovery) as prominent determinants of visitor satisfaction. (Filep, 2008)	Beardsley (1982; Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson (1990)
<i>Epiphany</i>	A momentary abrupt and vivid recognition or awareness of insight that can occur spontaneously, and can spark transformation.	The tourist epiphany as an interactional moment and catalyst for transformation in self-identity. (Wearing, McDonald, & Ankor, 2016)	McDonald (2008); Miller & C’de Baa (2001); Ross (2011); Storie & Vining (2018)
<i>Extraordinary Experience</i>	The emergence of an unexpected and temporary emotionally charged experience that holds the experiencer in a fleeting state of fascination.	Spawned by wildlife and scenery described as surprising, novel, and serendipitous, create moments of heightened affect such as awe, excitement, and pleasure. (Farber & Hall, 2007)	Abrahams (1986); Arnould & Price (1993); Jefferies & Lepp (2012)
<i>Hospitable Moment</i>	Moments in hospitality settings in which customers engage in a temporary state of intensive communal bonding that stands alone as its own event.	The hospitable moment as featuring elements of <i>communitas</i> , pure hospitality, and <i>communitasque</i> experiences as ultimately exemplifying instances of ‘meta-hospitality’. (Lugosi, 2008)	Bell (2016); Lugosi (2008)

Table 1. Continued

<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	Tourism experiences featuring particular experiential dimensions such as novelty and meaningfulness  vivid enough to be engrained in long-term memory.	Certain destination attributes create a higher likelihood of inciting a memorable tourism experience. (Kim, 2014)	Chandralal & Valenzuela (2013); Kim & Ritchie (2013); Sthapit (2017); Tung & Ritchie (2011)
<i>Mindfulness</i>	Mindfulness describes a fleeting, vivid, and sensitized state in which one pays deep attention to the present environment and experience unfolding on a second-to-second basis.	Mindfulness within the tourism context depicts rare instances in which a tourist reaches a greater sensory awareness of their present situation and is simultaneously able to relax in the here and now by ignoring outside thoughts (Chen, Scott, & Benckendorff, 2017)	Frauman & Norman (2004); Kabat-Zinn (2003); Langer (1992); Shapiro & Carlson (2017)
<i>Peak Experience</i>	Sudden moments of highest elation and meaningfulness that are generally short in duration yet experienced as timeless.	Tourists describe peak experiences as the 'highlights' of any given trip that correspond with the highest and rarest instances of happiness, excitement, and enjoyment. (Knobloch et al., 2014)	Dodson (1996); Maslow (1968); Laski (1962); Privette (1983); McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting (2009)
<i>Transcendent Experience</i>	Rare moments that totally absorb a person in extreme joy, freedom, and peace.	Instances of transcendent experiences have the potential to positively influence subsequent experiences of flow and happiness for mountain climbers visiting a national park (Tsaur, Yen, & Hsiao, 2013)	Levin & Steele (2005); Watson (1991); Williams & Harvey (2001)

The goal of this section was to argue for the existence of a specific type of experience that emerges within the tourism experience at large but has not been explicitly spotlighted until this point. The many 'moment-like' experiences described in this section share very similar characteristics that collectively represent an experience this study refers to as a Tourism Moment. While the possible experiential features of a Tourism Moment will be detailed in length later in this dissertation, one key definitive feature comes to define the experience. A Tourism

Moment is temporally short, perhaps lasting only a few seconds to minutes – in other words, the elation and intrigue experienced is vividly fleeting. Although a seemingly simple characteristic of the experience, studying experience at such a temporally micro-level may allow a unique perspective into the traveler experience. As discussed earlier, the tourism experience is perhaps best portrayed as rhythmic and fluctuating in nature rather than the uniform peak-like experience traditionally conceived. Tourism Moments then represent a fleeting spike in experience that elevates the trip to a new level, even if for a short period. Given their fleeting and subtle nature, Tourism Moments may have not been given attention from the tourism literature prior. This study seeks to change that by understanding what the experience entails along with its significance to travelers. Further, because the experience is so short-lived, the decision of whether or not to document the experience with a smartphone becomes more critical. With only seconds or minutes of experience to live through, choosing to document may mean that the majority of the experience is taken up by this act. Accordingly, this study will also focus on the potential impact that documenting a Tourism Moment has on the experience and subsequent memorability of the experience.

## **2.6 The Impact of the Smartphone on the Travel Experience**

In her paper about the most transformative technology innovations to impact travel, Hjalager (2015) proclaimed the following about the smartphone: "... [the phone thus became a principal guide to traveling, and not only a means of communication]" (p. 16). It is now well established the smartphone has been one of the single most impactful and influential technologies on the travel experience within the last decade (Kim & Law, 2015). Although the concept of a smartphone has been around since the 1990s, it was not until the introduction of the first iPhone that the true smartphone era began (Jackson, 2018). And the mere affordance of having mobile access to the internet tapped into a completely new world of how the travel experience is defined and executed (Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2014). Due to this key affordance alone, years of tourism research has attempted to unpack and explain the impact of the smartphone on the travel experience. In what follows is a brief review of the various affordances and their respective impacts on the travel experience.

The smartphone has had a groundbreaking impact on redefining how travelers remain connected to their homelife while away. The availability of the internet via the smartphone coupled with the rise of social media networks has facilitated a more connected traveler (Dickinson et al., 2014; Kirillova & Wang, 2016; Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2016). Although tourists were typically understood to engage with their trips so as to separate from everydayness (i.e. encapsulation), this traditional travel practice has given way to a new norm in which tourists maintain an omnipresence in keeping up with the everyday happenings of ‘homelife’ (Gretzel, 2010; Jansson, 2007; White & White, 2007). Utilizing the many communication channels found on a smartphone such as messaging applications (e.g., WhatsApp) and social media networks (e.g. Facebook), tourists showcase a more fluid sense of connectivity in which they can maintain both a virtual presence to home and physical presence to the destination. Historically deemed as liminal, the travel experience is now better understood as ‘decapsulated’ or ‘digitally elastic’ – both characterizing how the smartphone has made it difficult for travelers to leave homelife behind (Jansson, 2007; Molz & Paris, 2015; Pearce, 2011). In fact, research has shown that people dramatically increase their social media usage during a trip, as compared to their pre-trip or everyday patterns (Choe, Kim, Fesenmaier, 2016), which is line with the revelation that peoples’ use of smartphones intensifies during travel (Choe, Fesenmaier, & Vogt, 2017). This prevalent smartphone-facilitated connectedness has shown to produce both positive and negative implications. As far as the positive implications, maintaining a connectedness with one’s work responsibilities has revealed beneficial for keeping oneself ‘in the loop’ (Pearce & Gretzel, 2012). However, as Kirillova and Wang (2016) found, it is important that the line of communication is of high quality such that the work colleagues back home are supportive and caring in their communication back in order to benefit from a destination’s restorative qualities. Yet, mounting evidence also points to an evident ‘e-lienation’ experienced when travelers must negotiate keeping homelife updated while trying to make most of the fleeting travel experience before them (Tribe and Mkono, 2017).

Early on, Jansson (2006) pointed out that the technology at that time offered “more detailed scripts of potential journeys; aiding tourists to coordinate their touristic activities more efficiently” (p. 29). Almost 15 years later, the smartphone has only compounded the way technology aids tourists, and especially as it regards to information search. Early on, researchers recognized how the smartphone prompted the ability for tourists to easily conduct information

search during the trip while already at the destination and skip pre-trip planning altogether. (Gretzel, 2010). Today, more and more tourists choose to leverage their smartphone while already on the trip for ‘on-the-go’ search sessions (Ho, Yuan, Lin, & Chen, 2015; Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018). This pattern arose within the context of everyday living, as participants have expressed increased smartphone usage for information search activities (Wang Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2016). In their study, a spillover effect was found such that tourists habitual information search in everyday life make them just as reliant on their smartphone for information during their travels. However, information search was found to be more purposeful during the trip stage in that tourists turn to their smartphone in short spurts to search for things to do, restaurants, deals, and reviews. This is supported by recent research by Google which shows that 85% of leisure travelers make decisions on activities during the trip rather than prior, and that smartphone-enabled information search at hotels increased by nearly 30% in 2016, further indicating a trend in which tourists conduct information search for things to do/see while already at the destination (Google, 2016). The consequences of these changes to information search have been complicated and complex. On one end, the smartphone has been cited as fostering a modern or ‘prosuming’ tourist who is believed to be better informed, knowledgeable, and empowered (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2013). In particular, the smartphone grants travelers a sense of confidence, and even greater independence from the destination to navigate the travel journey (Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018; Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2014). Yet interestingly, this same affordance has been shown to create a traveler who is highly dependent and over-attached to their smartphone, stifling their sense of serendipity (Lalicic & Weismayer, 2016; Tribe & Mkono, 2017). Hence, much like most smartphone-enabled affordances, there are both positive and negative impacts to this technology on the travel experience.

Perhaps one of the most under-recognized impacts of the smartphone in travel has been its place as a tool for documenting travel experiences. Year after year, the camera technology in the best smartphones available have improved dramatically. In fact, there is reason to believe that smartphone cameras today rival some of the best expensive point-and-shoot cameras in the market (VSBytes Team, 2019). With such advanced cameras in smartphones, this may also explain why evidence shows that travelers today are likely taking more pictures than ever before (Richter, 2017). While documentation has always been an integral part of the travel experience,

no other time has ever allowed a traveler to produce high quality imagery at such an efficient manner. And perhaps, it is not surprising that the smartphone has also brought upon Photography 2.0 where documentation's main purpose is as a communicative act (Larsen, 2014). As a documentation tool, the smartphone affords a way for travelers during their travel experience to express to others on social media "not just that I was here; but I am here right now" (Bell and Lyall, 2005, p. 136). That is, the smartphone as a camera and internet-device has led to a change in which tourists take pictures/videos of their experiences simply for the sake of communicating these events to their social media audience during the trip, rather than for post-trip record-keeping (Larsen, 2014; Robinson, 2014). Documenting, as a traditional touristic practice has thus changed from documenting for the sake of remembering experiences, to documenting for communicative purposes. As the study by Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, and Wong (2018) indicates, this emerging pattern has resulted in travelers who engage in excessive documentation such that they feel the need to take a picture or video of any intriguing experience they encounter. Despite the recognized increase in travelers who document, as well as the increased use of cameras as a communication tool, there is very little research on the impact of the smartphone as a documentation tool. With a highly advanced camera in travelers' pockets along with an urge to communicate our travel moments via pictures/videos on social media throughout a trip, it is surprising to find little tourism research on how this new dynamic is shaping the travel experience at large. When travelers are increasingly dispositioned to interrupt their best travel moments by pulling out and placing their smartphones in front of their line of sight to document a great moment, it begs to question why no prior research has strived to explore the ramifications of this simple, yet significant travel practice. While great attention has been dedicated to the impacts of smartphone on connectedness and information search, it is now time to begin understanding the impact of smartphone documentation on the travel experience.

## **2.7 The Role of Documentation in Tourism**

Given the visually stimulating nature of travel, documentation is a traditional touristic practice that has been closely intertwined with the consumptive experience of travel (Urry, 1990). In fact, the act of documentation was one of the most prominent subjects in the early years of the growing tourism literature (Sontag, 1977; MacCannell, 1976). The subject has sustained its peak interest over the last few decades with researchers remaining intrigued with how travelers



negotiate their picture-taking and video-taking efforts within the confines of a new destination. Throughout this time, and with the evolving nature of camera technology, two divergent sentiments regarding the role of documentation has emerged. On one end, many believe documentation takes away from any given experience, while in direct contrast, others view documentation as capable of instilling a layer of added joy and performance in a travel experience.

For a long time, the view of documentation was mainly centered how it turns travelers into passive recipients of experience. Documentation, to many, represents a traveler who removes themselves out of an experience in order to capture the same trivialized images many others have done. This speaks to an overt strategy in which people travel seemingly just for the sake of obtaining photographs (Sontag, 2002). That is, documentation facilitates a hermeneutic circle where millions of travelers capture landmarks and sights in the exact fashion as shown in media depictions (Albers & James, 1988; Urry, 2002). In a way, documentation becomes an act that must be executed in order to certify that the trip even happened in the first place. As early as the 1970s, researchers such as Sontag (1977) were concerned of how the camera served as the primary modality for consuming a place. Today, this concern remains justified as research has recently shown the ‘mindless’ nature associated with documenting: “Other tourists reported taking pictures automatically rather than mindfully; as something they were supposed to do rather than wanted to do. During our participant observation we noticed that many tourists took pictures without expressing positive emotions, posing for the camera even if they did not enjoy it.” (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitás, 2016, p. 51). When all travelers are directed by media depictions in taking the same trivialized pictures/videos, it is no wonder this may foster a more mindless and disconnected sense of absorption. The notion that taking time to document pulls a traveler away was also seen in the work by Cederholm (2004), as backpackers recognized the missed opportunity to be in the moment when the extraordinary arose and a camera was present. In short, documenting in this light is seen as stifling the opportunity to realize and extract the full potential of an experience that is otherwise afforded when one is tasked with only observing and mindfully attuning to the present travel experience. Documentation then, can trump reality, temporarily moving the traveler’s curiosity and intrigue away from the present moment, and towards the documented content instead (Scarles, 2013).

In a different perspective, the idea of documentation as a disrupter is not only rejected but is replaced with a view that situates documentation as an enhancer of experience. While this viewpoint also recognizes that documentation invades in on the consumption of Tourism Moments, it regards this invasion as beneficial and positive. Or as described by Dinhopl and Gretzel (2016a), "...experience and documentation facilitate each other" (p. 404). In a sense, documentation is a multi-sensory experience all its own that offers a deeper level of immersion in consumptive experiences (Larsen, 2006). Travelers do not document passively, instead the act of documentation implies a performance of the lived experience which can offer an added element of pleasure in and of itself (Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). This line of thinking views documentation as a deeply embodied experience wherein a traveler becomes a participant in the experience and performs with the camera (Larsen, 2005). As a result, the relevance of a travel experience is heightened because travelers serve a purpose and become productive in the consumption of the experience. As a 'producer' of experience (Stylianou-Lambert, 2012), documentation allows a deeper level of immersion in the experience which grants travelers a stronger sense of 'being at a destination' (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016b; Marlow & Dabbish, 2014). At the minimum, documentation can allow for an element of play and fun not afforded for those who just observe an experience organically. Some evidence even suggests that those who have a favorable opinion towards cameras on vacations experience more positive emotions during their travel experience (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2016).

As noted earlier, documentation via the smartphone is a grossly underserved area of study in tourism despite the many distinct elements it introduces. To date, no study exists which seeks to exclusively study the impact of smartphone documentation on the travel experience. And yet, there is some indication that the inherent nature of smartphone documentation is very different from documentation with any other form of camera. One aspect which has received the most attention and is directly tied with smartphone documentation is the dynamic with social media. Previously discussed was how the new age of documentation is one where travelers take pictures and videos exclusively for the sake of instantly sharing their experiences online, rather than for record keeping (Larsen, 2014). It can be argued that this new dynamic was spawned directly due to the emergence of the smartphone which offers internet connectivity and access to any social media application. Some research in tourism has already highlighted some of the implications of the latter. For one, travelers may be perpetually conscious of a prospective social media audience

when documenting and consuming their experiences (Lo & McKercher, 2015). Travelers thus engage in overt impression management such that they work at ensuring they project the best idealized identity of themselves to their social media audience. Lo and McKercher (2015) outlined a five-stage process that showcases how a traveler meticulously manages their documented travel experiences. This impression management may create an undue socially derived pressure such that the traveler has to consider how their social media audience will think of their travel experiences as they are living it, possibly lessening the pleasure and increasing the tension of the present moment. In fact, the following description of this impression management reveals just how complicated and demanding smartphone documentation has become: “Sometimes an ideal performance for the future audiences might not be as ideal for the present audiences, and as such sacrifices are to be made. This struggle usually takes place during the on-site production” (Lo & McKercher, 2015, p. 114). Others however have a more positive view for this new age of smartphone documentation. Dinhopl and Gretzel (2016b) view selfie-taking, a practice largely conducted via smartphones, as functioning to help travelers construct and make visible their own self-identifies. Regardless of whether it is viewed in a positive or negative light, it is undeniable that the smartphone as a camera comes with an added layer of complexity not found in other forms of cameras.

Other aspects unique to smartphone documentation can also be found as well. Travelers have always been sensitive to ensuring they capture the ‘perfect’ shot. However, there is reason to believe that travelers’ concern for the quality of documentation has intensified with smartphone cameras. Some have pointed out that travelers in this new era are very habituated to always inspect how well they captured any given experience (Robinson, 2014) – and perhaps this is understood given the prior discussion on social media and impression management. Smartphone cameras have made it increasingly easier to capture high quality imagery and videos. Coupled with the popular use of filters and other design elements featured in social media applications such as Instagram and Snapchat, taking a picture or video has also perhaps never been more fun than with a smartphone (Moreau, 2019). The research by Gillet, Schmitz, and Mitas (2016) validates how the ease of documenting via a smartphone may ironically increase the time it takes to document because a traveler can quickly assess the quality of a picture then retake as many times as desired. Finally, one simple yet significant distinction of smartphone documentation is the inability to physically separate oneself from the camera. With

other forms of digital cameras, if one wishes, they can simply leave the camera behind before venturing onto a destination. However, given the camera is embedded within a smartphone, it makes it difficult for those wishing to fight the urge to not take a picture or video during their most cherished Tourism Moments.

It is these distinct aspects of a smartphone as a camera that suggests the impact of documentation on the travel experience may be different than what has been previously considered with just traditional forms of cameras. In fact, it can be argued that the smartphone may magnify either of the two diverging proposed impacts of documentation as previously discussed. Specifically, smartphone documentation may either be even more of a disruptor or enhancer of travel experiences. There are also two different mentalities and practices of documentation –travelers who view documentation as fun/enjoyable, and travelers who view it as a burdening expectation (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2016). The affordance of easy and high-quality documentation via smartphones may also intensify the positions of either group. To confirm either of the prior dynamics would require a study that tests exactly how documentation is impacting the consumptive experiences of travelers. However, within the tourism literature, there does not exist a study that has explicitly and directly examined how the act of documenting inherently affects how a traveler consumes an experience. To date, most opinions on this matter have remained at a theoretical level as researchers have yet to test their respective positions regarding whether documentation is a disruptor or enhancer of travel experiences. Accordingly, it is proposed that it is time for tourism research that moves beyond just offering propositions without empirical evidence for the possible impacts of documentation on the travel experience. Given the growing use of smartphones for documenting (Richter, 2017), there is a great need to begin examining the actual implications for how travelers experience their finest moments on a trip. One area of the experience that is perhaps most affected by smartphone documentation is how travelers remember the experience.

## **2.8 Memory Research in Tourism**

Given the intangible nature of travel experiences, it is understandable that the role of memory plays a significant part. Upon their return home and moving forward, travelers hope they retain in their memory the many experiences the destination offered them. In fact, it can be concluded that the only travel experiences that matter are those that can be later recollected from memory,

as those which are not are seemingly unobtainable again (Volo, 2009). Accordingly, it is not surprising that the study of memory and tourism experiences should be a highly prioritized research agenda. As will be discussed later, the last decade has focused primarily on the study of ‘memorable tourism experiences’ (i.e., ‘MTE’), yet the proceeding discussion will briefly present some of the aspects of what is understood regarding memory and the tourism experience outside of the ‘MTE’ research stream.

In short, tourism research on memory has focused on either what impacts the recollection of travel experience memories or the many roles memories play. In one regard, the purpose of travel experience memories goes beyond a stockpiling perspective in which travelers just collect memories for the sake of doing so. Instead, memories are argued to play a more influential role, and exist to do more than just be retrieved. Research outside of tourism has showcased the power of nostalgia (e.g., Cross, 2015) and this has also been seen in the context of tourism. People like to engage in nostalgia by reminiscing on their past travel experiences (Morgan & Xu, 2009). Thus, the act of reminiscing offers an enjoyable and lively experience all its own by allowing one to savor again a past experience (Chun, Diehl, & MacGinnis, 2017). And this may be why (Robinson, 2014) found that many travelers picture-taking motivations are based on facilitating future nostalgia – that is, to ensure they are able to reminisce on specific moments from a trip. Interestingly, the role of nostalgia is not a one-way street in tourism. Travel experiences themselves have been shown to serve as springboards for triggering past personal memories (from everyday life) (Rickly-Boyd, 2009). Beyond a reminiscing purpose, others have identified a more practical implication of travel experiences memories. Research has found that people’s travel memories are one of their biggest sources for deciding on a future destination choice (Kozak, 2001; Lehto, O’Leary, & Morrison, 2004; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). Along the same lines, evidence has implied that a ‘strong’ travel experience memory improves revisit intentions and word-of-mouth (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). Travel memories thus hold incredible value for both travelers (through reminiscing) and destinations (through behavioral intentions).

Given this value, some research has highlighted manners in which to facilitate the successful long-term retainment of travel memories. Several studies have showcased how souvenirs serve as a powerful reference for ‘tangibilizing’ travel experience memories (Belk, 2013, Rickly-Boyd, 2009; Wilkins, 2011). As “touchstones of memory”, Morgan and Pritchard

(2005) discuss how souvenirs function as powerful stimulants for channeling a recollection experience of past travel experiences (p. 41). And perhaps this is also why destinations agree and recognize that objects play a role in ensuring their visitors better retain a sense of place via memory recollection (Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016). Travel is an inherently socially-oriented experience, and as such, communication and storytelling can also play a role in memory retrieval and formation. Specifically, the narrative process of discussing one's travel experiences helps solidify a socially derived memory representation (Pearce, 2011; Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018). In other words, while any given travel experience is bounded as a memory upon the conclusion of its occurrence, the act of discourse in sharing this memory with others involves a lively process influencing how well that experience is remembered subsequently. Perhaps this is also why destinations evoke strategies which encourage travelers to share and communicate their destination's travel experiences online (Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016). Yet, others also stress that memories are malleable such that the process of storytelling also inherently changes how and what we remember from our travel experiences (Braash, 2008; Cary, 2004; Selstad, 2007). For instance, research has been conducted in which participants were led to believe they had encountered a character (e.g., Bugs Bunny) from their mock Disneyland vacation that they indeed did not encounter (Braun-LaTour, 2006). Accordingly, when people recollect and share their travel experiences from memory with others, they may be distorting or changing details of the experience with every recollection. Finally, others simply remind us that a highly engaging and multisensory experience proves paramount for ensuring that the memory is engrained for the long-run (Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016; Rickly-Boyd, 2009; Leach, 2011).

Interestingly, within the last decade or so there has been a concentrated focus from the academic tourism field to study 'memorable tourism experiences', or 'MTEs' from hereon. Grounded originally in the Pine and Gilmore (1999) principles of experiential marketing, this line of research emerged intended on identifying aspects of experience which best lead to an ideal memorable tourism experience. The emergence of MTE research can be credited to Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) who defined an MTE simply as a "a tourism experience positively remembered and recalled after the event has occurred" (p. 13). Achieving their goal, this study represented an effort to reveal the theoretical dimensions of an MTE and establish a validated seven-factor measurement as well. Within the same year, Kim (2010) took the framework further by conducting a structural equation model to determine how well the seven

initial MTE dimensions predicted the recollection and vividness of traveler's autobiographical memories. As will be discussed in greater detail later, this represents one of the only MTE studies which attempted to operationalize and measure memorability explicitly.

In lieu of measuring the memorability of tourism experiences, MTE research has instead developed a set of experiential dimensions which are intended on determining the memorability of any given tourism experience. The underlying premise in this approach is that a traveler will carry a higher chance of remembering a tourism experience if the experience features one or more of the MTE experiential dimensions. For instance, a traveler will have a higher chance of remembering their trip if they experience a sense of refreshment or experience something novel (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012). Complicating this approach has been the various sets of experiential dimensions forwarded by tourism researchers over the years. After the research by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) and Kim (2010), Kim & Ritchie (2014) conducted an additional confirmatory factor analysis that produced the same following seven dimensions: 1) hedonism; 2) novelty; 3) local culture; 4) refreshment; 5) meaningfulness; 6) involvement; and 7) knowledge. Yet, things become much more varied and inconsistent since then. Interestingly, Tung and Ritchie (2011) narrowed down the experiential dimensions of a memorable tourism experience to 1) affect; 2) expectations; 3) consequentiality; and 4) recollection. A different set of dimensions were found in a qualitative study of memorable tourism experiences which yielded seven experiential 'themes' that determine the memory of tourism experiences: 1) authentic local experiences; 2) personally significant experiences; 3) shared experiences; 4) perceived novelty; 5) perceived serendipity; 6) professional guides/operators and; 7) affective emotions (Chandralal, Rindfleish, & Valenzuela, 2015). Making things perhaps more complicated, others identified destination attributes that best foster the magical memorable tourism experience with aspects such as 'infrastructure' and 'entertainment' proving vital (Kim, 2014). Yet still, additional research has forwarded alternative sets experiential dimensions of an MTE (Lee, 2015; Sthapit, 2017), showcasing little consistency for what qualifies as an MTE. Moreover, studies have even differed in their inclusion of a negative oriented experiential dimension (Barbieri, & Henderson, & Santos, 2014; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015).

This paper shares the concern with several other tourism researchers that the current study of MTEs as is understood in the field lacks little connection to the memories of tourism experiences. Instead, the 'memorable tourism experience' concept may be simply referring to a

high-quality experience rather than having anything to do with the psychological and cognitive understanding of memory (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2014). This concern is explicitly expressed by Jorgenson, et al. (2019): “Even though it is called memorable tourism experiences, previous research looks more toward the emotion or feeling surrounding the experience. Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick’s (2012) scale captures new details of the visitor experience, but resembles motivations more than memories” (p. 570). Accordingly, this research is partly motivated by this glaring issue, and coincides with recent efforts (Jorgenson, et al., 2019; Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016) in attempting to offer a more appropriate conceptualization and operationalization of tourism experience memories.

A few other issues suggest a concerning approach for the MTE construct. First, in the line of research on MTEs, the strong memory of a memorable tourism experience is only assumed but not measured. A sort of accumulation effect is implied such that the traveler who acquires more of the experiences that resonate with any of their MTE experiential dimensions will result automatically in a highly memorable trip overall. And this is the glaring issue at the core of the MTE construct, despite its name, it resembles an idea having little to do with memory as psychology would understand it. When referring to memorable tourism experiences, Ali, Ryu, and Hussain (2016) stated on two occasions in their paper how ‘tourism memories’ impact satisfaction.

However, this makes little sense as a tourist memory is too broad of a concept to suggest this relationship. This is only further substantiated by the methodological choice in determining what qualifies as an MTE. Most studies in this research stream ask their participants to simply identify their most memorable tourism experience indicating that they may be actually just asking for their ‘best’ experiences which may not necessarily imply they are highly memorable. Other concerns involve the highly destination specific nature to the MTE (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018), the indication that the MTE may just be viewed as another evaluation metric like satisfaction (Jorgenson, et al., 2019) or the wide temporal window of a trip (Kim, 2014). Finally, perhaps most telling is how one study concluded that a memorable tourism experience can be predicted by a single experiential dimension, multiple dimensions, or none (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018) – showcasing how invalid and unreliable the MTE construct really is.



Accordingly, this study seeks to address many of the fallbacks of the MTE line of research. On one end, it becomes evident that the study of MTEs has very little to do with the study of tourism experience memories. Yet, it is understood that MTE research represents tourism's leading effort for understanding how travelers come to remember their experiences. There is thus a significant need to not follow the pack and seek a different direction on how to study the intersection of memory and tourism. Most importantly this requires going back to the field of psychology, the root of memory research within the last century, and adopt their dominant view on the memory of past personal experiences. Ultimately, there is a need for research that avoids the same obsession for the 'development' of MTEs – that is, identifying or constructing new dimensions of an idealized memorable experience. Given MTE research has largely been the tourism field's primary authority on tourism experiences and memory over the last decade, this study will directly seek to address the glaring aforementioned concerns by directly testing a prevalent factor in tourism (e.g., smartphone documentation) that may affect how well travelers remember their both their Tourism Moments and trips.

## **2.9 Theoretical Background Summary**

The overarching focus of this study concerns the experience of Tourism Moments, and the potential influence that smartphone documentation has on them. This overarching theoretical background outlined the broad arguments for the necessity of this study. After presenting the many viewpoints of the tourism experience conceptualization historically in the literature, it was argued that these various perspectives have collectively projected a narrow conceptualization of the tourism experience. A conceptualization that portrays the tourism experience as encompassing only peak-like events throughout the entirety of a trip. Evidence was then presented that challenged this longstanding view on the tourism experience, instead arguing for a more fluid and flexible conceptualization which features a variable trip of both highs and lows. Moreover, these highs in a trip were argued to be better represented by what this dissertation refers to as a Tourism Moment. Examples of various types of discrete experiences that point to the existence of Tourism Moments were presented. Ultimately, it was shown that Tourism Moments prove to be a unique type of experience that requires a greater understanding. Thus, study one of this dissertation will undertake a qualitative research project to learn more about what the experience entails and its significance to the tourism experience at large. In addition, to

explore how Tourism Moments are remembered and their role in the memory recollection processes of tourism experiences.

The smartphone, and its use as a documenting tool was also pinpointed as having a potential intricate relationship with Tourism Moments. It was stressed that smartphone documentation is distinct from other forms of documenting technology due its accessibility and quality. Travelers today were discussed to take more pictures than ever before because of the smartphone. In turn, signifying a high likelihood for the average traveler to choose to document their most precious Tourism Moments on a trip. And as such, introducing the need to understand the implications of this seemingly simple act. Specifically, study 2 will set out to examine how documenting with a smartphone impacts how Tourism Moments are consumed and also later remembered. Especially as it regards to the memory of Tourism Moments, this study will address a glaring research gap in memory research within the tourism literature by empirically testing one concrete influential factor on memory.

In essence, the focus on this study is on Tourism Moments – understanding the experience, its role as a memory, and how they are impacted by smartphone documentation. While study one will dive deep into describing the experience of a Tourism Moment, study two shifts directions in pinpointing one salient factor that can impact how travelers experience and later remember a Tourism Moment. The experience of a Tourism Moment only lasts a few seconds to a few minutes. Thus, a big component of study 2 as it relates to Tourism Moments is to empirically examine how ‘sensitive’ such a temporally short experience is to the act of smartphone documentation. Collectively, both studies will produce findings that will help introduce the experience of a Tourism Moment while also highlighting how it is influenced by one of the most prevalent acts in travel (smartphone documentation).

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## **CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE AND MEMORABILITY OF TOURISM MOMENTS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

One can learn a lot about the tourism experience by the recognizing the day-to-day trends governing society. The use of social media is now a deeply embedded aspect of most people's lives around the world, and one trend in particular speaks volumes for how people view and value their lived experiences. The use of 'stories' refers to a format in which social media users post short 'highlights' of their daily experience, usually regarding particularly intriguing experiences. Although Snapchat began the trend in 2012, today Facebook, Instagram, Skype, YouTube, Twitter, WeChat, WhatsApp, Weibo, and many other social media platforms around the world feature this same format. This means that billions of people around the world experience life in moments, share life in moments, and digest each other's moments on a day-to-day basis. In that sense, it could be said that people are increasingly cognizant of the experience of 'moments'. Given the spillover effect from everyday life (Hjager, 2015; Xiang, 2017), there is great reason to believe that the importance of these fleeting moments are even more magnified during travel experiences. When it has become human nature to have and share one's best moments, there presents a rich opportunity to explore what the experience of moments signifies for travelers.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of attention on more micro-level experiences in tourism research. Perhaps to blame for this is the literature's over-emphasis of conceptualizing the tourism experience as one uniform peak experience. In one regard, this refers to how the study of the tourism experience typically refers to all that is experienced within one designated 'trip'. That is, tourism researchers have largely characterized and generalized the tourism experience as everything a traveler encounters from the beginning till the end of a trip (e.g., María & Jacobsen, 2014 ; Ryan, 2002; Selstad, 2007; Turner & Ash, 1975). This broad sweeping view of the tourism experience consequently glosses over the opportunity of studying moment-like experiences that arise within this wide temporal window. Secondly, the tourism experience conceptualization for many years has characterized the entire trip as a uniform peak experience. Aligning the tourism experience as a peak experience signifies a traveler experiences a deep and heightened sense of sensory, emotional, and cognitive stimulation throughout the entire span of



the trip. As argued by other researchers such as Quan & Wang (2004), a large portion of tourism experience research has historically studied the experience under this running assumption. With this view of the tourism experience, it automatically presumes all that is experienced within a given trip is significant and worthwhile. Accordingly, this neglects the possibility that certain distinct instances which occur at a temporally shorter interval may stand out more than others. In other words, it leaves little room for studying the experiences of special fleeting moments on a trip.

It is thus now time to reexamine the tourism experience through a particularly different perspective. In a way, this requires going back to ‘square one’ and leading a study with the simple purpose of learning about people’s best moments in travel. Although a seemingly simple purpose, it places emphasis on studying experience at a much more temporally confined level. A study of traveler’s best moments seeks to understand the role that such short, yet significant experiences have within the trip overall. It avoids the same line of thinking that has dominated the tourism experience literature for many years – the foregone assumption that there is a continuous stream of peak experience throughout most trips. With the proposal that travelers instead have fleeting peak moments, and that travelers themselves may be highly cognizant of the existence of these moments, there serves a need to explore what these moments are all about.

As it stands, some research has already hinted at the existence of moment-like experiences during tourism experiences. A collection of different moment-like experiences which are given different names and labels have surfaced across the areas of tourism, leisure, sociology, and psychology. Examples of these moment-level experiences include the experiences of awe (Schneider, 2009), epiphanies (McDonald, 2008), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), or transcendent experiences (Levin & Steele, 2005), to name a few. While the array of these experiences each feature a unique set of distinct characteristics, they all allude to a temporally short yet significant experience – i.e., a moment. For instance, the experience of an epiphany describes a momentary abrupt and vivid recognition or awareness of insight that can occur spontaneously, and can spark transformation (McDonald, 2008). The experience of ‘Flow’ is characterized by a sudden change in one’s optimal psychological state in which one is fleetingly absorbed in a task at a heightened level (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). An extraordinary experience is the emergence of an unexpected and temporary emotionally charged experience that holds the experiencer in a fleeting state of fascination (Arnould & Price, 1993). I believe that these and

many other moment-like experiences may all be referring to the same ‘moment’ experience, the experience of what this study refers to as a ‘Tourism Moment’. The nature of the experience of a Tourism Moment may not resemble each of these many moment-like experiences exactly, but more so, reflects the broad spirit of a special fleeting experience. And so, the first two goals of this study are as follows: 1) 1. To develop a unified conceptualization of the Tourism Moment by identifying and describing its fundamental characteristic; 2) To understand what the experience of a Tourism Moment entails. Through accomplishing both objectives, this study will learn more about an otherwise implicitly yet significant type of experience that occurs during travel experiences.

In addition, this study will seek to better understand how travelers come to remember these cherished Tourism Moments. The tourism experience, because it is intangible, is capable of delivering value after it occurs only through the memories travelers retain from the experience. Interestingly, there currently lacks a wealth of knowledge in the tourism literature on how certain travel experiences from a trip come to be remembered while others do not. While experiencing a special and intriguing moment holds value as it unfolds and even shortly after, how well with this fleeting span of experience be remembered years later? Unfortunately, referencing the tourism literature for answers on this question leaves much to be desired. Much of the research in tourism has focused on identifying a distinct set of experiential aspects which determine the likelihood that a traveler may remember a trip (Kim, 2010; Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018). While this line of research has certainly been a beneficial start, there is a need for an alternative approach that explores memory from a more traditional psychology-grounded perspective (Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016).

This involves introducing the long-established theories, frameworks, and knowledge from the various fields of psychology. As such, this study adopts the degree of reliving and recall as a means to both study and conceptualize the memory of travel experiences. Degree of reliving concerns how vividly a person can relive a past event, while recall refers to how easy it is for a person to bring back a memory in the first place (Suddendorf & Corballis, 2007; Zauberman, Ratner, & Kim, 2009). If Tourism Moments represent some of the richest instances of intriguing experience from a given trip, then they serve as a suitable experience to study how travelers remember travel experiences. While the study of ‘Memorable Tourism Experiences’ (Kim, 2010) represents the memory for the entirety of a trip, the memory of Tourism Moments is much more

confined, and may offer a more appropriate temporal scale to study memory in the travel context. Accordingly, this study seeks to address the following objectives as it pertains to the memory of Tourism Moments: 1) To confirm if Tourism Moments are vividly relived; 2) To understand how well/often Tourism Moment memories are recalled; 3) To explore what affects the recall of Tourism Moments; 4) To understand how Tourism Moments and trips are recalled. It is hoped that this study will uncover the previously ignored dynamics regarding how travel experiences come to be remembered again.

The findings of this study should elicit implications for both theory and tourism/hospitality practitioners. Regarding the theoretical implications, the findings should help bring to light the importance of reconsidering the long-standing conceptualization of the tourism experience as one uniform peak experience. Instead, this study supports a view of the tourism experience as having certain spikes, peaks, or points of heightened interest that end up being the most cherished outcomes of a trip (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012; McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009; Williams & Harvey, 2001; Quan & Wang, 2004). While fruitful strides have been made in recognizing the importance of individual and discrete episodes in tourism experiences (i.e., moments) within a trip (e.g. Cutler, Carmichael, & Doherty, 2014), there is still much more conceptual development needed. From a memory standpoint, this study seeks to provide an alternative perspective than what the current tourism literature offers in understanding how certain tourism experiences become memorable. Much like how some tourism researchers have recently attempted (e.g., Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016), this involves approaching this question by adopting established memory frameworks from the fields of psychology. Through doing so, the findings will contribute to the literature by better identifying how and why certain tourism experiences come to be memorable (Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2016). For tourism and hospitality practitioners, the results of this study will help better reveal the existence of an experience that travelers encounter yet has not been explicitly and formally characterized. The experience of a Tourism Moment represents a fleeting point in the trip that reaches a heightened level of significance, intrigue, or enjoyment. Bringing to light this experience and understanding what it entails will allow practitioners to know how to facilitate their emergence. And yet, what good is it to experience these Tourism Moments if they are not remembered later on? Accordingly, this study will also showcase to practitioners exactly how memorable even their travelers' best tourism experiences are, and why.

## **3.2 Literature Review**

### **3.2.1 What is a Tourism Moment?**

Based on the prior discussion presented in Chapter 2, I propose that tourism experiences (as trips) hold the potential for Tourism Moments to emerge. To clarify, the 12 experience types presented in Chapter 2 on table 1 can all be regarded as a Tourism Moment – thus, the experience of a Tourism Moment can manifest in a multitude of different forms. A Tourism Moment for one tourist may be when they become fully absorbed in their surroundings for a moment's notice during a nature walk (e.g. Transcendent Experience), or alternatively for another tourist, their Tourism Moment may be when they joined in celebrating a victory soccer goal with other fans of their home country while abroad (e.g. Hospitable Moment). Yet, despite the range of experiences that may entail a Tourism Moment, there is also clear evidence that there are a few fundamental experiential characteristics that ultimately define the experience. This asks what ultimately qualifies as a Tourism Moment? A Tourism Moment is proposed to feature the following six qualifying characteristics:

- Suddenness
- Fleeting
- Experientially Distinct
- Event Boundaries
- Rare
- Consequential

In considering these six characteristics, the Tourism Moment is defined as the sudden emergence of a fleeting instance of experientially distinct experience that occurs within temporally short event boundaries, and which typically results in a positive consequence for the tourist. These six characteristics will be further detailed in greater length next.

### ***3.2.1.1 Suddenness***

One initial distinct characteristic of a Tourism Moment is their nature to emerge abruptly. This refers to how tourists continuous flow of lived experience is rapidly disrupted in an instant due to some stimulus. Almost occurring out of mid-air, tourists suddenly find themselves encountering a situation very differently than what was just occurring. Sometimes, this sense of suddenness stems from the serendipitous and spontaneous emergence of the experience. In fact, many of the experience types cited earlier were characterized as occurring unexpectedly. For instance, Cary's Tourist Moment describes those situations that tourists stumble upon or discover organically without warning during a tourism experience (Cary, 2004). Yet, the abrupt nature of a Tourism Moment is not exclusively tied to unexpected occurrences. Moments of awe are understood to be anticipated in the pre-trip stage of nature tourism experiences in hopes of encountering momentous scenery (Picard, 2016), or similarly, people undertake leisure activities for the hope of encountering a momentary sense of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Whether previously anticipated or not, the suddenness of Tourism Moments is best captured by the expression 'life comes at you fast', inferring Tourism Moments emerge rapidly and all at once.

### ***3.2.1.2 Fleeting***

Tourism Moments also feature a strong sense and understanding that the given moment unfolding will be fleeting. This characteristic is one of the most salient reported in the experience types previously covered. Jefferies & Lepp (2012) noted the 'temporary' and 'elusive' nature of extraordinary leisure experiences, while Rickly-Boyd (2012) determined that mountain climbers most vivid moments of existential authenticity can only be experienced in a short transient manner. Looking beyond the research on the 12 experience types previously discussed, and into other disciplines' views on the perception of time lend evidence to the notion that people can feel certain moments as strongly fleeting and short-lived. Prominent philosophers such as William James early on recognized the present conscious moment, or 'specious moment', features some transient sense (James, 1890). Likewise, and as another philosopher Edmund Husserl described, the real-time nowness of the present moment also includes an underlying recognition of 'what is about to occur' (Wittmann, 2016). That is, people are able to simultaneously perceive a moment

as unfolding in the present, while also having a future-oriented understanding that the current moment will have a seemingly concrete ending.

Time perception research in social psychology offers some evidence that certain Tourism Moments can be perceived as fleeting as they unfold. The concept of time embeddedness is related to temporal perceptive organization in social interactions. The key element of this concept is that people while in a short social interaction (i.e. moment) can be actively conscious of its socially constructed expected ending time (Lewis & Weigert, 1981). For instance, “a person who stops during the rush hour to buy a newspaper on the way to the bus stop knows that the interaction time available to chat with the newsvendor is quite limited (Lewis & Weiger, 1981, p. 437). Sociologist Harold Garfinkel refers to the latter as ‘background expectancies’ (Flaherty, 1993). Similarly, psychologist’s creation of the expectancy/contrast model is predicated on the notion that the perceiving of the ending time of any given coherent event is possible (Boltz, 1993; Jones & Boltz, 1989). As explained by Boltz (1993), “...ending points serve to define an event's total time span and provide a cognitive anchor toward which all ongoing activity is directed. At the level of the individual, these upcoming ending points can often be anticipated; in fact, it is adaptive to do so” (Boltz, 1993, p. 860). In other words, people often predict, seemingly consciously, of when their current event will end.

As such then, Tourism Moments are those instances in which a tourist recognizes that the moment they are in will be very short-lived – i.e., as the moment initially unfolds, tourists concurrently identify its quickly imminent ending. This characteristic refers to both fleeting as the feeling of time-passing quickly as well as the temporal criteria that the duration of the event occurs in a matter of a few seconds to a few minutes.

### ***3.2.1.3 Experientially Distinct***

Tourism Moments must also feature a phenomenologically rich experience. The range of different experiences detailed previously serve as salient exemplifiers that there exist certain experiences that unfold in a particularly special manner. Phenomenon like extraordinary experiences and others, collectively establish that certain experiences simply feel more unique and distinct when in them – they almost automatically and wholeheartedly grasp one’s attention (Arnould & Price, 1993). While the experiential content may vary widely, there is a unifying core characteristic. For instance, the experience of flow and extraordinary experience both

feature a strong sense of immersion in the experience at hand (Elkington, 2010; Filep, 2008). Alternatively, peak experience and extraordinary experiences are characterized by moments of highest elation and fascination (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012; McDonald, Wearing, & Ponting, 2009). As such, Tourism Moments are aligned within this spectrum of experientially-rich concepts. Tourism Moments instantaneously demand one's attention due to the distinct characteristics encompassing this short experience. Both during online perception and later recollection, a tourist recognizes its phenomenologically rich nature. Although not always required, would typically incite emotionally-charged and cognitively-stimulating reactions.

#### ***3.2.1.4 Event Boundaries***

Tourism Moments also stand alone as their own discrete and bounded events. As defined early on in their theorizing on event cognition, events are defined as “A segment of time at a given location that is conceived by an observer to have a beginning and an end” (Zacks & Tservsky, 2001, p. 29). Accordingly, a Tourism Moment represents an explicitly perceived experience that has a seemingly solidified beginning and end. Event cognition refers to event boundaries as ‘anchors’ in experience perception that differentiate one discrete experience from another (Speer & Zacks, 2005). Humans segment experiences as events when there are perceptual and conceptual changes to a situation at hand (Radvansky & Zacks, 2014). In that sense, tourists know when they are in a moment because they recognize that some preceding event is fundamentally different than what is being experienced in the now. Likewise, they are equally as cognizant when they pass through the ending event boundary that signals that the moment has concluded. Neurological evidence supports the notion that event boundaries are what segment events apart from another, showing increased brain activity at these boundaries (Speer, Swallow, & Zacks, 2003). However, it is important to note that the awareness of event boundaries can be at both a conscious and sub-conscious level (Zacks, et al., 2007). Our mind is constantly segmenting our continuous experience into events, but this segmentation can occur subconsciously, and it isn't until later recollection via remembering that we recognize the boundaries of an event.

With that said, I believe Tourism Moments represent the case when people consciously recognize the event boundaries around the moment – they are aware of when they step in and out of a moment during conscious perception. Event cognition theory provides credence that even temporally short experiences such as moments carry as much experiential weight as longer events as the theory does not designate that an event must meet a minimum duration to qualify as meaningful experience. This is showcased by research that has found that meaningful events can be represented at either a course-grained or fine-grained level, meaning that although Tourism Moments can, and probably do happen within the scope of a longer tourism episode, they are recognized as their own confined experience both during online perception and later memory retrieval (Zacks, Tversky, & Iyer, 2001). Evidence of event boundaries are present in moment-like experience such as flow. For instance, based on empirical evidence, Elkington (2010) presents an experience-process model of flow which features flow as an event that contains vivid boundaries separating pre-flow, flow-in-action, and post-flow. Tourism Moments are thus those short-lived experiences in which tourists, both during the perception and memory recollection, have a vivid understanding of when the experience started and concluded.

### **3.2.1.5 Rare**

Another qualifying characteristic of the Tourism Moment is their elusiveness in prevalence. Experiencing a Tourism Moment on a trip is not promised and is not a foregone conclusion. Perhaps adding to their mystery is the appreciation that Tourism Moments can not be manufactured, staged or delivered organically. Cary (2004) explicitly speaks to this in denoting the tourist moment cannot be invented, “It is important to note that this analysis of the tourist moment considers the representation of “first-time serendipity.” If serendipity appears to strike twice in the same situation, the tourist experience may shift into the as-of-yet-unexplored realm of “staged serendipity.” (p. 66). In line with other experiences such as moments of epiphany and peak experiences, tourists cannot just make Tourism Moments happen. Accordingly, this partly attributes to the designation of Tourism Moments as rare. Certainly of course, the rareness is simply attributed to the mere infrequency in occurrence: extraordinary experiences are deemed “uncommon” (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012, p. 48), existential authenticity emerges in “rare experiences” (Rickly-Boyd, 2012, p. 88), transcendent experiences as “transitory or rare” (Tsaor, Yen, & Hsiao, 2013, p. 361), or hospitable moments as “infrequent” (Lugosi, 2008, p. 141).



Adding to its allure, its rareness adds a layer of exclusiveness of experiencing a Tourism Moment.

#### ***3.2.1.6 Consequential***

Finally, Tourism Moments are seen to prove impactful and influential. Though the experience may only last a few seconds to a few minutes, this instant alone may carry great significance. One of the impacts most prevalent across the moment-like experiences is self-discovery. For moments such as aesthetic experiences, epiphanies, or experiences of existential authenticity, tourists possess the ability to recognize their inner self in the most transparent way (Beardsley, 1982; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Wearing et al., 2016). Typically, it is through this deep self-recognition which translates the moment into a transformational experience spawning change in the self along a continuum of significance. Tourism Moments thus serve as catalysts where they have real consequences beyond the moment itself. From a memory standpoint, Tourism Moments may play an important role as well. Awe as a Tourism Moment for instance, is capable of uncovering and revealing lost personal memories from the tourist's past (Picard, 2016). The strong emotionally charged nature of the awe experience moment becomes a strong enough stimulus to ignite otherwise forgotten memories from the past at that instant. As a memory itself, Tourism Moments may come to be the most strongly engrained memories of its respective trip (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012). It is important to clarify Tourism Moments may not all carry such consequential significance as profound as self-discovery, or inciting forgotten memories. For some tourists, these moments may merely represent 'highlights' of a given trip, and nothing more. As understood within the perspective of emotional engagement, certain Tourism Moments are just the highest points of momentary arousal within a given activity (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015). The consequentiality of Tourism Moments is a spectrum, capable of significant profound implications at the highest point.

#### **3.2.2 Situating Tourism Moments in Tourism Experience Research**

The prior section set out to argue for the existence of Tourism Moments, as well as introduce an initial working conceptualization of what constitutes the experience. Explicitly, I propose Tourism Moments are a specialized type of experience that surface within the confines of the

larger tourism experience. Although they may first appear to allude to some abstract, mysterious, and mythical experience, research indicates these moments are experiences that tourists may encounter quite vividly and concretely. They have a qualitatively distinct nature to their experience which makes them stand alone such that tourists may recognize them as their own discrete and bounded event in both real-time and retrospectively. The pursuit of this study mirrors the efforts of previous research in attempting to bring to light a very real lived experience which is otherwise unidentified, unnamed and undescribed. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) for instance, introduced to the world the experience of flow, which at its inception had not been previously recognized or explored in any way. Yet, what he brought to light was an experience that many people encountered in everyday life but had not been explicitly identified and articulated as its own distinct phenomenon – as four decades of subsequent research prove, the flow experience is very much a real discrete experience, it just had not been recognized as such prior.

Within the context of tourism, Cary's Tourist Moment represents an example of a specialized type of event tourists encounter but had not been explicitly recognized. As previously discussed, Cary recognized there existed "The Moment of the Tourist" within a tourism experience (Cary, 2004, p. 63). Though prior research had hinted to its existence, no one until that point had recognized and made sense of such an experience. Yet, in reviewing empirical and anecdotal evidence, Cary knew there to be this event which not only needed to be explained but made aware in the first place for others. Much like Csikszentmihalyi, Cary helped convincingly bring the Tourist Moment into the spotlight as a credible and very real type of experience, as evidenced by the paper's high citation rate. As such, the present study is inspired by Cary (2004) and may even be thought of as an extension of her work. In fact, the term Tourism Moment borrows from Cary's Tourist Moment label. However, whereas the Tourist Moment focuses exclusively on the experience of individual self-discovery and the tourist as a role, the Tourism Moment alludes to a broader range of experience found in tourism experiences. This study thus sets out to identify and provide a description of the otherwise unexplored Tourism Moment event that exists 'out there' in tourism experiences.

As proposed earlier, a Tourism Moment represents the manifestation of one of the many moment-like experiences introduced earlier in Chapter 2. That is, a peak experience, extraordinary experience, awe experience, flow experience, etc., all fall under the category of a

Tourism Moment. This may lead one to conclude then why study the Tourism Moment if there is a bountiful amount of experiential information already in existence. Beyond the importance of merely recognizing they all seem to refer to a singular type of experience, there are also some evident limitations from many of those experience subjects. One issue stems from the narrow contexts often utilized to empirically study these experience. For instance, many of the established and accepted characteristics of the peak experience stem from the unique setting of a wilderness experience (Pearce et al., 2016). Similarly, the seminal paper which has established the fundamental characteristics of the extraordinary experience resulted from a study of white-water river rafting (Arnould & Price, 1993). Extended into the tourism experience context, extraordinary experiences were studied within the very unique setting of the Dalton highway in Alaska (Farber & Hall, 2007). Accordingly, there is concern that some of the experiential characteristics of these moment-like experiences can be exclusively attributed to the narrow and distinct contexts they were studied in. In elevating and grouping conceptually these experiences into the idea of a Tourism Moment and studying this experience within a wider range of contexts, it becomes possible to source a more credible and fundamental set of experiential characteristics.

Another glaring limitation of this set of moment-like experiences is the disregard for temporal clarity. This regards to how although the majority of these moment-like experiences are depicted as happening in ‘moments’, ‘instances’, or ‘points’, which allude to a shortened temporal duration, there are lapses in consistency in this matter. Within a study of extraordinary experiences, one participant’s experience pertained to the exact moment when it was announced that their team won an award, yet the study also recognized another extraordinary experience as a multi-month effort of planning a school event (Jefferies & Lepp, 2012). Similarly, although they explicitly characterized the transcendent experience in momentary terms, “a moment of extreme happiness...[moments which are totally absorbing...]” (p. 249), William and Harvey (2001) shared participants’ anecdotes that included experience that transpired in seconds (e.g. discovering an animal) to hours (e.g. hiking through a forest).

In light of these limitations, these moment-like experiences provide valuable insight in which to pursue the topic of the Tourism Moment further. The present study will directly address the two prior limitations noted by first collecting experiential data from a variety of contexts – i.e., the purpose of trips and physical locations. In addition, this study will maintain temporal

consistency by focusing only on experiences that resemble a true moment as only those which seem to occur within the span of seconds to minutes. As recognized by other researchers (e.g. Knobloch et al., 2014), it is time to reconcile the mounting evidence regarding a group of special experience types all pointing to variations of the same phenomena. Accordingly, this study sets out to address the following two research objectives:

1. To develop a unified conceptualization of the Tourism Moment by identifying and describing its fundamental characteristics.
2. To understand what the experience of a Tourism Moment entails

### **3.2.3 The Role of Tourism Moments in the Memory Recollection of Tourism Experiences**

#### ***3.2.3.1 Memory Research in Tourism Experience Literature - What Does it Truly Mean to Remember a Tourism Experience?***

Given the intangible and ephemeral nature of tourism experiences, understanding the role of memory is of the utmost importance. Pine and Gilmore's proclamation that the name of the game was about creating 'memorable experiences' propelled and magnified numerous efforts across disciplines to unravel the key to memorability (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Pine made explicit what was otherwise implicit in that unlike physical products, all that truly remains after the consumption of experience is the memory of that experience. As experience is its core product, the tourism literature has followed suit and attempted to understand the nature of memory. The overarching purpose of such research attends to questioning what ultimately determines the memorability of a tourism experience.

For some, memorability is best conceived as the presence or absence of particular experiential dimensions in tourism experiences. Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012) forwarded the term 'memorable tourism experience' ('MTE') which would come to be established as the contemporary literature's primary efforts into understanding memory of tourism experiences. Their work was conducted so to identify and understand the aspects of experience that best predict memorability of tourism experiences. Their study produced a seven-factor model of dimensions that serves to both conceptualize and measure a memorable tourism experience. Echoing their efforts, subsequent research has validated or extended the importance of these experiential dimensions (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Sthapit &

Coudounaris, 2018). In essence, the memorability of any given trip is grounded upon the emergence of one or any of the dimensions. For instance, a tourist will have a higher chance of remembering their trip if they experience a sense of refreshment or learn something new (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012). On the other hand, this also assumes tourists will not remember a trip well later if their experience does not hit any of these target dimensions. As evidenced then, memorability is regarded simply as whether or not one's trip resembled a particular nature of experience. Memorability in this view thus assumes any experience featuring their particular set of experiential dimensions becomes automatically memorable – tourists' memory need not be measured any other way.

The tourism literature also features other ways in which memorable tourism experiences are perceived. Larsen (2007) delved into understanding the tourist experience through a psychological lens. In regards to memory, Larsen succinctly defines a tourist experience as follows "A tourist experience is a past personal travel-related event strong enough to have entered long-term memory" (Larsen, 2007, p. 15). This view however offers little in clarifying how to distinguish a highly memorable tourist experience – according to this perspective, any trip is memorable so long as one remembers any minute detail. In a similar sense, Cutler, Carmichael, and Doherty (2014) showcases how over a longer span of time, tourist's long-term recollection of their trips becomes blurred such that only snippets of experience remain. This thus brings to question the romanticized notion that the entirety of a trip is forged into and recollected from memory. Given this, it bears questioning again then how does one characterize a highly memorable tourism experience? Tung and Ritchie (2011) sought to explore the 'essence' of memorable tourism experiences as they believed "many [tourism] studies have examined memory as the outcome of experiences..." (p. 1368). Yet interestingly, no tourism study was cited in their paper which explicitly measured or operationalized memory as an outcome in any manner. A recent tourism study, although measuring memory as an outcome, conceptualized memory in terms of its emotional valence more so than a measure of how well the experience is remembered (Ali, Ryu, & Hussain, 2016). While there exists some discourse regarding the role of narration as a recollective memory tool (e.g. Cary, 2004) or how memories themselves mediate reinterpretation of tourism experiences (Selstad, 2007), generally missing in the literature is a focus on what exactly constitutes a memorable tourism experience.

Through an extensive review of the tourism literature, it was evident there lacks a significant understanding regarding what it truly means to remember a trip. The MTE experiential dimensions are best interpreted as triggers that may lead to experiences which stand a greater chance of being remembered. Yet, memorability is only assumed as MTE studies never objectively validate if their study participant's 'memorable' experiences are indeed highly remembered (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018; Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Zhong, Busser, & Baloglu, 2017). As expressed by some (e.g. Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2014), there is concern the 'memorable tourism experience' concept may be simply referring to a high quality experience rather than having anything to do with the psychological and cognitive interpretation on memory. Two research gaps are thus present in the literature. First, we do not know enough about what explains why some tourism experiences are better remembered than others. Two, prior work on memory in the tourism literature lacks in establishing how to measure or determine the memorability of tourism experiences. Turning to the psychology literature allows a credible avenue in which to source answers in addressing these limitations.

#### *3.2.3.1.1 Memorability as Recall and Reliving*

Memorability alludes to the degree to which a person is able to 'remember' a prior experience. Yet what distinguishes and characterizes a memory as high in memorability. Although the memory research in tourism literature fails in conceptualizing memorability, the various sub-disciplines within the realm of psychology indicate ease-of-recall and reliving as the most suitable measuring sticks of memory. Memorability is embedded within the experience of remembering, and ease-of-recall and reliving qualify and determine how the experience unfolds (Tulving, 1983). Essentially, how well one remembers or recollects an experience from their past is proxied in both of these memory principles. Looking into the literature on both recall and reliving helps in explaining how to best interpret memorability of tourism experiences.

### *3.2.3.1.2 Ease of Recall*

Simply put, recall is the first, and perhaps most critical determinant of memorability. Recall refers to whether or not a past experience which was encoded into memory in the first place is able to be retrieved (Craik, 1970). From a strict psychological interpretation, recollection (i.e. recall) occurs when a memory trace in the brain becomes reactivated by either an organic internal cue or external cue (Tulving, 1983). Essentially, recall is the conscious awareness for the emergence of a memory. As exemplified by the popular ‘free recall’ memory test, memorability is first and foremost a measure of the absence or presence of a previously lived event. The free recall test is a staple measure in memory research in cognitive psychology, and serves as the starting point for measuring memory empirically (Hogan & Kintsch, 1971; Rundus & Atkinson, 1970; Tulving, 1971). In such a test, participants are asked to recollect as many memories, or details of specific memories as they can. Hence, recall within the context of tourism experiences regards whether or not events from a prior trip are encoded into the memory system well enough to be retrieved later on.

Once retrieved as a discrete memory, a second component of recall regards the ease in which the memory was retrieved from memory. The latter has been labeled various ways in the field of psychology, but typically described as either ‘ease of retrieval’ (Zauberman, Ratner, & Kim, 2009) or ‘ease of recall’ (Butler & Wolfner, 2000). Regardless of terminology, both are understood in terms of difficulty of such retrieval or recall. Though indeed capable of being recalled, one may have had difficulty, required high cognitive resources, and spent longer time in attaining the memory than a memory recalled with ease. Naturally, memories which are more easily recalled from memory exemplify memories considered to be highly memorable. Taken from a neurological perspective, memories that are easily retrieved are those in which a particular set of neurons have been activated more often (Axmacher & Rasch, 2017).

Research in the related areas of availability heuristic and retrieval fluency provide credence into the role ease-of-recall plays in memorability. Availability heuristic describes how people come to rely heavily on the content from their memories that is first to mind to make judgements on how frequent or typical that content is (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). Essentially, whatever information is immediately remembered first, subsequent beliefs about the credibility of that event happening increase. For instance, if asked by your friend “do you think Puerto Rico would make a good vacation destination for our next trip?”, your immediate answer might be no

as the first memories that come to mind related to Puerto Rico are some recent images from the hurricane destruction. The availability heuristic privileges a need to come at a judgement quickly, even if the memory's content is inaccurate (Kahneman & Tversky, 1973). This initial hypothesis shed light on the relationship between memories and their respective retrieval experience.

Subsequent research followed suit, and attention shifted to understanding the role of retrieval fluency as it relates to memory. The well-supported retrieval fluency hypothesis indicates memories which are easier to recall are given a more favorable metacognitive status (Hertwig, Herzog, Schooler, & Reimer, 2008; Jacoby, Kelley, & Dywan, 1989; Johnston, Dark, & Jacoby, 1985; Kelley & Lindsay, 1993). Kelley and Lindsay (1993), for instance, found participant's had greater confidence in the accuracy of their memories when they were easier to recall. Their study helped further solidify the importance in the ease-of-retrieval for judgements of memory, as found in prior studies. Similarly, it has also been shown that the contents of memories are deemed more familiar when they are easier to recall as well (Kelley & Jacoby, 1990). Accordingly, memories that come to mind without difficulty are automatically believed to be accurate, and are felt as if they have remembered this memory previously. Ease of retrieval has even been found to qualify the previously detailed availability heuristic such that its effects are nullified when ease of retrieval is difficult (Schwarz, et. al., 1991) Effectively, ease of retrieval (or recall) serves as an index in both perceptions of the recalled memory, as well as subsequent judgements guiding decision making. Such a mental process is also supported within the consumer context (Menon & Raghurir, 2003). Akin to retrieval fluency, top-of-mind brand awareness has been given much support showcasing how the best brands are those in which they are easily retrieved from memory in free recall (Lee, 2002).

### *3.2.3.1.3 Degree of Reliving*

After recall, another defining characteristic of the remembering experience is the extent to which it allows one to relive the originally encoded event. Seminal memory researchers such as Endel Tulving are credited for bringing to light the importance of going beyond understanding the procedural mechanisms of memory, and instead exploring the lived phenomenon of remembering. Tulving (1985) recognized a fundamental distinction in the experience of remembering as two possible states of consciousness. Autonoetic consciousness describes



feeling as if one is actually reliving a prior lived event in its original context in the now, whereas noetic consciousness lacks any sense of reliving, only allowing the ability to retrieve semantic details about the event. Both neurological and self-report studies have confirmed the existence of these two states (Gardiner & Parkin, 1990; Tulving & Markowitsch, 1998; Wheeler, Stuss, & Tulving, 1997). Akin to a ‘mental time travel’, auto-noetic consciousness elicits visual mental imagery and emotion to situate people back into their previously lived events (Suddendorf & Corballis, 2007). For tourists, this means they can fantasize about a prior vacation in reliving the first time they laid eyes on the Great Wall of China. Remembering as a noetic consciousness means the tourist is incapable of living through this event as they once did, and can only remember that it occurred in the early morning, and was shared with a friend.

As a proxy for measuring the degree of auto-noetic consciousness, the remember/know paradigm emerged. Tulving (1985) in detailing and building a case for the existence of the two states of awareness in remembering, described how these states can be captured in simply asking participants if they remembered a prior event, or just know that it happened. Since then, the remember/know measure has become the most popular in determining degree of recollection (Yonelinas, 2002). It is said that participants who respond with a ‘know’ response to a question on their memory of a prior event indicates a sense of familiarity in which they can conclude the event did indeed occur, but nothing more. Mandler’s (1980) ‘butcher-on-the-bus’ analogy became the staple example in highlighting memory as familiar. The anecdote describes an encounter with a man on a bus whose face is familiar enough that one is convinced they have seen this person once before, without any additional supporting memory evidence. On the other hand, a ‘remember’ response indicates the participant is able to source enough episodic information about the event that they can bring the event back to mind. Harping back to the butcher-on-the-bus analogy, familiarity can turn to recollection when one is able to remember the actual prior interaction with the butcher at the supermarket.

While the conceptualization of memory strength is certainly an unsettled debate, there is much support that memories which are remembered (i.e. auto-noetic consciousness) can be considered as highly memorable. Typically, memories given a ‘remember’ response, as opposed to a ‘know’ response, are more accurate and gain higher confidence in their accuracy (A continuous dual-process model of remember/know judgements. In essence, a highly memorable event is one in which it can be relived vividly again and again in the present. Hence,

memorability is strongly dependent on vividness. While a memory can be recalled with ease, and can resemble a state of auto-noetic consciousness, it is the degree of vividness which significantly qualifies the reliving experience. As such, measures such as the Memory Characteristic Questionnaire have been developed to capture just this – the episodic richness or vividness of reliving (Johnson, Foley, Suengas, & Raye, 1988). The MCQ measure vividness by identifying the perceptual, spatiotemporal, and emotional characteristics of the relived event as a memory.

### ***3.2.3.2 Reorienting the Memorability of Tourism Experiences***

The prior section was dedicated to unpacking and exploring what should be considered the true measure of memorable tourism experiences. The tourism literature was found to be limited in providing a sound and reasonable conceptualization of how to truly distinguish memorable tourism experiences. Perhaps the limitation may be due to the obvious disregard for utilizing already established theories and findings from the broad field of psychology. As was briefly done so here, it was showcase that ease of recall and degree of reliving serve as externally valid means of designating a trip as memorable. First, memorability can be conceived in terms of whether and how easy a prior event from a trip can be retrieved from memory. Second, memorable events from tourism experiences can also be proxied by the extent to which a person can mentally relive said event in the present. Said simply, a highly memorable tourism experience is one that can be retrieved in a ‘top-of-mind’ fashion, in conjunction with the ability to materialize into a state of auto-noetic consciousness. To conclude, memorability of events which occur during tourism experiences is highly important. On one end, memories serve to fortify tourist’s self-identity (Conway, 2005). More simply however, “For a past experience to provide pleasure through reminiscing [emphasis added], it is not enough for the experience to be initially encoded in memory: it needs to be recalled and be subject to conscious reflection (Zauberman, Ratner, & Kim, 2009 p. 716). In reconciling and distinguishing against the work on ‘Memorable Tourism Experiences’ (e.g. Kim, 2010), this study follows recent efforts by Tung, Lin, Qiu Zhang, and Zhao (2016) in seeking to investigate the role of memory in tourism experiences beyond the use of trivial experiential dimension measures and statistical models which fail to capture memorability.

### *3.2.3.2.1 Tourism Experiences as Autobiographical Memories*

Having described the metrics of what constitutes a highly memorable experience, it is equally important to discuss how tourism experiences (as trips) are represented and structured as memories in the memory system. Tourism experiences as memories are best represented as autobiographical memories. In short, autobiographical memories refers to personal events which occurred at a particular place and time in one's past (Tulving, 1979,1985, Baumgartner, Sujan, & Bettman, 1992; Rubin, 1996). Key to distinguishing an autobiographical memory is that it always is in reference to knowledge about how the self lived through an actual life (Baumgartner, Sujan, & Bettman, 1992). In contrast, episodic memories as a higher-order memory construct, can feature the memory for events in which one was not present (Conway, 1996). For instance, one can have an episodic memory of the last second game winning shot they saw on a sports show highlight, even though they were not at the basketball game itself. At its essence, autobiographical memories are only memories of experiences unique to the rememberer. There are two components to autobiographical memory – episodic memory and semantic memory (Tulving, Schacter, McLachlan, & Moscovitch, 1988). The semantic component refers to the conceptual knowledge related to a previous lived event (e.g. names, location), whereas the episodic component contains specific details of how the experience unfolded. For instance, one's autobiographical memory for an event which occurred on a previous trip may contain both the names of the people involved (i.e. semantic memory), as well as a relived account of the time when you stopped to watch a street performer (i.e. episodic memory).

As has been theorized in prior research (Kim, 2014; Tung & Ritchie, 2011), a tourist does not just have a memory of tourism experiences, tourists have an autobiographical memory of their tourism experiences. Tourism experiences are in fact personal events one lives through which occur at particular times in places, ultimately qualifying them as autobiographical memories. It is critical then when discussing, and especially when studying the memory of previous tourism experiences, to have an accurate conceptual understanding of their place in the memory system. That is, studying the autobiographical memory for tourists' previous trips means adhering to nuanced parameters and considerations stipulated by cognitive memory research. One aspect which has been emphasized greatly in psychology discipline is the organization and structural representation of autobiographical memories (Conway, 2009; Burt,

Kemp, & Conway, 2003, 2008; Zacks, et al., 2007). To follow is a brief discussion of how autobiographical memories come to be structured in people's memory system. The purpose of this is to provide a conceptual background outlining the role of Tourism Moments within the broader autobiographical memory processes at play.

#### *3.2.3.2.2 Conway's Autobiographical Memory Model – Contextualizing the Role of Tourism Moments as Memories*

The memories of Tourism Moments are best understood when they are situated in the context of a memory model. As discussed prior, the memories of tourism experiences are categorized as autobiographical memories, and so, any corresponding Tourism Moments which occur during a trip fall under the jurisdiction of autobiographical memory principles and theory. Martin Conway has dedicated almost three decades of his career as a cognitive psychology researcher to explore and understand autobiographical memory. One of his most significant contributions pertains to his autobiographical memory model. In Conway and Pleydell-Pearce (2000) he describes his motivation for the initial inception of the model as being to reconcile years of research on autobiographical memory to extract a unified framework. At the time, Conway recognized there was no research on how autobiographical memories come to be represented and structured in people's long-term memory. He thus set forward to propose and articulate how autobiographical memories come to be organized according to a 'knowledge base' (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000). If autobiographical memories are memories for our personal past experiences, then Conway believed these memories are not just stored freely but are categorized. Specifically, his autobiographical memory model contains autobiographical memories that can be categorized at varying levels of specificity. His model reflects a partonomic hierarchy structure in which memories are specified at discrete and interlinked levels.

The autobiographical memory model can be represented in two ways. First, the model includes two overarching representation categories: 1) autobiographical knowledge and 2) episodic memories. The autobiographical knowledge component of the model exclusively features conceptual knowledge or facts pertaining to "goals, others, locations, activities, evaluations" (Conway, 2005, p. 608). Construed slightly different, this component of the model embodies the 'conceptual self' referring to facts and other semantic information about experiences which occurred in the past. Thus, memories at this level are mostly semantic, and

thus, they alone do not represent actual events recollected (Conway, 2005). For instance, one may have the memory for knowing that they lived through a middle school dance but have no recollection to relive specific events from this experience. On the other hand, the episodic memory component model is where events that are able to be recollected and relived are stored. While the autobiographical knowledge is highly abstract, memories in the episodic memory are more “event specific, and experience-near” (Conway, 2005, p. 608). Embedded within these two overarching representation categories are six ‘types’ of memories. Within the autobiographical knowledge component are memories categorized as themes, lifetime periods and general events. Again, these pertain to autobiographical memories which remain at a conceptual level, starting at its most abstract at the theme level, down to a finer grain of specificity at general events. Within the episodic memory component, Conway (2009) further delineates memories as represented by complex episodic memories, simple episodic memories, and episodic elements. Figure 2 provides a visual illustration of Conway’s autobiographical memory model. Each type of autobiographical memory will now be briefly described in order to provide an overall viewpoint of how tourism experiences come to be represented in autobiographical memory terms.

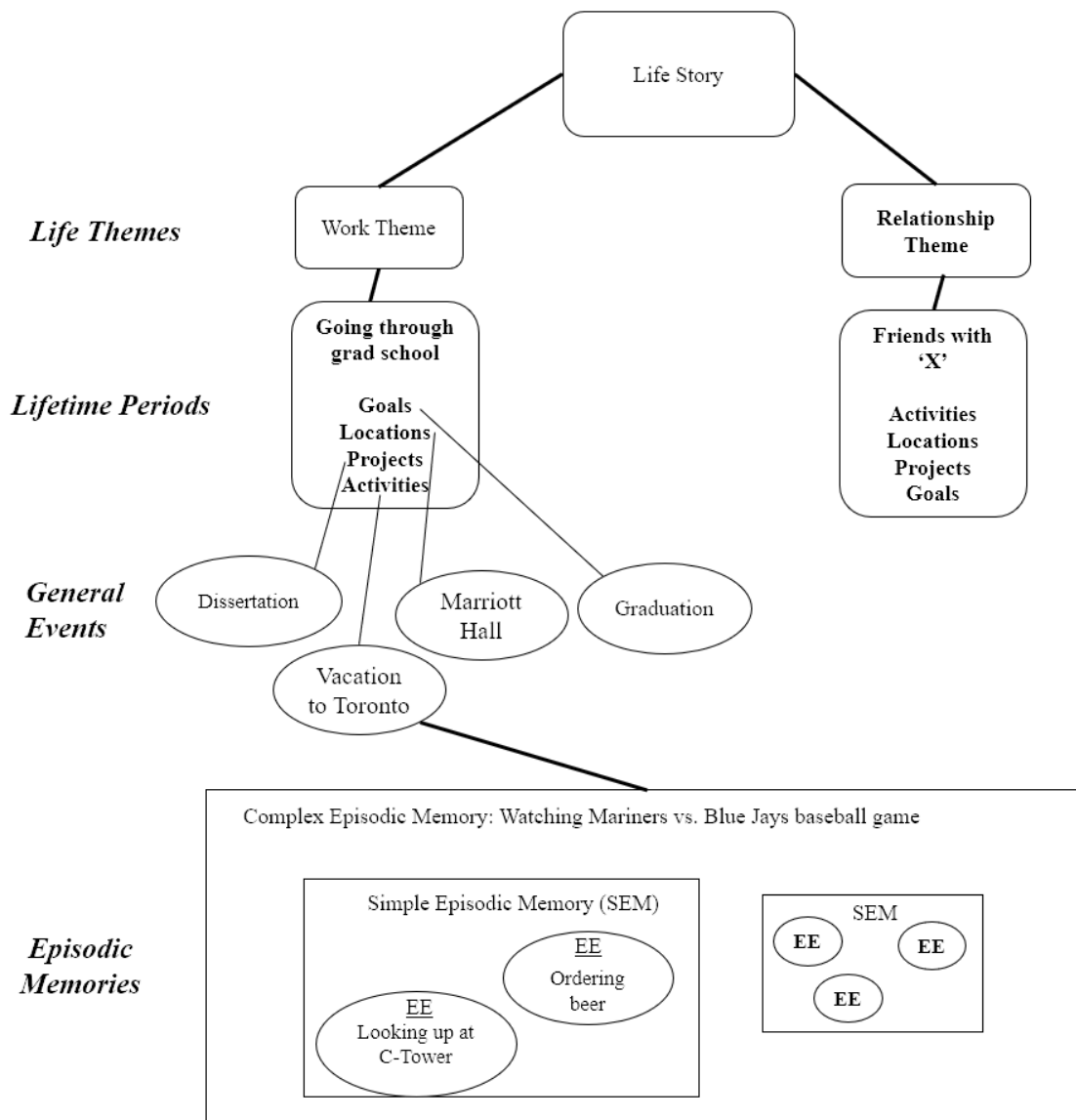


Figure 2. Conway's Autobiographical Memory Model (Adapted from Conway, 2005, 2009)

#### 3.2.3.2.2.1 Life Themes and Lifetime Periods

At the most abstract and highest order level, memories come to be categories in terms of themes and lifetime periods. Lifetime periods refer to a particular period of time bound together by some higher order conceptual topic. The actual content making up memories in the lifetime period level are general knowledge of locations, actions, activities, and goals (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Conway, 2005). The lifetime period memories may include such examples such as ‘when I was in grad school’, ‘when I was dating X’, or ‘when I worked at x’. Conway further recognizes that these lifetime periods are themselves linked to broader overarching ‘life themes’ (Csikszentmihalkyi & Beattie, 1979). For instance, all that is remembered about the lifetime period of ‘when I was in grad school’ may be linked to the higher order theme of ‘academic career’. Accompanying these higher order memories are also attitudes which people hold about these lifetime periods and themes (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000) – e.g. ‘these were stressful years’. It is important to note that tourism experiences yet have no recognition or representation at these two levels. Memories at this level are far too abstract or cover too long of a time-period that single discrete trips are not yet featured.

#### 3.2.3.2.2.2 General Events

In contrast to the prior section, memories at this level of specificity come to be associated with actual lived events. These memories for events come to be demarcated into two distinct types of general events (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Conway, 2001). First, general events could include what is termed ‘repeated events’ or ‘mini-histories’ which are events that although do not occur within a confirmed discrete timeframe, are conceptually linked to some overarching theme (Barsalou, 1988; Robinson, 1992). Example of the latter include all events associated with buying Christmas gifts, together creating the general event of ‘Christmas shopping’ (Burt, Kemp, & Conway, 2003). The second type of general event is more relevant to the present study, and it refers to single discrete events. In fact, Conway explicitly refers to tourism experiences as an example of a general event in this regard (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Conway, 2001; Conway, 2005). Essentially, all experience that is lived through within the span of a trip has the potential to be engrained and organized into a general event in the autobiographical memory model. Due to the partonomic hierarchical structure of the model, general events are a natural

branch to the lifetime period it corresponds to. Hence, any given trip comes to be permanently organized as a general event that is linked to a broader lifetime period and life theme. In addition, general events play a particularly important role in memory recollection. Conway asserts that the “level of general events is the preferred level of processing in AM and optimizes the amount of specific information available for least cognitive effort (Conway, 2001, p. 1377). In other words, people have a higher likelihood of first recalling memories as general events, which in turn serves as an avenue to cue and access not only lifetime period memories, but also, and more important to this study, episodic memories linked to that general event.

#### 3.2.3.2.2.3 Episodic Memories: Episodic Elements, Simple Episodic Memories, Complex Episodic Memories

The episodic memories component of the autobiographical memory model is where memories of actual lived events live. The general events discussed in the previous section are only substantiated and valuable when they are linked to specific moments in time as episodic memories (Conway, 2005). The term ‘specific autobiographical memory’ refers to general events which contain episodic information. Much like the memory model at large, Conway argues there is a distinct local organization to how episodic memories are structured. However, in his early work on the model, he provided very little clarification, and seemingly considered all memories at this level to be one in the same (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Conway, 2005). He seemingly depicted memories as being experience near, and pertaining to the most detailed level of specificity. It was only until Conway (2009) in which he further differentiated the episodic memories at this level to produce a more nuanced understanding of how actual lived events are parceled into specific types of episodic memories. Before going into a discussion of the three types of episodic memories, it is important to provide a brief overall description characterizing episodic memories. Episodic memories are sensory-perceptual in nature, which parallel mental records for the details of how a past experience unfolded (Conway, 2001). Due to this, the emergence of episodic memories are what allow and induce “recollective experience in autobiographical remembering” (Conway, 2001, pg. 1376). These memories determine whether or not we just know general events (such as trips) occurred but cannot remember any incidents (Tulving, 1985). These episodic memories fortunate enough to make into the autobiographical



memory mode however are further organized, and the following will be a description of this based on Conway (2009).

First, episodic elements constitute the first degree of episodic memories. According to Conway (1999), episodic elements are moments of experience, or a small collection of moments of experience. As can be surmised, these are very short slices of time reflecting past moments of consciousness. Examples of such moments which come to be represented as episodic elements in the memory model include: reading an email from a disgruntled client, washing a coffee mug after use, giving the order to the server at lunch, or answering John's question during a project meeting. As the examples highlight, they represent knowledge of exact moments of action and the outcomes of these actions. Hence, episodic elements ('EEs' from hereon), are the most event-specific, most experience-near representations in long term memory (Conway, 2001; 2009). Additionally, EEs are also recollected as visual imagery. EEs then come to serve as the core content making up episodic memories. We live through and collect many moments in time, and it is these moments in time which later come to dictate and represent the most concrete memories.

Conway further differentiates episodic memories in proposing EEs come to be embedded within simple episodic memories ('SEM' from hereon). An SEM constitutes a set of EEs that are tied together around a conceptual frame. Conway refers to a frame as a contextualizing theme or topic of any given experience. People experience life in a moment-to-moment basis, yet Conway asserts the multitude of moments experienced within a given day can be organized into different groups of moments. He further qualifies an SEM as generally only consisting of 7 to 9 EEs on average. Using Conway's example, one's journey to work represents an SEM. Although in actuality many moments occurred within this journey to work, the journey to work as an SEM later in the autobiographical memory model only contains about 7 to 9 moments (or 'EEs') which come to represent the totality of that experience. While Conway does not provide an explicit temporal parameter to an SEM, it is evident that SEMs typically represent events lasting a few minutes to tens of minutes, but not hours. Other examples of an SEM given by Conway include the following: having lunch, making coffee in the break room, going through a work project meeting, or talking to a co-worker during a break.

The final level of episodic memories is the complex episodic memory ('CEM' from hereon). A CEM encompasses a set of SEMs that are linked conceptually. CEMs thus represent a collection of experiences which span a much longer period of time than the prior two types, from a couple of hours to up to hours in the double digits. Much like an SEM, a CEM features a conceptual frame which again bounds its corresponding SEMs together as the following example will elucidate. The conceptual frame of 'work day' essentially bounds all SEMs experienced within the context of work, creating the CEM of 'day at work'. Here in Conway's working example, the CEM constitutes an experience lasting about eight hours – had the work day required overtime extending the workday to ten hours, then any corresponding SEMs occurring within the additional timeframe are encompassed within this overarching CEM. In turn however, CEMs are indexed to a corresponding general event as well, and likewise the general event with a lifetime period. This is what Conway refers to as the partonomic hierarchical structure of the autobiographical memory model such that memories are typically a 'part of' a more global high order memory category. With that said however, it is important to reiterate the distinct difference in what constitutes as memory between the autobiographical knowledge and episodic memory components of the model. While the CEMs, SEMs, and EEs featured in the episodic memory component contain actual sensory-perceptual details of 'what occurred', the content of the memory at the autobiographical knowledge level is almost strictly semantic and conceptual in nature. For instance, a general event labeled as 'working on project x' represents only a memory as a fact unless they are linked to episodic memories of CEMs, SEMs, and EEs.

### ***3.2.3.3 Tourism Experiences and Tourism Moments within the Autobiographical Memory Model***

In this paper, Conway's Autobiographical Memory Model will be used as a foundational framework in which to contextualize and understand the memories of Tourism Moments in particular, and tourism experiences more broadly. For illustration purposes, the following is an example of how tourism experiences are translated into the autobiographical memory model. John Doe is on vacation with his family. Two separate moments come to later represent EEs in his autobiographical memory: 1) asking the front desk clerk for recommendations on a good local restaurant; 2) seeing a whale emerge from the surface of the ocean to do several flips. Each of these moments occurred in a very short period of time and refer to actual lived experience that

will serve as the sensory-perceptual detail later as an individual EE respectively. The moment of asking the front desk clerk for a recommendation itself is encompassed by the broader event of ‘checking in to hotel’ – and it is this broader event which later is organized as an SEM. Similarly, the whale-emerging moment occurred within the span of time when the tour boat that John was on, was heading back to shore. As stipulated by Conway’s model, the whale moment as an EE will be forever engrained within the SEM of ‘returning back to shore after deep sea boat tour’. Continuing on, the check-in experience (i.e. SEM) and its corresponding recommendation moment (i.e. EE) are both embedded by the overarching experience characterized as ‘getting to hotel’ (i.e. CEM). Likewise, the entirety of the deep-sea boat tour John and his family were on later comes to be represented as the ‘deep sea boat tour’ CEM in his autobiographical memory. Living within this CEM are both the corresponding ‘returning back to shore’ SEM and whale-emerging EE. Moving up the autobiographical memory model, the entire trip John was on with his family, from the moment of arrival till departure constitutes a general event ‘family vacation to Hawaii’, which itself occurred during the lifetime period of ‘the kids as teenagers’.

Ultimately, Conway’s Autobiographical Memory Model asserts that trips can really only be relived through the recollection of any corresponding EEs and SEMs. They are the concrete events that we can step back into and relive in some fashion (Conway, 2009). However, trips can and probably often do remain at the general event level in the memory model. This means one only knows a trip occurred but cannot remember any specific episodic memories about events that actually occurred within this trip (i.e., EEs and SEMs). Trips then remain at the conceptual and semantic level of our autobiographical memory, essentially meaning they are not able to be relived. It is only when episodic elements and simple episodic memories are recollected alongside their general event that allows the means to relive the general event. Tourism Moments then come to be those EEs and SEMs given the experiential characteristics of a Tourism Moment previously discussed (e.g., fleeting). That is, Tourism Moments represent seconds (EEs) to minutes (SEMs) of lived reality within an otherwise longer stretch of time (CEM).

In that sense, Tourism Moments as EEs and SEMs are what allow trips to be relived in any manner at all. Per its initially developed definition, Tourism Moments are experientially distinct and emotionally charged, which are both factors that increase the degree of vividness or auto-noetic consciousness (Berntsen, 2001; Talarico, Berntsen, & Rubin, 2009). In other words,

Tourism Moments are the EEs and SEMs from trips that most likely have the highest degree of reliving, or auto-noetic consciousness. For instance, the EE of ‘asking hotel clerk for restaurant recommendations’ in the previous example should have a significantly less vivid sense of reliving as compared to the EE of ‘seeing whale emerge from water’. Moreover, Conway (2009) suggests that in reality many EEs and SEMs are lost from past general events, and only a few may remain. So what does this mean for the role of Tourism Moments and the memory of tourism experiences in general? It indicates Tourism Moments may offer the only route back to relive and derive enjoyment from previous trips in our memory. It can be argued then that the true value of trips as memories lies in the opportunity to mentally time travel back and savor the trip anew through reliving a Tourism Moment (Chun, Diehl, & MacInnis, 2017).

With that said, and as was previously discussed, the degree of reliving for a past trip is only one piece of the memory recollection puzzle. One cannot relive and engage in auto-noetic consciousness if the memory of the Tourism Moment is difficult to recall or cannot be recalled in the first place. Though it is fairly viable to assert that Tourism Moments are some of the EEs and SEMs which have the highest degree of reliving, it is less certain to declare Tourism Moments are the easiest to recall. Accordingly, this necessitates a need to learn about the recall of Tourism Moments. Simply, Tourism Moments, and in turn trips, cannot be relived if they are not being recalled in the first place. If Tourism Moments’ primary value in the memory of tourism experiences is their role in allowing a sense of reliving trips, then attention should focus on understanding the recall of Tourism Moments. As a result, the following research objectives are posed:

1. To confirm if Tourism Moments are vividly relived
2. To understand how well/often Tourism Moment memories are recalled
3. To explore what affects the recall of Tourism Moment memories
4. To understand how Tourism Moments and trips are recalled from memory

### **3.2.4 Literature Review Summary**

This study’s overarching research purpose is two-fold: 1) To learn about the Tourism Moment; 2) To understand Tourism Moments role in the memory recollection of tourism experiences. In this literature review, an initial working conceptualization of a Tourism Moment was developed, and in turn, a need to further explore this discrete experience further. This initial running

conceptualization serves as a ‘starting point’ in which to begin recognizing the experience from the qualitative data to be collected. Additionally, the limitations of the many ‘moment-like’ experiences discussed in Chapter 2 were also discussed. It was concluded that these experiences may all be referring to the same discrete experience this study calls a Tourism Moment.

However, the many limitations of these moment-like experiences discussed may explain why so many variations these experiences have been produced with no obvious link between them.

Thus, this study will attempt to bridge together these many experiences types to provide a single comprehensive and unified conceptualization of the same event this study refers to as a Tourism Moment.

The second part of the literature review turned to understanding the role Tourism Moments may have in the memory recollection processes of tourism experiences at large. A significant lack of theoretical development on memory research in the tourism literature was highlighted. At the heart of the issue was the unclear conceptualization of what constitutes a memorable tourism experience. Degree of reliving and ease of recall were identified as theoretically valid measures of the latter. It was then surmised that tourism experiences are most conceptually accurate as autobiographical memories in Conway’s Autobiographical Memory Model. Tourism Moments then were discussed as being the episodic memories (i.e., EEs and SEMs) which feature a high degree/vividness of reliving. Accordingly, this suggested the recallability of Tourism Moments as the focal concern. That is, there is a need to understand travelers experiences with recalling Tourism Moments, as they become some of the only memories allowing a means to relive past trips in any fashion. In summary, and to conclude this literature review, the following three research objectives of this study are presented:

1. To develop a conceptualization of the Tourism Moment
2. To identify the experiential characteristics of a Tourism Moment
3. To examine how Tourism Moments are remembered

### **3.3 Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 Research Methodology Adopted: Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory was selected as the guiding methodological framework for this qualitative study because of its emphasis on inductive analysis (Charmaz, 2014; Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This is particularly important for this study given the novelty of the topic and lack of prior theoretical support for the concept. Grounded theory, through its emphasis on inductive analysis assumes no prior leanings and allows the data to speak for itself. Given the main objective of this study is to forward an understanding of a phenomenon not well described and researched, an inductive-oriented analysis was required.

Grounded theory does not represent one particular approach, rather, this method has a storied history which has spawned at least three different versions over the past several decades. Yet, grounded theory is largely recognized as originating from the work of sociologists Barney Glaser and Ansel Strauss. This initial version of grounded theory is characterized strongly by these positivist/objectivist principles (Charmaz, 2006). One significant principle in particular suggests the researcher is able to completely remove themselves of their internal and external biases for the sake of allowing objective and otherwise true insight to emerge (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In direct opposition to this core and rigid positivist principle, Strauss broke away from his long-time colleague and sought to evolve grounded theory in a more post-positivist direction (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). That is, Strauss largely discredited the idea that the researcher can remove themselves and their biases from the study at hand to achieve neutrality (and objectivity) when dealing with qualitative data. Despite this seemingly flexible stand, many have pointed out the irony regarding Strauss and Corbin's staple element of their ground theory version – the coding paradigm (Charmaz, 2014; Kendall, 1999). Essentially, their coding paradigm functions as a frame in which any and all emerging insight from the qualitative data must come to fit into three overarching analytical categories: conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Thus, this turns grounded theory into a deductive application in which emerging insight must correspond within the pre-established parameters of their framework.

Despite its attraction and popularity as an easy-to-apply framework, it was determined Strauss and Corbin's version was not a good fit for the present topic. More than anything, there was great concern that their version may stifle any room for creativity which goes directly against the initial and core grounded theory principles of induction and following what the data tells you emergently (Charmaz, 2014). Pursuing an entirely foreign topic and seeking to understand an otherwise mysterious experience such as a Tourism Moment, it was necessary to be sensitive to what the data is saying and allowing room for emerging insight outside a pre-determined box. Moreover, Glaser's version of grounded theory was also rejected due its strict positivist ideals stipulating the possibility of obtaining a neutral and objective stance on the topic. Fortunately, a third version of grounded theory exists which overcomes both its predecessors' limitations – Kathy Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory.

Charmaz's take on grounded theory is one that marries two key elements of the first two versions: 1) inductive and emergent reasoning; and 2) reflexivity. In the most recent edition of her book 'Constructing Grounded Theory', Charmaz summarizes what the constructivist bend of ground theory is as follows: "Viewing the research as constructed rather than discovered fosters researchers' reflexivity about their actions and decisions" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 13). A constructivist epistemology, as alluded here in this quote, indicates researchers, participants, and the situational contexts alike collectively construct a social reality of the subject at hand – in contrast to a positivist or post-positivist perspective which projects the researcher as the value-free, objective, distant, neutral, and know-all observer. While true, Charmaz stresses that the constructivist-based grounded theory still prescribes to the original and staple principles of grounded theory as a methodology that is emergent, open-ended, comparative, and above all else, inductive (Charmaz, 2014). Pragmatically speaking, a constructivist grounded theory approach still also adopts many of the same mechanics related to coding, sampling, memos, and theoretical sampling.

The constructivist version of grounded theory was ultimately selected for these reasons above. I strongly believe in the existence of Tourism Moments during travel, and this is due both to my personal experiences and knowledge of the tourism experience literature previously discussed. Adopting a constructivist perspective to the latter affords three key advantages. First, it aids in both acknowledging and accounting for the pre-conceptions about Tourism Moments that I may bring into the study – and, to understand that these pre-conceptions cannot be set

aside, so I must be constantly reflective of their role throughout the study. Second, a constructivist perspective accepts that the reality presented as data emerges through participants interaction with their social contexts, myself as a researcher, and their viewpoints as individuals. Ultimately, the acceptance that whatever findings emerge are always contingent and intimately tied to the subjective circumstances of the participants and associated interactions. And third, with these two advantages in place as the foundation to a constructivist approach, the researcher is free and flexible to pursue leads and emergent developments during the analytical stage, allowing a close connection to the participants actual Tourism Moment experiences.

### **3.3.2 Sample and Data Collection**

#### ***3.3.2.1 Preliminary Data Collection: Travel Blogs***

The use of secondary data in the way of online travel blogs was utilized for two reasons: 1) to gather a better initial understanding of Tourism Moments; 2) as a means for triangulation against the interview data later discussed. The website [travelblogs.org](http://travelblogs.org) was selected as the exclusive data source as it has proven to be a reliable source for secondary data with rich detail and variety (Bosangit, Dulnuan, & Mena, 2012; Wenger, 2008). To extract blog entries from the site, a data mining program called Import.io was utilized. A total of 2,749 blog entries stemming the years of 2008 to 2016 were collected and imported into NVivo Version 12. These entries represented experiences across four continents, and well over 100 countries. A heuristic was employed as a means of identifying potential experiences that may pertain to the initially proposed conceptualization of a Tourism Moment. To do so, the keywords ‘moment’ and ‘momentary’ were used to search the 2,479 blog entries within NVivo. From this filtered dataset, each individual blog entry was read to determine if the experience shared resonated with the initial Tourism Moment conceptualization established. A grounded theory methodology best thrives with the use of diverse sources of data which function as sources of comparison – i.e., constant comparison as a major tenet of any grounded theory study (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1968).



### ***3.3.2.2 Interview Recruitment and Procedure***

Prior to the formal recruitment period, six pilot interviews were conducted in order to develop, test, and improve the interview guide. A convenience sampling approach was conducted to recruit interview participants for the actual data collection. Specifically, participants were recruited via the use of promotional flyers that were posted at over 20 public and business locations around the Spokane, Washington area. The flyer read as follows: “Can you still remember certain special moments from a past vacation? If so...please share your stories with us!”. Participants were compensated \$15 cash for their participation in the study. The only qualifications for participation were that they needed to have traveled anytime within the previous year of 2018, and were 18 years or older. A total of 23 participants were recruited (22 individual interviews, and 1 duo interview: See Table 2), and all interviews were conducted within a three-week span in January 2019. Participants were recruited until theoretical saturation was reached which was determined throughout the iterative memo-writing process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). No hard guidelines exist for a grounded theory study, as even sample sizes less than 10 have proven insightful (e.g., Speedling, 1981). Yet, Charmaz (2014) both recommends increasing sample size with novel/complex topics such as Tourism Moments and advocates for adhering to theoretical saturation.

Table 2. Interview Participant Profiles

Name (Aliases)	Gender	Age	Destination
Lena	F	32	Bali, Indonesia
Raquel	F	~31	Los Angeles, USA
Mandy	F	~55-65	Kenya, Tanzania
Tom	M	~55-65	Kenya, Tanzania
Sandra	F	~50	Australia, New Zealand
Todd	M	~60	Venice, Italy
Luke	M	~20	Toronto, Canada
Matt	M	~21	Cascade Mountains, USA
Lucy	F	28	Cancun, Mexico
John	M	~65	Mexico
Mary	F	79	Athens, Greece
Spencer	M	57	San Francisco, USA
Erika	F	63	Los Angeles, USA
Samantha	F	19	Paris, France
Megan	F	~25	Cruise Ship, Europe
Elena	F	~50	Kelowna, Canada
Michelle	F	66	Cairo, Egypt
Isabel	F	~25	St. Lucia
Lynn	F	~60	California, USA
Stan	M	37	Thailand
Pam	F	22	Washington D.C., USA
Victor	M	~35	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Danny	M	~19	Banff, Canada

A semi-structured interview approach grounded in ‘constructivist interview’ practices was employed. A constructivist approach honors the inherent social mutuality of the interview as a conversation and organic interaction (Charmaz, 2014). That is, it rejects the view of an interview as capable of capturing the actual lived reality of participants’ experiences, and instead, honors the natural interaction between interviewer and interviewee as jointly working to explore an emergent understanding together. For instance, the following interview excerpt from this study offers a glimpse of this mutual dynamic:

**Interviewer:**

So you know what it means to achieve mindfulness or is that possible to say?

**Participant:**

You can aspire towards mindfulness...

**Interviewer:**

Do you see these moments, do you think your more sensitive to recognizing needing to be...is mindfulness, and you would be the perfect person to ask, is it something you have to work towards, or is it something that has to happen organically?

**Participant:**

I think that its in all of us by sneaking up on it, my world, through meditation, or the practice of mindfulness, I am now drinking, my coffee tastes warm, I think its also an acquire skill that you can develop so that you can have more moments, because your open to it, rather than staring at your screen or thinking what's next

Here, I purposely turned the tables to give the participant, a yoga instructor well-versed in the concept of mindfulness, an opportunity to teach me about the concept which then spurred subsequent discussions about its role during Tourism Moments. Though seemingly simple, these types of instances create the rapport and explicit understanding that the participant themselves is playing a critical role in helping identify emerging connections.

Interviews lasted about an hour on average and were audio-recorded. The locations of interviews were decided by participants and varied from public libraries to coffee shops. To facilitate a more natural conversation, written memos were done immediately at the conclusion of every interview, in lieu of taking notes during the interview itself. An interview protocol was developed to ensure that each interview flowed in nearly the same manner and that the research questions were properly addressed. The interview protocol included four different stages: 1) introduction: presenting outline of interview, building rapport with participant, and identifying/describing of participant's trip overall; 2) Tourism Moment questions: learning about participant's Tourism Moment experience; 3) old Tourism Moment recollection: describing Tourism Moment occurring more than five years ago; and 4) memory survey: assessing participant's degree of reliving of their Tourism Moments. In respect to a grounded theory approach, the protocol remained only as a guide such that all questions did not need to be

covered comprehensively in every interview, and more importantly, opportunity was given to pursue ideas and leads that did not necessarily pertain directly to the interview questions at hand.

Stage three and four of the interview was intended on addressing the proposition that Tourism Moments are likely some of the most vividly relived memories from our past tourism experiences. Specifically, it was discussed in the literature review that Tourism Moments play a significant role in memory such that they are the episodic memories that allow the only means to vividly relive our past trips. As such, it was deemed necessary to confirm this proposition in some manner, and two key tactics were utilized to do so. First, stage three involved asking participants to recollect a leisure trip that occurred more than five years ago, and to identify a Tourism Moment from this trip. Participants typically did this with ease, and the ‘age’ of these older trips recollected were from 5 years to 40 years. Participants were simply asked to take a few minutes to describe their Tourism Moment to the interviewer and were not asked further follow-up questions. The objective of this tactic was to get a general sense for how detailed and extensive their memory for these much older moments were. Secondly, stage 4 required participants to complete a short five-minute online survey intended on measuring the degree of reliving for both of their Tourism Moments shared – i.e., Tourism Moment from 2018, and Tourism Moment which occurred over five years ago. The 8-item autobiographical memory scale was adopted from Fitzgerald and Broadbridge (2013) and Rubin, Schrauf, and Greenberg (2003). One example item read “As you remember the Tourism Moment, how clearly can you see it in your mind as if it were happening right now?”. It is important to emphasize that the survey results are certainly not to be treated in the same respect as a traditional quantitative empirical piece. In other words, given the blatantly small sample size, it cannot be concluded with certainty that the results are generalizable. This exercise is done in conjunction with stage three solely as a means to gather some indication regarding the notion for Tourism Moment’s high possibility of featuring a highly vivid recollective memory experience. Charmaz (2014) challenges the implicit expectation that grounded theory is exclusively an interview method, and stresses that the specific methods used are contingent on the research interests at hand:

“My notion of grounded theory includes a basic methodological principle: our data collection methods flow from the research question and where we go with it. Thus, a particular data collection or analytic strategy cannot drive the research question” (p. 27)

### 3.3.3 Ensuring Trustworthiness

Obtaining a high-quality sample and demonstrating rigor is of upmost importance in any qualitative study. A constructivist paradigm approach to assessing qualitative research strays away from the core principles that were founded on positivist ideals. Rather than speaking in terms of validity and reliability, constructivist-based qualitative research is more concerned with assessing its ‘trustworthiness’ or ‘goodness’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Morrow, 2005; Peshkin, 1993). Grounded in constructivist ideals, four criteria were used to ensure trustworthiness of the sample and data: usefulness, fairness, credibility and dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, Charmaz, 2014; Patton, 2002).

Many qualitative researchers stress that a sample or data is only as good as its potential to offer rich and insightful information – i.e., its usefulness. Typically, these arguments are made based off the guiding principle of whether the sample can adequately answer the research questions. Good samples then are those which are ‘information-rich’ in that they provide enough information that the researcher(s) have the potential to learn a lot about the main issue at hand in the study (Patton, 2002). Other scholars echo Patton’s points as well (e.g., Bernard, 2000; Morrow, 2005). Good samples then do not exist, only more or less useful ones. Similarly, Charmaz (2014) proposes that usefulness means striving for collecting ‘rich data’, which is data that is “[...detailed, focused, and full” (p. 23). A similar parallel lies in the notion of obtaining ‘thick’ description which can encapsulate data as interview transcripts, memos, fieldnotes, or secondary data and serves as the foundation for the subsequent analytical and reporting stages (Geertz, 1973; Patton, 2002).

This study strived for usefulness in a few ways. First, although not explicitly designed for, it was evident that many of the participants recruited were highly motivated to share their travel experiences. That is, it was evident that the participants were not enticed to participate simply due to the \$15 compensation offered, while many noted this explicitly, most indicated they were happy to just share their previous travel experiences. Perhaps the recruitment flyer (discussed later) played an influential part as it read “Can you still remember certain special moments from a past vacation? If so...please share your stories with us!”. Although seemingly simple, I believe this drew in participants ready to go in-depth on their feelings, beliefs, and takeaways from their recent travel experiences. In turn, this resulted in deeply engaging conversations regarding their particular Tourism Moment experiences, which allowed the depth

necessary to get at best understanding what the Tourism Moment experience is all about. Further, another strategy that helped ensure the obtainment of useful data was the great care taken to explain the Tourism Moment concept to participants. Nearly ten minutes at the beginning of each interview was dedicated to describing the definition of a Tourism Moment, giving multiple examples of Tourism Moments, and allowing time for any questions participants may have about what a Tourism Moment is. A significant determinant of usefulness is that the data remains focused on the topic at hand (Charmaz, 2014), and this time spent ensuring participants initially understood well the idea of the Tourism Moment made it so their responses pertained well to the type of experience the researcher was after. In summary, these two factors give confidence that the sample forwarded rich data, and in turn, useful data.

One point of trustworthiness assessment concerns fairness, such that the research was conducted in a manner that captured a wide range of different viewpoints within a sample so to avoid over representing or biasing one sub-set of beliefs/experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Mays & Pope, 2000; Morrow, 2005). Ensuring and showing that fairness is achieved requires accounting for a wide range of viewpoints and contexts. A widely utilized strategy in achieving fairness is to seek out viewpoints that represent the minority voice (Patton, 2002). This may also be referred to as seeking disconfirming evidence against what the emerging patterns suggest (Charmaz, 2014). Although there is no exact science to assess fairness, the researcher can acquire a good ‘feel’ regarding how diverse their sample is.

The sample obtained in total for this study showcases a great degree of diversity and range of perspectives. From a demographic standpoint, the sample includes many different age groups represented fairly equally, an 8-men to 15-women gender split, and a seemingly wide range of economic backgrounds. Great efforts were taken to obtain a culturally-diverse sample, which resulted in four out of the twenty-three participants belonging to an ethnic minority-group. Perhaps most important, it was evident that the participants varied greatly in their amount of prior travel experience, perceived spending power, destinations, and purpose of trip. For instance, nearly half the sample represented international destinations across several different countries (e.g., Thailand, Italy, Egypt) and in addition, the purposes of the trip varied greatly as well such as family vacations, honeymoons, dance tourism, and solo travel. Seeking out disconfirming evidence or minority viewpoints was also addressed. This arose when participants during the first five interviews expressed very strong views against taking pictures/videos during

Tourism Moments. The sixth participant however disclosed a strong inclination to document moments whenever they arise. As such, I veered and decided to spend a great deal of time probing this participant about their views on the matter rather than addressing other interview questions as thoroughly. This allowed an opportunity to learn about an underrepresented viewpoint which challenged and contextualized some of the emerging ideas from the prior interviews.

Though admittedly having a more post-positivist leaning, dependability was also addressed. Dependability refers to demonstrating to some extent how the researcher came to their conclusions on the findings. To do so, qualitative researchers advocate for producing an ‘audit trail’ (Mays & Pope, 2000). Morrow (2005) describes an audit trail as “a detailed chronology of research activities and processes; influences on the data collection and analysis; emerging themes, categories or models; and analytic memos” (p. 252). For Charmaz (2014), memo-writing functions to make visible the interactive and interpretive space in which researchers make connections of what is otherwise abstract.

Not only as a means of record-keeping, memo-writing played a crucial role in facilitating reflexivity. Reflexivity offers a remedy to combat the inherent issue of subjectivity by illuminating and bringing forth any underlying assumptions, beliefs, or attitudes that a researcher holds which may compromise their understanding, as well as their interpretation of the phenomenon at hand. (Ellis & Bochner, 2003). Showcasing such level of transparency works to demonstrate to the reader the contingencies associated with the data, and in turn, showcasing a more dependable set of data. Prior to conducting the interviews, I wrote down all the assumptions and beliefs I held about Tourism Moments and the associated topics. For instance, one important revelation arose from this exercise – I recognized that I held a fairly strong stance against taking pictures or videos during Tourism Moments. With this acknowledged beforehand, I was able to craft interview questions and engage in conversations on the matter with participants in a more neutral-standing manner.

Accordingly, memo-writing played a significant part throughout the totality of the research process to address the dependability criterion. Memos were taken during the literature review, development of research questions, development of interview questions, post-interview recaps, and of course the analytical stage. Specifically, extensive memos were written immediately following each interview. This aided the use of theoretical sampling to expand on

emerging ideas and leads to address in subsequent interviews. When transcribing interviews, memos proved pivotal in further expanding on the initial insight from the interview stage. Together, the collection of memos compiled demonstrate a fairly evident path for the line of thinking leading to the findings ultimately identified.

Credibility refers to executing qualitative research in a rigorous and consistent manner (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Gasson, 2004; Patton, 2002). Triangulation has long been considered one of the primary strategies to ensure some level of credibility in qualitative studies (Denzin, 1989). Triangulation is not one discrete method, but rather encompasses various types of triangulation efforts (Fontana & Frey, 2003; Morrow, 2005; Wray, Markovic, & Manderson, 2007). ‘Triangulation of sources’ was employed in this study, which pertains to the use of multiple sources of data for the analytical stage. Charmaz (2014) speaks of triangulation as a powerful data collection strategy for the sake of systematically reconciling and confirming insight. As introduced earlier, the use of travel blogs was selected not only as a means of generating initial insight of the Tourism Moment experience, but also, as a means of corroborating against the results of the interview analysis. This involved comparing the memos/codes from the analysis of the blogs to the memos/codes of the interview analyses. Likewise, member checks have long been regarded as “the single most critical technique for establishing credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 239). Accordingly, after the interview stage was completed, participants were contacted to verify the points and assumptions from prior interviews, as a means to confirm or dispute what has already been said. In essence, participants served as a source when triangulating the emergent findings from collective set of interviews.

### **3.3.4 Analysis**

The analytical strategy employed stemmed from the guidelines provided in Charmaz (2014). To begin, the recorded interview audio was transcribed with the aid of the Express Scribe Transcription Software. Per grounded theory principles, extensive memo-writing was conducted during this transcription stage, and in fact, these memos proved to be a driving source of insight for the subsequent analytical phase. Additionally, all interview transcripts were read in their entirety before beginning the coding process as a means of familiarizing with and sensitizing the researcher to the qualitative data. To facilitate the coding analytical stage, interview transcripts were then imported into NVivo Version 12.



It is important to clarify that the coding process discussed next was conducted for both the travel blog data and the interview data in the same manner. It is also important to note that one of the biggest findings from analyzing the blog data was the discovery of four types of Tourism Moments. Half-way through the analysis of the blog data it became abundantly clear that there existed distinct types of Tourism Moment experiences, and by the end of the analysis, it was further evident that four discrete types of Tourism Moments could be identified. This proved important for the subsequent interview data analysis as each participant's Tourism Moment experience were categorized according to the type of moment it characterized, and in turn, the codes applied were categorized according to the type of moment.

In short, Charmaz (2014) describes coding as follows: "In grounded theory coding, we take segments of data apart, name them in concise terms, and propose an analytic handle to develop abstract ideas for interpreting each segment of data" (p. 113). More conceptually however, Charmaz stresses that researchers do not simply apply codes, but rather, they construct codes. Constructing codes speaks to how researchers always bring in their unique individual viewpoints on the matter, as well as the role that language and meanings play in the decisions to interpret and code data accordingly. This is in direct contrast to more positivist ideals which may see the assigning of codes to data as paralleling a mirror capable of capturing the true and natural empirical world that is partitioned against outside factors. Thus, before describing the coding procedures used, it is important to stress the application of these codes are born from the subjective interactive and interpretive space.

Initial coding represents the first step of the Charmaz (2014) constructivist grounded theory analysis. This coding step involved a line-by-line assessment of each interview excerpt, with a goal of sticking closely to the data, and paying close attention to what the data is telling you. Critical to initial coding is the use of gerunds which means only using codes that end with 'ing'. The reasoning for using gerunds is two-fold. First, this orients the data as actions, which prioritizes a focus on making sense of what is happening, rather than what it means. Secondly, and in turn, coding for actions functions as a buffer against the inclination to begin thinking conceptually and interpreting in theoretical terms at this early stage. At this stage, it was imperative to remain open and sensitive to emerging leads, and to avoid applying any pre-conceived ideas before this happens. And as such, the initial coding served as an exercise to learn about and sensitize me to the data. At the conclusion of the initial coding stage, all initial codes

generated were also labeled according to one of the four types of Tourism Moments (stemming from the blogs analysis discussed earlier).

After initial coding, focused coding was conducted as the second step in the coding process. Procedurally speaking, focused coding is quite different than the previous initial coding step because it moves away from the meticulous and time-consuming line-by-line reading of interview excerpts, to a focus on assessing the initial codes generated. At the conclusion of the initial codes stage, the researcher is expected to have a solid global understanding of the subject and data as a whole. With this new-found enlightenment, focused coding is about making decisions regarding which initial codes seem more theoretically/conceptually relevant to answering the research questions. In essence, you are not coding the raw data anymore, but rather, taking a more interpretive position in evaluating and selecting the previously generated initial codes. Guiding this process, Charmaz (2014) recommends focusing on the initial codes that appear most frequently and/or that carry the most theoretical significance. Moreover, focused coding was centered on moving from simply describing the data through codes, to applying more conceptually and abstract codes. As such, the ‘act’ of coding either involved selecting an initial code and elevating it to a focused code, or instead, coding a set a of initial codes with a new and more conceptually oriented label. The use of gerunds was still employed at this coding stage so to still stick closely to the data while simultaneously leading the analysis to a more conceptual/abstract level. The focused coding stage took the longest amount of time by far. This was not only due to analyzing hundreds of initial codes, but also due to the meticulous comparative process evoked. A process which involved comparing initial codes from one interview excerpt with another, comparing blog initial codes with interview initial codes, and moreover, comparing initial codes with the numerous memos written, and comparing blog memos with interview memos. The end result was a ‘trimmed’ dataset represented by a few carefully selected focused codes.

Lastly, theoretical coding both reconciles the prior two coding stages, and results in the final finished product from the analysis. In short, theoretical coding involves conceptually elevating the focused codes further to find relationships or similarities among them. As such, theoretical codes strive to be ‘integrative’ to help project the overarching and concluding theoretical story of your data (Charmaz, 2014). With these analytical guidelines in place, the theoretical coding stage unfolded in three steps. First, all focused codes for each particular

Tourism Moment type were compiled into one document. Theoretical coding was then employed such that each of these four documents (one for each type of Tourism Moment) was individually analyzed with the intent on grouping focused codes together according to some conceptual/theoretical concept. For instance, the private Tourism Moment focused codes of ‘recognizing novelty of situation’, ‘recognizing unique setting’, and ‘recognizing significance of what moment means’ were grouped together and given the theoretical code of ‘recognizing significance of present moment’. The second step involved grouping the list of theoretical codes generated in the first step according to an even higher or more abstract level. For instance, the theoretical code ‘recognizing significance of present moment’ previously showcased was further grouped alongside two additional theoretical codes to make a new more elevated theoretical code labeled ‘recognizing present circumstance’. To reiterate, these grouping decisions were strongly facilitated through the memos written throughout the entire coding process across both the blog and interview data.

The third and final step of the theoretical coding stage was centered towards organizing and making sense of the grouped theoretical codes from the previous step. This iterative process involved evaluating and determining the ‘fundamental characteristics’ for both the Tourism Moment in general, and each type of Tourism Moment specifically. This required going through the theoretical codes of each type of Tourism Moment, and identifying which codes are present across all four types. These reoccurring theoretical codes were then compiled into one document which represented the ‘fundamental characteristics’ of a Tourism Moment. Additionally, this step also involved identifying which theoretical codes were distinct for each type of Tourism Moment. For instance, the theoretical code labeled ‘Absorbing place’ was a characteristic distinct only to the Private Tourism Moment type. This was only identified after all of the theoretical codes across the four Tourism Moment types were evaluated and compared.

Figure 3 summarizes the analytical process of this study, including all three rounds of coding employed. Emphasizes is placed on showcasing the continual iterative process driving the analysis. For additional illustration purposes, Table 3 provides an example of how the raw interview data came to be coded across the three coding stages.

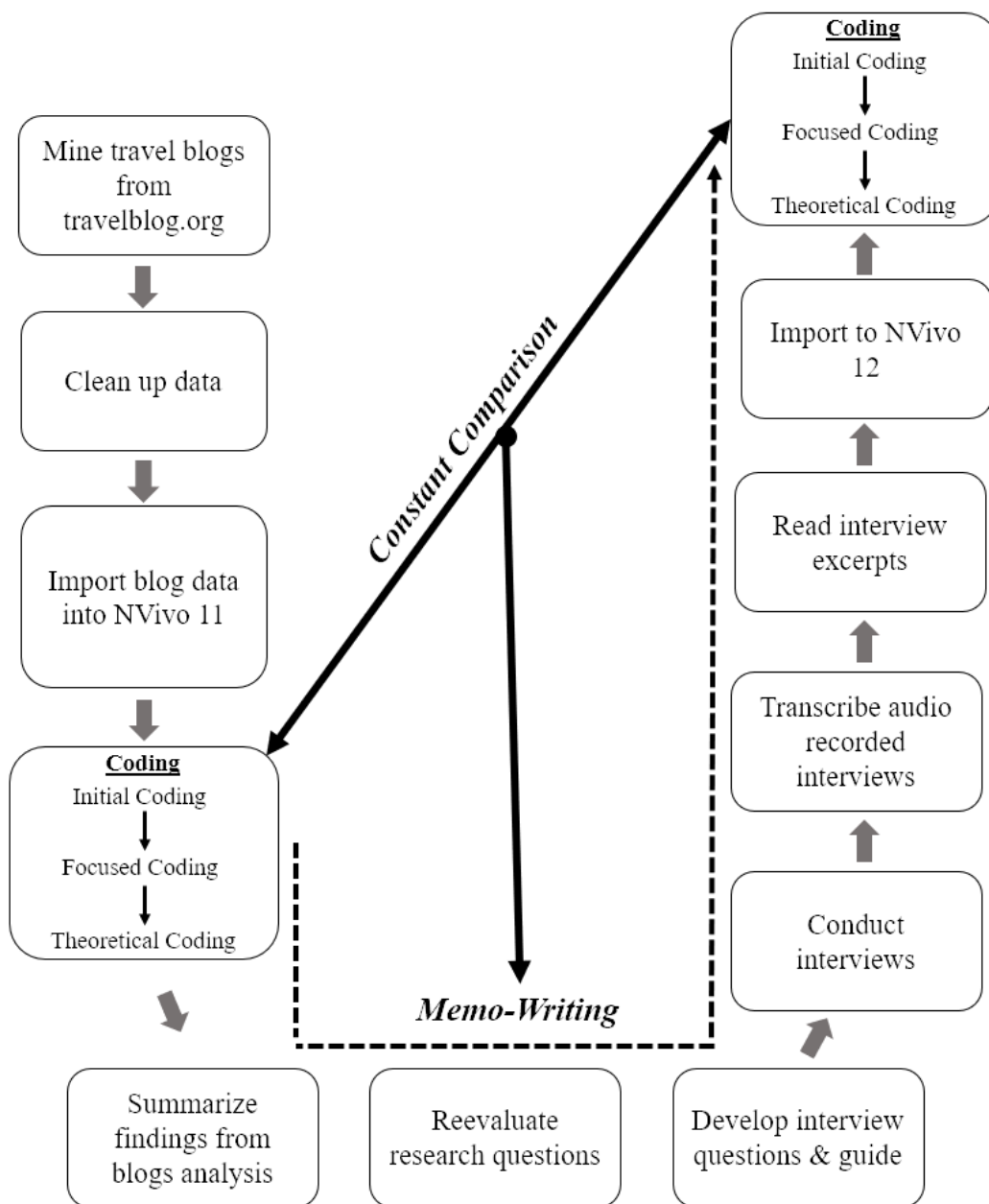


Figure 3. Analytical Process of Study 1

Table 3. Example of Coding Process

Coding Round	Example
<b>Initial Coding</b>	
<i>Initial Code: Being part of komunitas experience</i>	<i>[...and everybody was singing this funny song you know, so idk it just stood out to me...]</i>
<b>Focused Coding</b>	
<i>Focused Code: Being a part of something small</i>	<i>[...and everybody was singing this funny song you know, so idk it just stood out to me as like there was content in that moment and then it was kind of just like joyous funny thing that everybody was doing and I just remember looking at my partner smiling and laughing and it just felt fun to be a part of something so small like strangers just....]</i>
<u>Initial Codes</u> <a href="#">Being part of a komunitas experience</a> Singing along with everyone else	
<b>Theoretical Coding 1</b>	
<i>Theoretical Code 1: Making a small connection with others</i>	
<u>Focused Codes</u> <a href="#">Being a part of something small</a> Connecting with strangers Connecting with a stranger	
<b>Theoretical Coding 2</b>	
<i>Theoretical Code 2: Sociality</i>	
<u>Theoretical Codes 1</u> <a href="#">Making a small connection with others</a> Others involvement creating moment Desiring others to experience same moment	

### **3.4 Results**

This research set out with a dual-purpose of both learning about the Tourism Moment experience and exploring its place in the memory recollection processes of tourism experiences. The literature review challenged the existing and historical tourism experience conceptualization dominating the tourism literature. This paper argued for the existence of moments within trips, and the need to understand the Tourism Moment experience. Specifically, objectives were established to develop a Tourism Moment conceptualization while defining what the experience entails. A second focus of the study concerned understanding how Tourism Moments come to influence how travelers remember their previous trips. This study intended on confirming that Tourism Moments are one of the most vividly relived memories from our past trips, and thus, to subsequently shift focus on investigating the recall of Tourism Moments.

#### **3.4.1 Experiential Characteristics of a Tourism Moment**

The following section will present a parsimonious and bounding conceptualization of the Tourism Moment experience stemming from the grounded theory analysis conducted. Despite the identification of four discrete types of Tourism Moments, there exist a few key experiential characteristics that characterize all four types. That is, a few distinct experiential elements that come to define what qualifies as a Tourism Moment experience.

##### ***3.4.1.1 Bounded Event***

First, it is important to clarify how moments are experienced as consciously and explicitly as the overarching trip itself. A trip is bounded in contrast to the everyday context, delineating a tourism experience (at the trip level) as liminal – a sort of discrete span of experience against an otherwise continuous life. Tourism Moments are experienced in a very similar fashion. Although travelers can seemingly recognize that they are ‘on vacation’ at all times within a trip, and thus go through the tourism experience as a continuous flow of experience, segments of this experience emerge out as distinct phenomena all its own. Travelers seemingly step in and out of moments and have a conscious recognition or feeling of when they have done so:

*“[...the whole environment of the restaurant changed back to before like even the lighting changed and stuff so it was kind of this snap change, it was kind of like you were in a trance a little bit and then it was back to business as usual...]”  
(Raquel)*

As reflected here, it is apparent that these moments are compartmentalized out as their own within the flow of a tourism experience. This is noted in the excerpt above in how the traveler noted how things went back to “business as usual” with the conclusion of the moment. Within the continuity of life, tourism experiences as trips are the fleeting spikes of distinct phenomena. Yet, within the seemingly fluid flow of a tourism experience, Tourism Moments function as the fleeting spikes of increased stimulation and intrigue. One of the most telling evidence was that during or upon the conclusion of a moment, travelers consistently and explicitly alluded to having their moment. As clearly as they can declare having just gone on a vacation, they equally recognize that they have just gone through something particularly interesting (i.e. moment) as the excerpt below showcases. In this example, a group of travelers had suddenly just encountered a large moose while driving on a quiet highway to the Canadian border:

*“It just went up the road I guess, and then ducked into some trees, and after it disappeared we left, and then we kind of chuckled, I said well I just made this moment for everyone, well this moment was brought to you by your brother’s inability to tell me to turn.” (Elena)*

Immediately after it occurred, the group took a second to explicitly recognize and appreciate the emergence of the moment within an otherwise mundane drive after it occurred. The latter is supported by event segmentation theory which stipulates that humans segment events according to event boundaries when there are perceptual and conceptual changes to an otherwise continuous flow of experience (Radvansky & Zacks, 2014). The beginning boundary or start of the moment was almost always evident and explicit to the traveler. In other words, they know they have commenced on a distinctly new experience which was different than what was just occurring. And it is this contrasting nature of the start of the moment which allows it to be bounded as its own discrete experience apart from an otherwise continuous flow of experience.

### **3.4.1.2 Short and Fleeting**

A Tourism Moment corresponds to instances of experience occurring at the temporal scale of seconds to several minutes. More specifically, the duration of participants' Tourism Moments varied to as short as a few seconds to as long as about ten minutes. As such, this challenges the notion of projecting the temporality of peak-like experiences as constituting the entire trip. Both the blog data and interview data support that the felt rise in elation, intrigue, or engagement is very short-lived. Additionally, it is also important to clarify and distinguish that a Tourism Moment is also *felt* as fleeting. That is, one can experience a short experience but never consciously feel as though it transpired quickly. The experience of time is a subjective feeling (Weardon, 2016), and with most Tourism Moments shared by participants there was often a very vivid sense of the present transpiring quickly. Take the following two Tourism Moment experiences as an illustration. Both occurred with a few minutes of time and yet they showcase how the fleeting passing of time is vividly featured during the experience:

*"I think the quick instant of we're going to dye it, to here you go its purple, soak it into a banana mixture, we're going to squeeze excess water, here you go, touch it, and the fabric is completely dry, soo yeah, I think that the fact that I touched and saw it all within 5 minutes, I think that might be that moment...]" (Lucy)*

*"So I went and I took a seat on the roots of an old tree near the fence, pulled out my journal, and started to write. And the sun slowly peaked down through the Sunshine Cove trees as I observed the world around me, the movement of the water, the sea birds floating along the ripples, and eventually, the spray of the humpbacks far across the channel as they dove, feeding on the tiny animals that they filter through their baleen. And I smelled the air and just felt, "Yah. This is where I am supposed to be at this very moment. I am a scientist, lost in nature and loving it."" And it passed all too quickly as I headed back to campus..." (blog entry)*

Though the degree to which this fleeting nature is felt certainly varies, it is an important experiential feature of a Tourism Moment nonetheless.

### **3.4.1.3 Abrupt Surprise**

It was interesting to discover that nearly all of the interview participants' moments were unexpected. A few examples of participants' unexpected moments included seeing a volcano erupt in the distance, discovering a 'hidden' cave, encountering a moose, or entering a yodeling contest. Many participants appeared completely blindsided by the occurrence of their moments.



Almost serendipitously, travelers seemed to stumble across these experiences as well. And as such, participants often described the start of their moments as ‘sudden’. Being thrown into their moments, the first instances of their moments were a scramble to get a grip of what was happening. For Luke, this occurred when he encountered a towering sight above him:

*“I didn’t even know that we were driving by it until I saw it out of the corner of my eye, I wasn’t really expecting that...[so we were pretty close to it but I was still in awe, but it was pretty cool cause I was actually on my phone I was just on my phone and I look up and it’s the CN tower, and I was like whoa! ...definitely staring and blinking multiple times while watching that, while driving by it. Definitely one of those things where I had to turn my head back to see it from the back of the car” (Luke)*

Here, Luke’s moment speaks of how rapid things can change, or how an otherwise continuous flow of experience is disrupted through the happening of a Tourism Moment. It was also evident that the unexpected nature of the moment occurring was often an influential reason for the significance of the experience. Although the role of delight is not new in hospitality and tourism experiences (e.g., Lee & Shea, 2015), the interview data illuminates the inherent value of unexpected experiences such as Tourism Moments. The sense of unexpectedness makes for experiences which are purely organic. An excellent example is evidenced in the following experience in which a seemingly simple occurrence comes to be preserved decades later as a lifelong memory:

*“I had this beautiful floral apricot colored scarf that I had bought for my honeymoon, and it was around my neck, and we were on the bridge and I leaned over the railing and I said to Dale, take a picture... he said no I’m not going to take a picture of you with a scarf and then just as he was saying, you need to live in the moment, a gust of wind came through, and took my scarf out of my neck and it floated like this like a dance going down to the river, it was crazy good...cause then I watched it, we just stood there with our jaws you know, dropped watching this beautiful scarf do this ballet over the river...]” (Erica)*

This demonstrates that Tourism Moments, almost due solely to their unexpectedness, turn simple events into lifelong meaningful experiences. Tourism Moments become organic in the sense that they appear exclusive only to them.

#### 3.4.1.4 Surreal

Both the blog and interview data described Tourism Moments as featuring a distinct feeling of time being suspended. Participants described the latter in several ways such as ‘time being suspended’, ‘time freezing’, ‘time stopping’, or ‘being frozen in time’. Tourism Moments seemed to be experienced inherently different than the flow of experience immediately before and after the moment. Discussed earlier was how Tourism Moments are bounded as their own discrete experiences within a trip. Well perhaps crystallizing this distinction is the sensation of feeling as if the flow of time is altered within the timeframe of a Tourism Moment. The following brief excerpt alludes to this point well:

*“[...but it does it, it takes your breath, away and it sort of just freezes that moment and I just watched it because it was really fun to just trot along...]”*  
(Elena)

As Elena explicitly speaks to here, moments are encapsulated in and by time, and travelers recognize this unique distinction as they live through them. Moreover, travelers have both a significant physical and psychological reaction to this suspension of time. First, participants described themselves during their Tourism Moments as having their breath taken away, jaws dropped, frozen in place, and not blinking. An almost shock to the body’s system, tourists seem to succumb and let themselves be taken by the moment at hand. Perhaps then it is no wonder participants spoke highly of the surreal and almost spiritual aspect of the Tourism Moment. It is the feeling of time being frozen that simultaneously seems to create a vivid degree of surrealness, or the feeling that what is currently happening is not real. And as such, it is more than the suspending of time, certain Tourism Moments are the suspension of reality. So much so that participants often questioned this consciously to themselves during their moments:

*“Yes, I was in tune to that moment to like almost to where the point to where I was really questioning if this was real?? Like is this a real moment like am I really experiencing this cause it was sort of like aha like oh shi\*! Im really here, this is really happening, so almost kind of like it never happened cause it seems so unreal of that experience...]”* (Victor)

The degree of surrealness then can become so profound that travelers seem to catch themselves realizing this suspension of reality happening before them. Beyond the cognitive element of the experience, some participants’ Tourism Moments rose to a spiritual level:

*“Just absolutely relaxed, I swear on my life that I have never been more relaxed in my life then in that moment, blissful, I am not a religious person in any way or shape, but I would almost call it spiritual, like as far as you know.” (Isabel)*

As showcased here, Tourism Moments have the potential to manifest into very spiritual and almost out-of-body experiences. While not all participants’ Tourism Moments reached such a heightened level of spirituality or surrealness, there was a consistent pattern that travelers recognized that they were living through a particularly special experience as it occurred – or as one participant noted, felt the ‘expanding of their soul’ during the Tourism Moment.

#### **3.4.1.5 Snap Return to Reality**

Perhaps directly due to the elevated and suspended nature just discussed, many participants described a suddenness in how their moments concluded. ‘Snapping back to reality’ serves as an accurate descriptor in projecting how just as quickly as their moments unfolded, did they come to a rapid end. Yet, it is particularly in relation to the experience of a suspended reality discussed prior. The end of moments implies the return to reality, or the notion of coming back down to earth. Said differently, the spell of their Tourism Moments was broken. Further, and most often, travelers did not decide when their moments ended, as there would often be an explicit external factor that brought an end to the moment. For instance, one participant’s moment of watching the sun burst through a cloudy sky ended when the winds picked up as he was driving a sailboat. As such then, Tourism Moments truly are not dictated. They are not staged as they are unexpected, and their ‘runtime’ is not predetermined as they end suddenly and undirected. While the in-moment emotions may be felt afterwards, the return to reality appears to be quite vivid for travelers:

*“If this makes sense it went by very slow but ended very quickly I don’t know if that makes sense but its kind of like ...its hard to put into words, but its like when it starts theres...and I wonder if it has to do with the fact that I’m not thinking about anything else so im not thinking about like time,... just enjoying it but then its over...]” (Danny)*

As reflected in this excerpt, a complicated set of feelings surround this sudden end to moments as participants are faced to simultaneously recognize that the entire trip cannot reach this heightened level of intrigue at all times while also appreciating what just transpired. So perhaps

both a reality check that this special moment has just concluded, and that these moments are few and far between.

#### ***3.4.1.6 Experientially Distinct***

Prior to commencing the study, one of the parameters established for a moment is that it must be experientially distinct. Through the analysis of the blog and interview data, it was further understood what this critical element of the Tourism Moment entails. First, what can be deemed as experientially distinct or substantial was of course completely subjective. It is near impossible to predict if any one given Tourism Moment may be interpreted as particularly interesting for all travelers. A Tourism Moment appears to reflect a sudden spike of intrigue and importance for a traveler. In other words, the moment clearly captivates and sparks the travelers' attention at that particular point in time more so than what just occurring prior or what followed the 'conclusion' of the moment.

However, the degree of distinctiveness or specialness of a Tourism Moment experience certainly varied. Certainly, a good portion of the qualitative data showcased moments of extraordinary experiences, alluding to the 'special' experience category previously found in the literature: peak experience, extraordinary experiences, awe experiences, and the like. Yet other participant's Tourism Moment experiences carried seemingly less experiential grandiosity on the surface, representing much more simplistic encounters. As an example, the following blog excerpts represent two Tourism Moments as conceptualized in this study:

'Extraordinary' Moment:

*"Anyway just when we thought we were not getting any more sightings a male and female (whales) came up right behind us. We got really fabulous views of them side by side coming out of the water and both tails going down together...[we were now elated, what a fabulous experience and how privileged are we to be able to do something so fantastic. It was without doubt a very special moment and one of many that we have already had on this trip." (blogger)*

Non 'Extraordinary' Moment:

*"One of my favorite songs with Elbow comes on, and I put down the book and lie still to soak in the tones. I'm getting better at this again, better at enjoying all those little beautiful moments that intersperse our lives. Can't afford to miss out on them in a place like winter-Sweden. Happiness isn't a constant state, it's second-to-second, as moody as a teenager. You don't acquire it once and then get*

*to enjoy it for the rest of your life, and that's why all the little beautiful moments are so important.” (blogger)*

As these two excerpts should showcase, a moment is not necessarily defined by the extent to which it is unique, special, fascinating, or extraordinary. Tourism Moments then are experienced on a continuum of ‘distinctiveness’ or ‘specialness’. At the minimum, moments are understood as highly interesting, and its maximum as ‘peak’ or extraordinary experiences.

If a Tourism Moment is not necessarily defined by its degree of distinctiveness, then what can truly serve as the qualifying distinguishing factor for a Tourism Moment? To help articulate the answer to this question, I briefly turn to involvement theory. In particular, the Felt Involvement framework introduced by Celsi and Olson (1988) provides a suitable parallel to describe the fundamental essence of what makes a Tourism Moment experientially distinct. The following discussion is not meant to suggest that a Tourism Moment is perfectly explained by felt involvement, but instead, that the qualitative data seems to indicate that the subjective experience of felt involvement as presented by Celsi and Olson (1988) offers a suitable explanation for what underlines the distinct nature of any Tourism Moment.

The concept of felt involvement stems from the consumer literature, and pertains to the “experiential, phenomenological nature of involvement” (Celsi & Olson, 1988, p. 211). Generally speaking, involvement is a variable that helps explain a consumers’ interest towards a product, service or event (Broderic & Mueller, 1999; Gabbott & Hogg, 1999; Richins, Bloch, & McQuarrie, 1992; Zaichowsky, 1985). The Celsi and Olson (1988) Felt Involvement framework depicts a process that explains the antecedents, description, and outcomes of involvement.

At the core of their conceptualization, it considers personal relevance to be an essential characteristic of Felt Involvement. Much like other researchers, they view consumers’ involvement with an object, situation, or action to represent the degree to which the consumer considers that object, situation, or action to be personally relevant (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Richins & Bloch, 1986; Zaichowsky, 1985). Celsi and Olson (1988) define personal relevance as the extent to which consumers perceive an object/situation/action “to be self-related or in some way instrumental in achieving their personal goals and values” (p.211). In that regard, Felt Involvement is always tied to whether a product or experience is believed to address a consumer’s goals and beliefs at any given time. Of significance to Tourism Moments, they emphasize that personal relevance is not some stable and default attitude towards a product or

experience. Instead, Felt Involvement is a fleeting and situational relevance such that consumers experience a temporary feeling of increased personal relevance only in certain circumstances. It is important to note that determining the degree of personal relevance experienced are both situational and intrinsic sources. Situational sources refer to “a wide variety of specific stimuli, cues, and contingencies in a consumer's immediate environment” and intrinsic referring to “relatively stable, enduring structures of personally relevant knowledge, derived from past experience and stored in long-term memory (Celsi & Olson, 1988, p. 211-221).

Once some situational stimuli induce an increased level of personal relevance (i.e. involvement), it is postulated that this transient spike in personal relevance results in immediate cognitive and behavioral outcomes. This resulting phase of Felt Involvement is deemed as a motivational state that “energizes or drives consumers” (Celsi & Olson, 1988, p. 211). For instance, they find that greater involvement results in consumers dedicating more attention to advertisements, exerting greater cognitive effort to comprehend ads, a more narrowly focused attention on the product in the ad, as well as more extensive elaboration (i.e. sensemaking) of the ad. Similarly, the entire research stream of information processing theory is predicated on the principle that higher personal relevance prompts more extensive cognitive processing of incoming stimuli (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

The subjective experience of felt involvement thus describes a temporary increased sense of relevance towards some object or experience, and in turn, a more sharpened cognitive processing (i.e. attention, comprehension, elaboration) towards said object or experience. Based on the analysis, I posit that the experientially distinct nature of Tourism Moments is best represented as similar to the subjective experience of Felt Involvement. This depicts Tourism Moments as being instances in which a tourist experiences a spiked and transitory period of personal relevance towards their tourism environment at hand (i.e. the Tourism Moment). In other words, and at the most baseline level, Tourism Moments are simply short experiences of high personal relevance during a trip. In conjunction with a spike in personal relevance, Tourism Moments exemplify an increased attention dedicated to the present experience by the tourist. An organic ‘motivational state’ emerges in which the tourist intuitively and almost automatically absorbs the present moment in a cognitively richer fashion. Regarding attention, this corresponds with more bottom-up attentional processes, where the tourist’s attentional gaze is seemingly pulled to the moment automatically, involuntarily, and with great ease (Pratto & John, 1991).

The following excerpt speaks to this joint rise in personal relevance and motivational state experienced in a Tourism Moment:

*“So I was on one of the nights I think the first night I was...it was evening everyone’s kind of winding down getting ready for the bed, the sun is coming down, and I go up to the bathroom which is on a hill overlooking the camp, and so...I go up there and I come out again, and I just look down on to the campsite which is downhill from me and I just see everybody has their flashlights their headlamps because everyone is getting in there tents, getting ready for bed, and Idk just the image from that far away of like this camp illuminated from all these different lights idk, it was a pretty image it was pretty much the only moment of solitude on that trip cause you know we were all working together and living together pretty constantly, and that was cool cause I talked to a lot of people and that was a lot of fun, it was just that interesting moment of being away above the camp and being able to look down and see how pretty it looked at that moment.”*  
(Matt)

First, this Tourism Moment speaks to the rise in personal relevance required to achieve experiential distinctiveness. Earlier in the interview, Matt shared that he has a great passion for the outdoors and camping. So in that regard, the visual of the campsite brought together the element of being out in nature with the unique camp setting. The sight painted a pretty image which encapsulated and reflected well two of his personal interests. Moreover, that experience afforded “the only moment of solitude” on the trip which seemed very relevant and important given the otherwise constant stream of social interaction throughout the trip. Together, this sudden rise in personal relevance sparks the motivational state driving him to dedicate an intensive and focused amount of attention at the beautiful sight before him.

To conclude, the fundamental qualifying nature for the experiential distinctiveness of a Tourism Moment is as follows. On a day-to-day basis, a tourist consumes an on-going and continuous tourism experience during their trip. Within this flow of tourism experience, there are instances in which situational sources in their immediate destination environment provoke a fleeting and higher degree of personal relevance towards whatever activity or experience is at hand. Subsequently, this induced sense of spiked relevance then provokes the tourist to naturally devote more cognitive resources (e.g. attention) towards this emerging Tourism Moment. Figure 4 depicts an example of a Tourism Moment pulled from blog data included earlier, that depicts the underlying role of personal relevance and the motivational state.

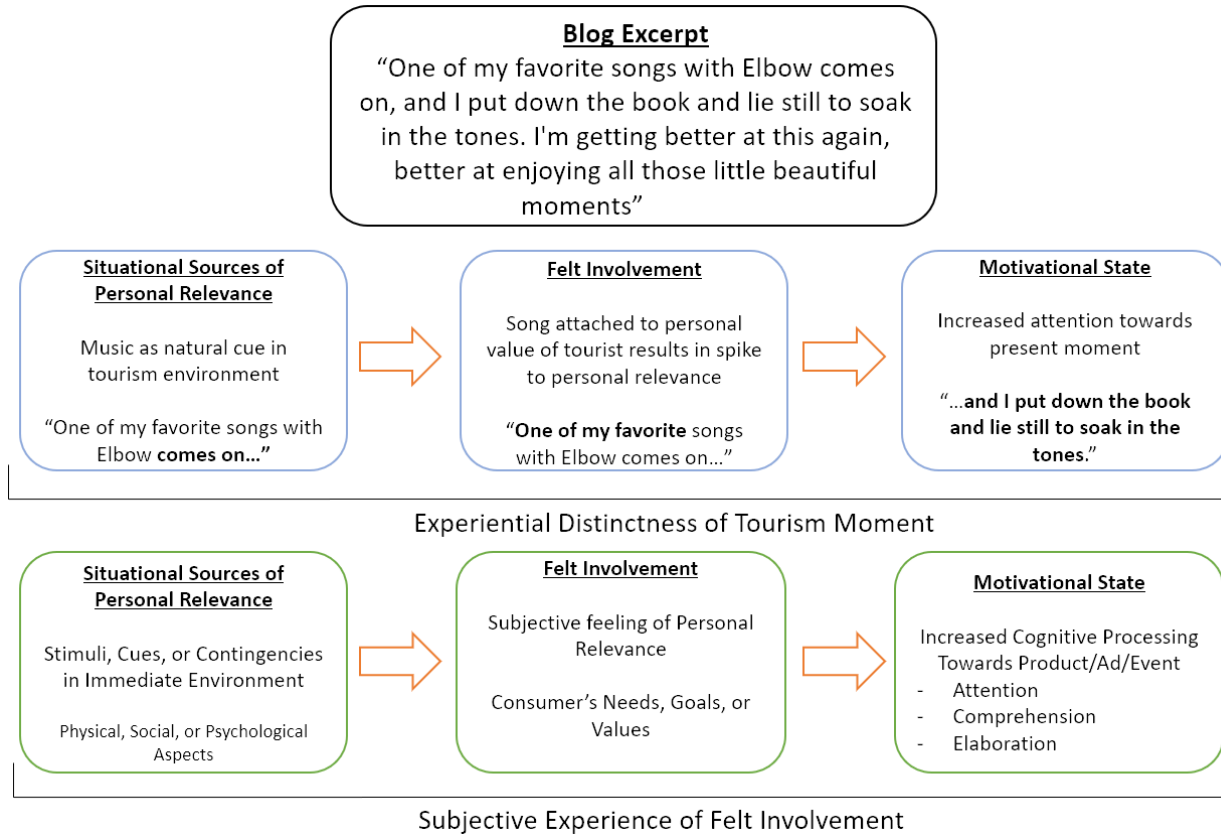


Figure 4. Parallel Between Felt Involvement and Experiential Distinctness of a Tourism Moment

### 3.4.2 Four Types of Tourism Moments

Having described the fundamental characteristics of the Tourism Moment, it is now time to present the four types of Tourism Moments identified in the blog and interview data. Each of these four Tourism Moments feature the fundamental characteristics discussed in the prior section in addition to a few distinct features that make each type unique. The following four types of Tourism Moments will be described next: 1) Cinematic Scene; 2) Engaged Adventure; 3) Captivating Spectacle; and 4) Metacognitive Absorption. Each moment possesses a unique set of characteristics that makes it a distinct experience all its own.

#### 3.4.2.1 Cinematic Scene

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic about the Cinematic Scene Tourism Moment is that it is one of only two moment experiences that is about an event. Merriam-Webster defines an event as simply something that happens or occurs – i.e., the traveler is watching an active



stimulus unfold as an event. While seemingly simple, this is again one of the only two Tourism Moments that is experienced as an explicit and objective event. In contrast for instance, the two other moments pertain to something that just exists or regards a more internal sense-making experience. A few examples of the Cinematic Scene as an event include: seeing a Lion walk by, watching a gondolier blessing, or watching the sun suddenly appear as the clouds part. Due to being an event, the Cinematic Scene has one of the most definitive beginning and ending temporal boundaries – i.e., the traveler can clearly pinpoint retrospectively when the moment began and ended. Just as important to distinguish is that the event occurs independent of the traveler. As such, the traveler is reserved to only watch the event unfold but does not participate in it nor do they have an influence over it.

Moving on, the Cinematic Scene featured a very unique aspect not found in any of the other three types of Tourism Moments. Interestingly, it was the only moment where travelers described being preoccupied immediately prior to the start of the moment. At least a handful of interview participants referred to being intently focused on a task beforehand that had no relation to the moment itself. While the element of unexpectedness is featured in all types of Tourism Moments, the Cinematic Scene appears to be the only one in which the traveler's attention and mindset was not totally carefree before the moment surfaced. For instance, Spencer below describes how he was concentrating diligently on learning to steer a sailboat for the first time before the emergence of his moment interrupted his focus:

*"I mean there was the moment when the clouds cleared under the bridge, I think that was the most cinematic moment... seeing the sun suddenly peak through the clouds... Well seconds before he gave me the wheel, he said do you want to try, he pointed out a place I should steer towards and so I was focused on that and then I'd just gotten used to it and then the sun came out... A little bit of nervousness [beforehand] you know, I didn't want to go in the rocks, the winds the being under the golden gate bridge... And I've got a little fear of being in the cold water, under massive structures" (Spencer)*

Clearly Spencer's full attention before the moment started (i.e., sun peeking through clouds) was dedicated towards ensuring he kept the sailboat afloat, and certainly was not in a carefree and leisurely mindset. And it is this very drastic shift of going from an intensely focused task to witnessing an incredible moment unfold in an instant which marks this moment type. Accordingly, the Cinematic Scene truly emerges when travelers least expect it.

It is perhaps this very reason why most travelers seemed to consider themselves very fortunate to experience their Cinematic Scene moment. In some way, it appeared that fate created the moment for participants, i.e. the stars aligned just right. More pointedly, participants' great fortune stemmed from simply being in the right place at the right time. One participant, Mandy, spoke of waking up in the middle of the night to hear a lion kill a zebra outside their camp in the Serengeti Reserve. She was assured that this has never occurred by another traveler who had experienced camping in the Serengeti many times prior, and thus, was lucky to be camping there the night it happened. The participants' stories seem to indicate more than serendipity was at play, but also a sense of destiny attributed to the fruition of their Cinematic Scene. Take Todd's moment for instance:

*"Well we had read in the guidebooks that the day we were getting into Venice the first day of our trip was the weekend of the big gondola festival...well unfortunately we couldn't change our lodging to be there to see it, but the day we got in which I think was a Friday, they had the starting events of the whole weekend gondola festival, was the blessing of the gondolas and gondoliers, so at a church, and by the time we got in, left our bags, there was not much time to navigate from here through very narrow alleys and over the bridges to get to there...so we hustled sprinting through the tourists and scrum and made it just about 20 minutes later than the official starting time but they hadn't begun to start, perfect! Absolutely perfect!" (Todd)*

Todd's moment of getting to see the short gondolier blessing speaks to fate at play on two accounts. First, unbeknownst to them, the very first day of their trip, and the only day they were to be in Venice, coincided with the commencement of the gondola festival. And perhaps more incredible, despite running across the busy Venice streets and being late to the published start time of the blessing, they were fortunate to learn that the event was running late anyway. The Cinematic Scene then is distinct for making travelers feel a vivid sense of serendipity and fortune.

Along the same lines, the Cinematic Scene is the only type in which the experience always involved encountering something rare or novel. Accordingly, not only did it seem that fate gifted them the moment, but the moment itself was also extremely unique on its own. Though the novelty was often quite explicit such that most people in that circumstance would consider the event to be new or rare (e.g., seeing a snow leopard), sometimes all that mattered was that the event was novel to just the traveler experiencing the moment. For Michelle, a cultural dance enthusiast, the Kafafa dance she encountered on her trip was "simple and basic".

And yet, because it was a completely new dance routine she had never seen before, it became one of her top moments on the trip. As such, most travelers seemed to just know almost automatically that the moment unfolding before them is rare and unique. The Cinematic Scene moment then is evidence that the contrasts against everydayness referenced in the tourism literature is not vividly constant throughout a trip. That is, it is not enough for travelers to find themselves in a foreign setting, travelers must encounter novel moments. Accordingly, the contrasts against everydayness surface only intermittently as Cinematic Scene moments.

Finally, it is the combined sense of fate and novelty which attributes to the last defining characteristic of the Cinematic Scene. The data spoke to how travelers during this type of moment attempted to engage more consciously or vividly with the event as it unfolded before them. Recognizing the serendipitous, fateful, and novel nature, some participants alluded to feeling an underlying pressure to best absorb the moment as it was happening. While Tourism Moments are instantly attention-grabbing and captivating, it seemed travelers strove for a meta-cognitive level which drove an urgency to take control of how well they are consuming their moments. The latter surfaced through a myriad of strategies. For Luke, suddenly looking up and encountering the CN tower was so profound that he wanted to extend the very brief encounter by engaging in self-dialogue and sensemaking about the significance of the landmark:

*“Reminiscing...cause I understand it’s place in Toronto... and then honestly just ...not awe struck cause ive seen it before, but like just wow that’s amazing the architecture the resemblance it has to the Space Needle cause it really does have a lot of resemblance.”(Luke)*

Though subtle, this excerpt showcases how Luke tried to engage more deeply with his moment as he simply could have just reacted to it but had no further thoughts on the encounter. Pam also alludes to this subtle yet intentional overtaking of how travelers consume their Cinematic Scene. In watching an extremely impactful and sad clip at the Holocaust Memorial Museum, Pam describes her efforts in the latter: “I was allowing myself, trying to let it sink in and impact me.”. As noted here, it is about the traveler making a conscious choice to take greater care and elevate one’s level of immersion. And perhaps this element was specific only to the Cinematic Scene because of travelers wanting to make the most of the novel moment that fate delivered.

### 3.4.2.2 Engaged Adventure

Much like a Cinematic Scene, the Engaged Adventure Tourism Moment typically corresponded with experiences as events. Yet unlike the latter, it does not involve the traveler simply observing an event transpire. Travelers in this type of moment are implicated directly in the experience such that they are actively involved in whatever is occurring. There is no particular subject to observe because they are the focal subject in the experience. A few examples from both the blog and interview data include being chased by a rhino, bungee jumping, having a conversation with a local, or being escorted across a busy street by a local. Referring to Pine and Gilmore's experience framework, this moment would reflect 'active participation' in which travelers are personally subjected to live through a performance or event related to the experience (Pine & Gilmore 1999). Take note of the following two moments:

*"But when I turned my head I saw whole sofa moving. Yes, it was an earthquake. I experienced earthquake for the first time in my life..." (blogger)*

*[...they were having a yodeling contest and didn't know that at the time but they were pulling random people up from the audience to participate in this unknown event and I got pulled up and my dad got pulled up and we didn't know what we're in for, we thought we were going to be doing the chicken dance, and they tell us what we're supposed to do and I'm like noo, noo, im not doing this... like I would have done the chicken dance, just yodeling is not my thing. (Megan)]*

Both moments involve the traveler subjected to an event rather than just witnessing an event take place. Especially with Megan's moment, being a participant in an event changes the entire dynamic and stakes involved as she later stated: "I don't regret it cause I feel like maybe that experience wouldn't have been the same if I hadn't participated like if I was just in the audience and not as involved in the situation...]. Accordingly, this moment is inherently marked by how the traveler becomes an active focal point in the event unfolding. As such, action-oriented verbs typically dominated the typical description of this type of moment (e.g. running, rushing, purchasing, talking).

Perhaps given that travelers are actively involved in the experience, it makes sense that Engaged Adventure moments featured some of the most trying and negatively intense experiences. While not all participants' moments in this category were so, no other type of moment featured travelers experiencing a negative experience to any extent. The intensity of the negative experience varied greatly. On the extreme end, one blogger described "the most

terrifying moment” of her life as falling out of a kayak while white-water rafting. While not to this degree of danger, most other participants still described their emotions as intense. For Samantha, these intense emotions manifested as a result of having her college-affiliated flag confiscated by a security guard at the Eiffel Tower:

*“I felt like scared, like more scared than going through airport security cause they’re like going through my bags and not speaking English and very rude, so I guess that and frustrated kind of frustrated in the moment...” (Samantha)*

Here, Samantha describes being scared and frustrated during a time where she was supposed to feel ecstatic about visiting the famous Paris landmark. What occurred after her moment also reflects how travelers in these trying Tourism Moments overcome their unfortunate circumstances. Samantha shared how she focused on trying to make the most of being in Paris, and specifically, focus on the blessing of being fortunate to be at such a wonderful destination. In a similar fashion, Mary describes in the following excerpt the theme of ‘overcoming’ found in the Engage Adventure moment. Here, Mary finds herself in the predicament of being unable to cross an extremely busy Egyptian intersection:

*“[...but there were cities that I could not go anywhere in because I couldn’t get across the street, the one place [Cairo] I’m standing there, I really wanted to go over and walk down that seawall on the other side of the street and I’m just...frozen and this guy comes up and he says do you need to cross the street? And I said, mmhmm, and he takes my arm and we march out there and he takes me across the street and then he turns around and goes back, and he wasn’t going that way, he was just helping me.” (Mary)*

Hence, Mary’s moment here is striking both in reflecting the tensions experienced, and yet also, the subsequent feelings of relief with overcoming these tensions. And so, the Engaged Adventure is characterized as sometimes having the traveler both go through and make it through a trying event.

Lastly, one of the most prominent experiential elements of the Engaged Adventure is its strong foundation as a socially-oriented experience. In fact, most of the moments categorized as an Engaged Adventure involved an impactful connection or interaction with others. For instance, several participants shared stories of feeling extremely thankful for a local’s actions. Already presented was Mary’s interaction with a local helping her cross the street, and Lynn’s moment carries a similar sentiment. Lynn’s moment involves a tour guide giving her exclusive access to a

painting not on display for the public after learning she had previously encountered it in years past:

*“For him to join into my little obsession lol, with the glee with which he did, I mean he was clearly, absolutely willing to do this thing he’s not supposed, in order to get us his charges, the experience we need or want out of our tour and willing to take us places...” (Lynn)*

It was evident throughout the interview that the moment was special not just because she got to see this rare painting, but more so because this tour guide delivered this moment for her out of pure kindness. Hence, it is really about these ‘small’ connections with complete strangers which prove to be profound and impactful. Luke here considered one of his best moments from his spring break trip as being a quick minute exchange with others nearby:

*“[...we had breakfast that morning it was just me and my cousins and all this like this is a thing that stands out...cause we were...cause the people next to us were like talking to themselves, it was just cool cause they were actually Cameroon like we are too, so it was just really cool to be able to make conversation and connect with your other people from your hometown, it was a cool little moment... I just thought it was cool that we ran into people from Cameroon like a small country in Africa, in Toronto, like what are the odds.” (Luke)*

Seemingly simple interactions then prove to later become some of the most profound memories from their past trips. Raquel spoke of a similar connection with a room full of restaurant patrons when she joined them in singing an impromptu song during the middle of dinner:

*“...and then all of a sudden the waiters starting passing these sheets of music almost, like laminated and we were like what is this?? And we had disregarded it and then I looked at it closer, the Italian song...of when the moon hits your eyes...yeah and then all of a sudden out of nowhere erupted in this song, and like everybody, all the waiters and staff were singing it, and because they had handed out all the music sheets, all the people who were singing, all the patrons started singing and joining in and we just started singing and...everybody in that moment was unified, and everybody was singing this funny song you know... it was kind of just like joyous funny thing that everybody was doing and I just remember looking at my partner smiling and laughing and it just felt fun to be a part of something so small like strangers just....” (Raquel)*

To summarize then, the Engaged Adventure’s significance lies in its ability to place travelers in these unique and collaborative circumstances. And again because this is a lived-through event, it situates the traveler in a more interactive and involved role in their experience.

### 3.4.2.3 Captivating Spectacle

A Captivating Spectacle Tourism Moment is a distinct type of moment that is centered around the visual consumption of a sight. Of all of the Tourism Moment types, it is perhaps the most traditional in tourist practice. Simply, it represents the instance in which a traveler *first* encounters a scenic landmark, artifact, or natural landscape. In particular, it corresponds primarily to the experience of the first few seconds to minutes upon encountering the scene of interest. Certainly, the traveler is free to observe the subject for as long as he/she desires, but as the data indicates, there exists only a momentary peak of heightened interest in the first few instances of observing the subject. In contrasting against the Captivating Spectacle, which involves an objectively fleeting event, the subject in a sightseeing moment is static. While both involve observation as the exclusive form of consumption, it is the nature in which what is observed that is different. For instance:

*“The clouds parted and gave us a clear day! While Ed was in the museum I sat on a bench, in the sun, and just studied the monument. It was a inspirational moment. Sometimes you can be in the middle of a crowd and have a wonderful solitary moment. I'm not sure how to describe it, but I was there for several minutes, just enjoying the true beauty of it all.” (blogger)*

As is noted by this traveler, these moments of heightened visual observation do not last long. For the Captivating Spectacle, the moment duration is much more fluid and subjective, with the sense of captivation being what is fleeting rather than the sight itself. Thus, although observing the scene of interest may last tens of minutes, one can only experience a Sightseeing Moment once within that span.

Not surprisingly, one salient feature of this moment is the sharp visual appreciation for the aesthetics afforded by the scene. Whereas the main form of consumption was also visual in the Captivating Spectacle, the event being observed in this type of moment was not often due to aesthetic appeal. Yet, aesthetics is at the forefront with a Captivating Spectacle:

*“How incredibly lucky are we, to be able to stand on the top deck of a ship with all the lights off 100km into Lake Huron and see a natural spectacle, have it explained to us and see the different colours of the dancing curtain was unbelievable” (blogger)*

Here, much like in most Captivating Spectacle moments, the traveler recognizes the beauty of the “spectacle” before them. Further, many travelers described these moments in terms of absorbing, soaking, or savoring in the aesthetics of the scene. In that regard, this moment should

not be interpreted as a superficial level of engagement as is often stereotyped with tourism (Urry, 1990, 2002). In these moments, there is genuine lust and enriching satisfaction for the visual spectacle, even if just for a few seconds or minutes. It is no surprise then that travelers also consistently reported being in awe and/or overcome by the sheer aesthetics of what they were witnessing. Interview participants in particular illuminated the latter in describing a trance-like state when first encountering the visually stunning sight:

*“I had my hands on the railing and just like as close as I could get, and just looking at it looking at the top of the waterfall and then the bottom and trying to find little parts of it that might not be so obvious like obviously we can see the waterfall but like could there be a cool little eddy or ice crystallization on the side that could be easily missed...It was quiet and very...so it was like enclosed so I don’t know if I would use the word cozy but like yeah I guess cozy and almost I want to say the word tangible cause it was like this is all I can think about, all I can focus on, umm, cause it like the cave provided this sort of tunnel vision to just the beauty of the waterfall” (Danny)*

As hopefully evidenced by Danny’s moment, the Sightseeing Tourism Moment elevates the experience to a higher and more surreal dimension of consumption that goes beyond the simple notion of gazing. Even if for an instant, these moments captivate the traveler in allotting time to zero in and drink in the visual spectacle.

The final distinguishing factor of this type of moment relates to the degree to which travelers carried prior expectations about the moment. That is, travelers in general knew what they were going to witness beforehand. In fact, the visual spectacle was often a primary checkpoint on a list of ‘things to do/see’. Travelers knew they were going to see Mount Rushmore, a sunset, a mountain view, or the Eiffel Tower. As such, it is the only moment in which the traveler could explicitly look forward to and foresee the experience before it occurred. In almost every other type of moment, the experience is spontaneous, serendipitous, or unexpected. Yet even sights that have previously been seen, the experiential richness of the moment is no less the same, as indicated by this blog entry: “I have seen it before on TV but is one of those moments that can never be properly experienced until you see it first hand”. These moments then are not necessarily about the scene being observed, but about the initial shock when a traveler finally comes face-to-face with the visual subject. As such, a sense of unexpectedness is felt as travelers seemed to never truly anticipate the degree of magnitude of what they were going to see.



#### 3.4.2.4 Metacognitive Absorption

This moment type is perhaps the most distinct from the other three. Its distinguishing factor is that the experience is almost exclusively internal as it occurs in the traveler's mind. Every other moment type discussed thus far pertained to a real discrete event occurring or object existing. In other words, anyone nearby could witness and experience the same event or object as well, or at least recognize the traveler having an experience. Metacognitive Absorption moments, as their name implies, are much more about the sensemaking and feelings the traveler is experiencing such that these thoughts and feelings make up the experience itself. One blogger's description of their Metacognitive Absorption details the latter well:

*"I found a sweet small temple in a garden, where I stopped to reflect and just be still. Such precious quiet time being still, not doing anything, simply existing, connecting with the earth and cosmos. I treasure those fleeting moments." (blog entry)*

In this example, a curious observer would not be able to discern that any sort of substantial 'experience' was taking place, and yet quite obviously, the traveler is immersed in a spiritual and enriching moment. The Metacognitive Absorption parallels a metacognitive experience which in part means experiencing metacognitive feelings (Efklides, 2009). Specifically, and most associated to this type of moment, this alludes to the feelings of satisfaction. Consequently, travelers described being lost in thought or reminiscing as a result of these metacognitive feelings:

*[...we carried on the winding roads of Yellowstone, and I found myself reminiscing about moments on the Trip so far..." (blogger)*

Metacognitive Absorption is introspective at heart, they are those few seconds or minutes of reflection which come to be cherished for years to come.

While the data also indicated that the triggers of Metacognitive Absorption moments varied extensively, one of the richest sources of stimulation for such moments was the physical destination environment. In Captivating Spectacle moments, there was typically a single focal object captivating the travelers' gaze. In Metacognitive Absorption moments, it is about the pure and complete immersion in the total ambience in one's present environment. This ambience includes both the physical (e.g. buildings, landscape), and non-physical (e.g. smells, sounds) elements. For one blogger, simply sitting on a bench during a New Years celebration while watching the locals embrace each other offered enriching environmental stimuli to spur a

Metacognitive Absorption moment. For Isabel, the culminating ambience of her surroundings made her Metacognitive Absorption “perfect”:

*[...we had swam out to these floating rafts that are in the water, like outside floats, and the inside is a net so you're still sitting in the water, and...we were kind of just sitting in this thing by ourselves and the Piton mountains were in the background, and we were just sitting there relaxing and you know kind of being quiet and then my husband who knows I'm obsessed with Disney grabbed my phone... and put on a song from Moana, and so it was kind of awesome, like I was just sitting there with the mountains in the background, my husband, I had a cocktail in my hand, listening to a song about the ocean, it was perfect. (Isabel)]*

As shown here, travelers linger and immerse themselves in place for the sake of simply doing so. Moreover, Isabel's moment showcases how it's not just one, but a combination of environmental elements which set the stage for a Metacognitive Absorption.

The data also indicated that it is through this instance of deep absorption in their present environment and the state of contemplation which sparks a strong sense of appreciation. The blog entries and interview data suggested that this appreciation manifests in two ways. First, travelers during these moments experienced sharp epiphanies where they got a sudden rushing realization of how special it was where they were at that particular place and time. It is the point of a trip where one acquires a heightened consciousness and awareness – a pure recognition forcing a strong appreciation of being on a vacation at that destination. These travelers described such an experience as follows:

*“I took a seat on a bar stool and ordering a drink I attempted to get my breath back and take a moment to realize that I was now in Hawaii.” (blog entry)*

*“It's always nervousness, is this trip going to be like my fantasy was like, and so when we finished that first leg of that trip and we were on that transition, literally....we knew that we could do it... yeah I think it was like proof that something that we could do that and just feeling good, feeling that satisfaction.” (Reggie)*

As evidenced by these two examples, Metacognitive Absorption offer a fleeting opportunity to savor one's present circumstance. Travelers come to trivialize and take for granted the destination and the fortunate circumstances of travel. So it is perhaps only in these moments that travelers are able to acquire such gratitude, even if for a matter of seconds/minutes. The sense of appreciation was also shown to manifest and spillover beyond the circumstance of the trip at

hand. As Victor's moment highlights, the experience can become so introspective and reflective that travelers begin taking stock of their life circumstance at large:

*"...I think it was a kind of calmness, joy, and kind of like a very umm grateful opportunity and I think all three because you know I was living in the moment that here as an adult I am able to experience on my own and not have to worry about being an undergrad for eight years, and you know having moments where I can be able to finally in my life enjoy you know something like I was experiencing and truly not have to worry about finances or truly have to worry about stresses of like oh my gosh am I going to spend too much, you know it was a truly I'm enjoying this because I deserve this, I earned this, and I can do this..." (Victor)*

Victor's moment helps showcase the powerful and influential nature of the Metacognitive Absorption moment. Specifically, it shows how this moment may be the only avenue in which travelers come to be mindful of their present and future circumstance. And moreover, the latter may explain why these moments also often featured a deep sense of peacefulness and relaxation as demonstrated by the following excerpts:

*"It was an incredible zen moment and I felt so peaceful, calm and was so happy just being there" (blog entry)*

*"This is a rare moment of stillness, a feeling of peace that comes with the waiting." (blog entry)*

*"I don't know if feeling connected is an emotion, okay so I certainly felt connected, both to the place and to my son. Pleased. Pleased that he was so attentive to my little journey down memory lane, you know happy relaxed being by the ocean is always relaxing" (Erika)*

### **3.4.3 The Role of Tourism Moments**

Having provided an overview of the Tourism Moment experience along with its different variations, the following section will briefly discuss the role of Tourism Moments within the broader context of the trip. Interview participants expanded further on the understanding of Tourism Moments by delving into what makes them significant and special. As will be showcased, Tourism Moments hold a special place for travelers within the grand scheme of the trip at large.

#### **3.4.3.1 Moments to be Had**

Participants' descriptions of their Tourism Moments suggest that these experiences are highly sought after. After presented with the 'definition' of a Tourism Moment', almost every interview participant instantly and easily understood what kind of experience the researcher was referring to. And this was because most participants already knew that these moments existed, despite not having explicitly recognized it prior. As such, Tourism Moments can be recognized as its own unique experience. This surfaced in the conversations with participants, as they shared how Tourism Moments are largely the reason why they travel. To be clear, it was evident that travelers do not necessarily know what the moments will be about beforehand. Rather, travelers seem to go into trips with the expectation of experiencing some special distinct moments. Accordingly, traveling seemingly becomes an avenue in which to obtain Tourism Moments as evidenced by Lena's moment:

*"And I think also just because we're very luck to travel a lot I think there's always unexpected moments, they're not always going to be a set up dinner on the beach I mean it may be something, like a moment where you think it could turn out bad if you get lost but then you find a band playing on the street...those unexpected...and I think that's part of travel...]"(Lena)*

While the act of visiting a new place itself is significant all its own, Lena seems to suggest that the experiencing of a Tourism Moment is a critical aspect of the overall tourism experience. A trip is not a trip without experiencing Tourism Moments. Erika highlights this further in describing her "reason" for traveling:

*"Yeah for sure. I mean that's one of the reasons why I travel, and why we travel cause its not this pre-scripted life, so who knows who you're going to meet, who knows what kind of sunset you'll see, who knows what kind of food you'll taste right?" (Erika)*

What Erika is suggesting here is that Tourism Moments are what keeps travelers guessing and driving the anticipation for travel. Tourism Moments then have a significant pull-factor in motivating the desire for travel because they are the experiences that create the unique stories for each and every traveler.

Accordingly then, Tourism Moments are important because they not only fuel the motivation to travel but they also create the built-up excitement when already at the destination. The data suggested that travelers seemingly await the emergence of *their* Tourism Moments as the trip unfolds. The degree of consciousness for this anticipation varied from participant to

participant. For instance, Todd and his travel partner have an explicit awareness and anticipation of Tourism Moments as they have their own label for them:

*“Yeah my friend and I call them Rick Steve’s moments because in his [blogs]...he usually kind of highlights how he got to see the natives dancing or procession carrying the virgin from the cathedral, in any event we call them Steve’s moments.” (Todd)*

Todd’s excerpt here points to how travelers are vividly aware of the existence of Tourism Moments. However, most participants had a more subconscious or implicit anticipation for Tourism Moments. As discussed previously, travelers partly embark on travel for the sake of experiencing these moments without knowing exactly how they will unfold. Instead, once at the destination, some participants described having an underlying hunch that “there are moments to be had”:

*“Well when you get on a boat, you’re in a different context, a different world, and so certainly your awareness is bound to change... I get very expansive and I know that there are moments to be had here.” (Spencer)*

The excerpt points to the idea that being at the destination deeply sensitizes travelers to expect the unexpected. As Spencer alluded, the mere act of being in a different context readies the mind to be on the lookout for their moments to surface. Tourism Moments then are the prized gems hidden within the mystery of the trip.

#### **3.4.3.2 Moments as Bonuses and Differentiators**

Both sources of data also point to a dual role that Tourism Moments play within the trip at large. It appears that Tourism Moments function as either an added bonus or differentiator to a traveler’s trip. In the first regard, upon reflecting back on their trip, interview participants were able to situate and contextualize the significance of their moment. Every participant deemed their trip as highly satisfying and a success overall, and as such, admitted that their overall impression of the trip would not be greatly diminished had their Tourism Moment not occurred. This then suggested that the ‘success’ of trips does not necessarily hinge on the emergence of Tourism Moments, rather, they seem to be the ‘cherry on top’. Participants spoke on this matter in depth, discussing how all the activities and experiences accumulated on a trip give one a positive holistic impression:

*“I don’t think so cause we wouldn’t have known any differently. You know... we had some really fun evenings you know at dinner, or going to a pub or something, so that’s...so we had fun times with that, so I think it [Tourism Moment] just added to it.”(Elena)*

Here, Elena responded to whether she would have viewed her trip any differently if her moment had not occurred. As she alluded, the hypothetical bar of satisfaction was already met, and so her Tourism Moment was an unexpected experience which only raised the significance of her trip that much more. Raquel speaks to this explicitly in describing her moment within the context of her dining experience overall: “anything else that would have happened that would have been a good moment would have just been like a bonus.” Again, Tourism Moments are that additional bit of experiential value that help to make a great trip unique and distinct.

Another unique pattern identified was the role Tourism Moments play in diversifying the flow of experiences within a trip. This regards to how the type of experience featured in the Tourism Moment often seemed to be considerably different from the types of experiences typically encountered throughout the entirety of the trip. A sort of contrasting effect can be seen such that the intrigue of the Tourism Moment is partly explained due its distinction from the majority of activities the traveler conducts throughout their trip. The proceeding excerpt highlights the latter as Lucy shares how she was grateful that her moment helped mix things up:

*“[...so if we had not gone I think it would have just been another, just you know, which isn’t bad, but another beach trip vacation, but a little bit more I guess low key... but the fact that we did go to Chichén Itzá was the cherry on the top.”(Lucy)*

Here, she discussed how the bulk of her experiences on her Mexico trip centered around beach and/or leisure activities as expected when one goes to Cancun. Yet, Lucy’s Tourism Moment was when she visited and saw the Kukulcan pyramid at Chichén Itzá heritage site. As she seems to suggest, this moment was particularly striking because it was so different than the typical beach and leisure experiences she had encountered throughout the trip. Many other interview participants spoke to the value of variety and in diversifying the type of experiences encountered. This contrast manifested in different ways for participants, whether it was a moment of solitude within a socially centered trip, or a moment of relaxation within an otherwise busy safari vacation. Ultimately, it seems to be that Tourism Moments disrupt the flow of uniformity and complacency that can be felt within a trip encompassed by the same category of experiences.

Trips such as these feel like one big buzz until a unique Tourism Moment experience shakes things up.

#### **3.4.3.3 Moments as Carefree and Pure**

Finally, the genuine pressure-free experience of Tourism Moments also explains why they come to be so cherished by travelers. Participants shared their feelings explaining the significance of Tourism Moments. A few suggested there is an underlying carefree nature to Tourism Moments rarely found outside of this experience. Perhaps specifically due to their unplanned and serendipitous nature, participants' stories indicate that the very nature of how Tourism Moments are taken in and internalized is distinctly unique. The conversation with Raquel best articulates how Tourism Moments are free from pressure:

*“And I think part of the reason its these in between moments are special is because there are not a lot of pressure around them, so like when you go see something, like a tourist attraction, or when you go have some experience that like a lot of other people have done, or you know was supposed to be big, theres a lot pressure about how you feel when you see it because you’ve taken time off work, or spent a lot of money to get there... and there’s a lot of expectation and pressure, so sometimes I think that that pressure could like ruin some of those [touristy] moments, or make them not as memorable because you’re so worried about how to package it or if you’re feeling the way you should, or if the money was worth it, or whatever, its these little in-between moments, one they are not planned most of the time, they are not expected and there’s not a lot of high stakes like pressure around them.” (Raquel)*

This excerpt hits on several different points that collectively highlight that Tourism Moments may be some of the only experiences within a trip in which travelers can truly let their guard down and savor their present experience without an underlying internal angst. As she elaborates later in the interview, travelers tend to feel forced to enjoy the popular attractions or typical activities known to a destination such that they fabricate how they feel towards these experiences. In direct contrast, Tourism Moments may represent one of the few experiences in which travelers feel unreserved and tuned in to only the present experience before them. And as Raquel stated, this may be due to their ‘in-between’ nature. Most Tourism Moments occur as the unsuspecting ‘gaps’ of experience found during a trip – i.e., a time when nothing special was supposed to happen. A few examples from the interview data of these in-between experiences include:

- Stumbling across a seaside restaurant for drinks while wandering to dinner
- Waiting for travel party and noticing other travelers exit ‘strange’ cave
- Waiting for bus to arrive to visit next destination
- On a train en route to next destination

As such, all of these Tourism Moments arose while waiting for or on the way to the next ‘meaningful’ experience on the agenda. Ironically then, Tourism Moments come to manifest during the lapses or breaks within a trip.

### **3.4.4 Tourism Moments in the Memories of Trips**

The prior section illustrated the significance Tourism Moments within the overall context of the trip. Focus was on showcasing why these moments matter for how travelers feel about their overall trip experience. Now, the proceeding section presents the results stemming from conversations with interview participants about Tourism Moments as memories. Through the literature review, it was proposed that because Tourism Moments are likely highly vivid memories, they may offer the only way to relive our past vacations. As such, this interview study intended first on confirming that Tourism Moments are indeed perhaps one of the most vividly relived memories from our past trips, and secondly, to shift focus on investigating how Tourism Moments are recalled.

#### ***3.4.4.1 Confirming the High Reliving Vividness of Tourism Moments***

Research on episodic memories in general, and the introduction of the Autobiographical Conway Model specifically, suggest that the nature of its experience makes the Tourism Moment highly likely to elicit a strong auto-noetic consciousness when it is later recalled from memory.

Auto-noetic consciousness refers to the degree to which one can situate themselves in the mental visual imagery of a past event and live through it once again (Suddendorf & Corballis, 2007). Accordingly, a high degree of auto-noetic consciousness for a Tourism Moment memory implies one can hypothetically replay back their experience in the same sequence as was originally done.

As an objective of the study, a brief quantitative survey was employed to interview participants as a means of examining the idea that Tourism Moments are highly vivid memories. Specifically, a composite score was calculated from a nine-item established measurement scale



of auto-noetic consciousness. Both the Tourism Moment from the prior year, and Tourism Moment which occurred more than five years ago were measured using a seven-point Likert scale. The descriptive analysis results showcased that the 18 interview participants as a group could strongly and vividly relive both Tourism Moments: 1) Past Year Moment ( $M = 6.13$ ,  $SD = .66$ ), Five Years or Older ( $M = 5.21$ ,  $SD = 5.21$ ). Particularly striking is that despite the experience occurring over five years ago (more than 10 years on average), participants' mean score indicates their degree of reliving is still very high so many years later. Both participants Mary and Sandra can corroborate these results as they both demonstrated a very detailed description of their Tourism Moments which occurred over 25 years ago. The following excerpt from Sandra's interview provides a brief example of how vivid the reliving experience for 'old' Tourism Moments are:

*"I was living in San Francisco at the time, my sister was in college and I was just a waiter and so we packed our bags and went to Rome and seeing the artwork in Italy, seeing the Pitta in particular was just almost sucking the breath right out of me I couldn't believe it, you know, and going to Greece and seeing the ruins, and all of the things that are there..." (Sandra)*

Other participants' similar detailed accounts along with the statistical results support the proposal that travelers are capable of vividly reliving their Tourism Moment memories well after the trip occurred. Many of the experiences from prior trips are typically going to be lost from memory (Conway, 2009), and even those few that remain lack enough detail to be relived and instead stay at a semantic level of recollection. As such, Tourism Moments carry a great significance in the role of how trips are remembered. If one wishes to savor past trips through reliving parts of them, Tourism Moments may be the most likely candidates to do so. Yet in order to benefit from the high degree of vivid reliving, one must be able to recall (i.e., remember) the moment back in the first place. As such, the following section will focus on this.

### ***3.4.4.2 The Recall of Tourism Moments***

#### ***3.4.4.2.1 The Desire for Preservation***

Some of our best experiences on a trip elicit a naturally strong desire to preserve them in our memory and Tourism Moments are especially so. As they unfold, travelers recognize the rarity and significance of Tourism Moments, in turn, creating an urgency to ensure they are captured

‘correctly’. In one respect, this strong desire for preservation stems solely from the exclusivity and rarity of the moment at hand. As one participant put it, “... you only get those moments once, so you gotta go back”. As will be elaborated on later, it was clear that documenting with a smartphone served as the most popular method for preservation. Even those participants who were against taking pictures during these special moments admitted to either taking a commemorative post-moment picture or had hoped that their fellow travel partners took pictures. Upon questioning participants regarding why there is such a heightened desire for memory preservation, it was learned that the memory of the Tourism Moment itself holds great benefits. For one, Tourism Moments seem to be among some of the only experiences that are recollected from a past trip. Even within a years’ time, many of the activities conducted and attractions visited at a destination are forgotten. In the following excerpt, Raquel discusses how many of the details of the experiences outside the moment are lost from her memory:

*“so it obviously it stood out, like I don’t remember the name of the restaurant I don’t remember what I ate really.... but I remember the song that we sang [The Tourism Moment] you know...” (Raquel)*

Raquel is not able to recall the semantic details of the experiences that happened before and after her moment yet can recall the episodic details of her Tourism Moment with no issue. This again suggests Tourism Moments are valuable largely in part because they are one of the only few remaining memories from our trips. One participant’s story shed further light in indicating that even the experience of a Tourism Moment increases the chances of recollecting the trip overall. Todd, in comparing a ‘commercial’ trip to his typical independent ‘off the beaten’ trip, alluded to the idea that Tourism Moments are necessary anchors to solidify the overall trip memory:

*“I’ve only done this one commercial trip and I would just say it was just kind of flatter, its easier and its certainly a great way to go if you have a limited time and you have more money and time, but it’s more flatter experience.” (Todd)*

His use of the word ‘flatter’ here can be interpreted to suggest that the memory of this commercial trip is vague and blurry. The trip was flat in the sense that there were not any Tourism Moments which served as the spikes necessary to engrain the trip as memorable. Thus overall, Tourism Moments prove beneficial as a memory simply because they come to represent some of the only memories attached to a given trip.

Tourism Moments as memories were also found to have an additional purpose. Evidence suggests that Tourism Moments have a positive residual effect on travelers long after they were experienced such that they serve as a source of enjoyment or pleasure when they are recalled from memory. That is, the actual vivid reliving of the Tourism Moment as a memory delivers a certain degree of pleasure similar to what was experienced when it actually occurred. Traditionally, given their intangible nature, one of the disadvantages of experiences is that one can only derive pleasure once from an experience when it is lived through. However, the present study's findings coincide with recent research (e.g., Chun, Diehl, & MacInnis, 2017) showcasing people often derive enjoyment through reminiscing and savoring past experiences. Raquel speaks well to this point in discussing how she leans on her past Tourism Moments for a 'pick-up':

*"...it's a big part of my life that I have to be away from family and friends, and partner, like I try, when I'm with them and experiencing something like that, I try to take like a mental picture, not really a picture, but try to bottle that up so that I can revisit it because some days when I'm alone in Connecticut and freezing that's all I have you know..."(Raquel)*

Here, Raquel was discussing how she tries to take a mental picture during her Tourism Moments so that she may better relive the special moments as needed later on. This then speaks to an overt strategy that travelers employ to leverage and derive value from their past trips. Not only enjoyment, but as Isabel discusses below, Tourism Moments memories are also leveraged for encouragement:

*"All the time, so part of the reason is so, so where I am at in grad school which you know, I am at this point where I am deep in dissertation work, I want to scream a lot of the time, and that's kind of my bliss space [Tourism Moment memory] if you will, and its also motivation, so I think in my head, if I work really hard I think I will get either a really awesome job that pays me a lot of money, and I can afford to go on trips like that again, or I work really hard, and get a really good job, in a location similar to that lol"(Isabel)*

Wherein Raquel used her Tourism Moment as a source of enjoyment, Isabel derives motivation by using her moments to set goals. That is, in recalling her past Tourism Moments, she uses them as a reminder to herself of what she can achieve if she works hard. As can be hopefully recognized is that the value of Tourism Moment memories is not one-dimensional, and that these memories are preserved for more than the sake of record-keeping. Travel memories, and especially Tourism Moment memories hold invaluable implications for people's day-to-day life well after the trip is over.

#### 3.4.4.2.2 *How often are moments recalled really?*

Interview participants were also asked about the frequency in which they actually recall Tourism Moments in their day-to-day lives, and a few participants indicated that Tourism Moment memories are recalled with great ease. Not only are their memories some of the only that remain from trips, but *once the memory is cued* in some way, participants seemed to imply that they are also the easiest to recall as well. Ease of recall refers to the degree of effort needed to bring back a memory, and some interviews highlighted the very little effort needed for the memories of Tourism Moments. In fact, this low ease of recall was quickly discerned at the beginning of interviews as participants needed little to no time to identify their individual Tourism Moment. In these cases, participants themselves qualified Tourism Moments due to this ease, as these short examples showcase:

*“I think something that stands out the most, one memory from this trip, that is very in my face...” (Megan)*

*“Yeah, and there’s a string of things, and everyday there was something, and if I poke at them long enough, I’ll have dozens of them. But the ones off the top of my head are pretty straight forward” (Lynn)*

*“So actually when you were asking me this question earlier, I was trying to decide between three times that I had, I had three moments that I could think off the top of my head...” (Isabel)*

All three excerpts above showcase participants who were quickly and easily able to recollect their moment memory once reminded of it. As such, a criterion of a Tourism Moment is that once it is cued, it must be able to be recollected with ease as a memory. Moreover, a few participants reported that the memory of their moment sometimes resurfaces as a spontaneous flashback. Typically, this describes a situation where one suddenly recalls a past memory without an explicit cue, or without one trying to remember. These ‘popup’ Tourism Moment memories are interesting because they force the rememberer to reflect back on not only the moment but the trip as well. For instance, Todd described how these popup moment memories initiate a sensemaking process in which he takes a brief instant to clarify which trip the moment belonged to. However, it was also evident that these spontaneous popup memories are rare. Of the 18 participants interviewed, only three reported recalling their Tourism Moments in this flashback manner, and of these three participants it was apparent that their flashbacks were few and far between. Thus, although Tourism Moments may be some of the only experiences from a

past trip that are recalled in this flashback fashion, this occurrence is too infrequent to conclude that people remember the memory of their Tourism Moments often in this manner.

The ease of recall for Tourism Moments discussed previously pertained to instances when a cue (e.g., interview) is used to bring forward the memory. In actuality however, the analysis suggests that without a cue, people may rarely or never recall their Tourism Moments again. As special and interesting as Tourism Moments are when they happen during a trip, and although sometimes people get spontaneous flashbacks of them, more often, they remain stranded in their memory banks. The following series of excerpts are participants' responses to a question regarding how often they have recalled their Tourism Moment:

*"Probably not. Just once I started emailing you." (Spencer)*

*"I haven't really thought about it since back in August, so it's been a while." (Samantha)*

*"I think a couple of times, but I wouldn't say I've thought about it a lot, or enough, I think maybe like two or three times maximum" (Luke)*

*"Not too often." (Pam)*

These then serve as testimonies showcasing how moments may rarely come to be recalled, if at all. Truly then it is quite fascinating to believe that despite being a really meaningful, special, distinct, or extraordinary experience which occurred during a unique period of time (i.e. a leisure trip), people may never get an opportunity to even remember that it occurred. To clarify, this does not imply that they have forgotten the memory permanently, rather, the memory simply remains lodged deep in the long-term memory system until it is cued. Interestingly however, Danny's anecdote below presents an interesting paradox:

*"I mean I've thought about the hike and the waterfall, but I don't know if it's been...I don't know if I've done enough self-reflection about that exact moment." (Danny)*

He indicates here that although he has not recalled the Tourism Moment itself in the past, he has recalled the broader experiences encompassing the Tourism Moment incident. This means he has a general and global recollection such that he has only remembered the experiences of the trip at a semantic level. In other words, up until the interview, Danny had only a conceptual remembrance of what he experienced on the trip but had not engaged in autonoetic consciousness to remember how he experienced the trip at large, and his Tourism Moment in particular.

#### 3.4.4.2.3 The Significance of Memory Cues

So, what is at play in explaining the low recall rate of Tourism Moments? It was found that the need for an explicit cue is crucial to prompt the recollection experience. A cue refers to a tangible object or intangible topic related to the experience which helps to naturally retrieve the memory. By the end of the analysis, it was apparent that a cue is absolutely necessary to recollect a Tourism Moment from a past trip. And frequently it also appeared that the more tangible the cue, the greater the chance of bringing the Tourism Moment memory back. Cues were either self-created or arose spontaneously. In the first regard, participants were shown to be proactive in intentionally creating cues intended on keeping memories alive. Examples of these include picture books, souvenirs, canvas paintings, or other physical objects. For Michelle, her cue was as simple as a candle votive:

*“It’s a good question, you know it depends on what might trigger something, umm, like I have reminders from my 60th birthday when I went to Cabo, and I have those little I don’t know if you’ve ever heard of those Glassy Baby, they’re really expensive glass votives... my girlfriend who came with us she bought me, there was a really beautiful light blue one, and they named it Cabo, so when I light it, I think of that trip” (Michelle)*

As she notes, the votive serves to keep the trip, as well as any corresponding Tourism Moments from that trip alive in her memory. Similar, Mary has compiled a collection of magnets from her many trips as an intentional strategy to keep memory cues present in her everyday life. Many other participants shared similar examples of how they keep tangible and external cues around their home as a means of ‘forcing’ the recollection of past moment memories. However, sometimes cues were less intentional as they arose spontaneously. For instance, the following two excerpts showcase how seemingly random events can be sources for cues:

*“I mean every once in awhile cause people say there’s a moose in the South Hill” (Elena)*

*“I would say a handful of times, yeah I think probably comparing to when we go out to dinner here lol” (Lena)*

The moose and the dinner experience in both instances here were not intentionally sought after to create a cue, and yet, they had a direct association with each of their respective Tourism Moments. For example, Elena’s Tourism Moment pertained to seeing a moose on her way to Canada, and so the topic of seeing a moose around her neighborhood causes her to reflect back

on that moment. Further, it was also evident that Tourism Moments stand a greater chance of being recollected when cues serve to recall its corresponding trip first. In other words, people may need to retrieve the general memory of their trip first to be able to subsequently recall the Tourism Moment. This coincides with principles of Conway's Autobiographical Model which asserts that the brain holds a preference for retrieving memories at the General Event level (e.g., vacations, projects) first before retrieving more specific episodic memories such as Tourism Moments. In essence, a cue is needed to retrieve the trip memory which in turn serves as a cue to recollect any corresponding Tourism Moment memories. Accordingly, it appears it is difficult for people to organically and spontaneously remember their Tourism Moments. Cues are vitally important to give any chance for moments to be recalled. Unless physical cues are kept nearby around one's home, Tourism Moments may never get the chance to be recalled as evidenced by the interview data.

An interesting social dynamic was seen to play a role in both the aid and hindrance of recollecting Tourism Moments. First, some evidence points to the possibility of improving the recall of Tourism Moments. A very clear pattern emerged demonstrating the advantage of having others in the travel party co-experience the Tourism Moment along with the traveler. Living through a Tourism Moment with someone else creates additional sources capable of later on reminding the traveler of the experience. For instance, the excerpts below demonstrate how others function as insurance and share responsibility in keeping the memory alive for both parties:

*"but like we talk about it now like remember that place we went where people were singing" (Raquel)*

*"Oh sure. Yeah I get all sorts of popup memories, and so does Sara. And we'll be doing something, or I will, just had a flash about blah blah. Was it this trip or that trip?" (Todd)*

Other people essentially serve as one of the best forms of a cue helping to improve the chances of recollecting the shared Tourism Moment. Through the Tourism Moment, people become forever interlinked within that memory, and because it is a meaningful shared experience, there is greater care taken by both to preserve it and remember it again. This point is addressed well by Tom:

*"Sure and I mean that if you are able to, if you talk about it with your fellow travelers [after] you're extending the moment, yeah you do." (Tom)*

By extending the moment, Tom appears to suggest that the experience remains relevant and valuable as a memory beyond the time when it transpired. As an alternative, a few participants discussed how social media can be leveraged in lieu of physically co-experiencing a Tourism Moment with others. In most cases, this involved travelers who either during or immediately following the Tourism Moment, posted a picture/video about the experience to their social media accounts. As exemplified next, Megan describes how she was asked about her Tourism Moment after the trip solely due to the video she had posted on social media:

*“...like I know some people asked, but I know more people were like commenting once they saw me because most of my friends are on Facebook or Instagram... so it was like hey I saw that video of your dad you know.” (Megan)*

Accordingly, in sharing the Tourism Moment on social media, it essentially functions to create the potential for a large number of cues to exist – or as many friends that view the post. Sharing and co-experiencing one’s Tourism Moments is seen then to only improve the chances of recalling it in the future.

Ironically, the advantage of sharing a Tourism Moment with others does not prove advantageous when this is done post-trip and in-person. This dynamic refers to instances in which participants upon returning from their trip, were often reserved and reluctant to share details about their Tourism Moment experience with a friend or loved one. Participants discussed glossing over the details, downplaying the significance, or outright reframing from talking about the Tourism Moment altogether. Both Spencer and Elena exemplify this dynamic below as they discussed how they were reserved when sharing their Tourism Moment:

*“Yeah. Yeah. Well she has a shorter attention span, so I probably said I went out to the bay and I had the tiller and the clouds parted and it was incredible and it was a moment where I almost lost my breath.” (Spencer)*

*“Yeah. But it’s... I can’t think of a time where I actually...I think I’ve mentioned it a few times to friends that there was this completely new dance that I had never heard of before but didn’t really talk about it in-depth.” (Elena)*

As can be seen above, both participants were reluctant to disclose both the episodic details of what transpired, as well as their feelings about the experience. One possible explanation as denoted from the conversations with participants, is that travelers may feel as if others will not easily grasp why the moment is so significant to them. Often, Tourism Moments were not grandiose experiences on the surface, or associated with popular destination attractions or



activities. As such, travelers may feel as if it may be too much effort or it would be a lost cause to try to explain to others why the moment mattered – i.e., ‘you had to be there’. Or as Raquel explained, Tourism Moments may be too personal to share with others:

*“Yeah...and then they’re not the kind of things that you would share... Instead I would say, we went to Disneyland, we did this, we did that....its more like a personal experience that I don’t think other people would care about.” (Raquel)*

Travelers thus may find it easier to share the more expected and stereotypical experiences that hold little emotional and personal weight. Yet, there is a significant negative implication for memory-purposes when travelers are reframing from sharing their Tourism Moments. This is because research in psychology indicates that to aid in the solidification of memories into long-term memory, experiences should be elaborated through the means of sensemaking or sharing the experience with others (Dudai, 2004; Drexler & Wolf, 2017). That is, the more often a memory is retrieved from memory when shared, the stronger it becomes, and the more likely it will be recalled later on again. Accordingly, in reframing from sharing the Tourism Moment, or even in limiting the degree of details shared, travelers are forgoing an important mental exercise required to forge the memory of the moment. To conclude, Tourism Moments stand the greatest chance of being recalled when they are co-experienced with others, or when travelers engage in storytelling on a deeper level.

#### ***3.4.4.3 Understanding the Role of Documentation in the Recall of Tourism Moments***

Regardless of the role that social dynamics were found to play, many participants regarded documentation as being the single most important method for preserving and recalling Tourism Moments. Documentation refers to the picture-taking or video-recording of a Tourism Moment (most often with a smartphone in this study). One distinct pattern that arose was the degree to which several participants believed documenting served as the only way to recall Tourism Moments. At the core of this sentiment was an apparent *need* to document or risk losing the memory of the Tourism Moment forever. A great deal was learned from the joint interview with Tom and Mandy in unpacking their rationale for why they documented their Tourism Moments. As can be reflected in the brief quotes to follow, both participants hold a fairly definitive belief that documenting is absolutely critical if one stands a chance at recollecting the moment at all:

*“And you can’t...the only way to recall it is the picture.” (Tom)*

*“... well with the video you’re hearing the audio of what happened around you to other people, exclamations...] I’ll always remember it, but its great reliving it by looking at the shot or the video again...” (Mandy).*

Not only do they believe that moments must be recalled via pictures/videos, but that they also allow the only means to actually relive the experience in any form. This is an important distinction to clarify because this suggests that travelers may feel as if the sense of reliving (i.e., auto-noetic consciousness) of a Tourism Moment must absolutely be facilitated with a picture or video. Yet this begs to question whether one is actually ‘reliving’ a Tourism Moment, or simply watching a video or looking at a picture of it later on. Regardless of the latter, there is no question that many travelers have seemed to accept and rely exclusively on pictures and videos to recall Tourism Moments. In essence, this is the acceptance that no other cues can work to bring back the memory of their Tourism Moments. This belief is substantiated by the following excerpt in which Megan shared how ‘journaling’ her prior trips failed to facilitate the recall of memories:

*“Because for instance on a previous trip, I kept a written journal, I feel like reading the written journal is not as effective because seeing a photo brings back more memories to me than reading a piece of paper, because I’m like I don’t remember that. It doesn’t trigger anything.” (Megan)*

Megan here specifically points out that alternatives to documentation such as journaling are not effective “triggers” (i.e., cues) for retrieving and reliving Tourism Moment memories. As such, it is understandable that these travelers hold a strong predisposition to almost always reach for their smartphones to document every Tourism Moment on a trip. While a seemingly simple observation, there is a more significant implication at work. With a blind acceptance that Tourism Moments will not be retained in memory if they are not documented, travelers are essentially relinquishing any authority over their memories. As Spencer noted in his interview, travelers are giving over full control to cameras for the engraving of Tourism Moment memories:

*“Umm because you are outsourcing your memory, I keep my photos on the cloud, but I keep my memories here [mind].” (Spencer)*

The idea of outsourcing is indicative, it is the intentional decision to allow pictures and videos to proxy as the exclusive reserve for memories. This then demonstrates that a mental trade-off occurs such that with an assurance that the camera will function as their memory bank, the

traveler may not feel the need to invest a lot of attentional resources to the moment. Instead, the traveler may dedicate more cognitive attention to accurately and correctly documenting their Tourism Moment than to observing the experience unfold. A possible consequence then is these travelers must certainly rely on the availability of their photos and videos to be able to recall a Tourism Moment given they took themselves out of the moment to capture it. To be clear, despite the possibility for a distracting effect of documenting moments, some participants were confident they could successfully both document and pay respect/attention to their Tourism Moments. The findings overall however do not provide a conclusive answer on this dynamic.

Certainly, what seems to be much more definitive is the advantage of longevity that a documented Tourism Moment affords. This pertains to how a Tourism Moment memory can be kept alive decades after it occurred when it is documented. In fact, it appeared that this served as one of the most significant motivations for documenting Tourism Moments – i.e., the assurance that it will be preserved to be recalled much later in life. Megan’s comments below speak to this obvious benefit as well as the role of re-introducing and re-engraining her moment into memory:

*“I don’t think so because I feel like that video is going to be me reliving that specific moment over and over and over again, or like allow me to have the opportunity to relive it over again multiple times in the future...it’s just now because I’m able to watch it multiple times, that’s probably more prominent than if I hadn’t taken a video than maybe I would have 10 or 15 years from now I would have forgotten.” (Megan)*

Thus Megan, much like many other participants, seems driven largely by the fear of ‘losing’ the memory altogether later in her life. And this belief was present even for participants who self-identified as being reluctant or resistant to documenting their moments, as several admitted to being concerned about the preservation of the memory many years later. As will be discussed in the proceeding section, this group of travelers prefer to forgo documenting for the sake of dedicating their entire attention to their Tourism Moments. And yet, even these participants acknowledged the long-term vulnerability of Tourism Moment memories:

*“Interviewer: So you have just as strong of confidence that that moment, even if you didn’t take a picture or video will still be there?”*

*Participant (Erika) : Oh yes, well I don’t know about 10 years, I’m in my 60s, but maybe 5 years from now...”*

Similarly, Todd discusses how he succumbs to the stereotypical touristic practice of documenting because it means increasing his chances of recollection years later:

*“... just taking a brief photo of it is part of the experience so you can briefly relive it later or more in depth really, you know I’m talking these memories from just a few months, I know there’s lots of from trips five or six years ago that I don’t recall but if I went through the pictures, it will bring back many memories...”*

In a sense then, the photo or video of a Tourism Moment does represent perhaps the most effective and efficient memory cue. Travelers do not just document as a means of preservation, but rather, for the hope of rediscovering a cherished and otherwise ‘lost’ Tourism Moment memory. And as some participants can attest, this is reason alone for choosing to take attention away from a Tourism Moment to capture it.

In direct contrast, another group of participants surfaced and represented the other side of the spectrum regarding the use of documentation for preserving Tourism Moment memories. Specifically, this group refers to participants who expressed a distrust in documentation as the primary method of recollecting Tourism Moment memories. These participants choose to only observe or partake in the experience rather than using their phones to document during a Tourism Moment. In questioning their rationale for this position on documenting Tourism Moments, participants provided some interesting points. Spencer, in particular, challenged the notion held by several participants that travelers will not remember a Tourism Moment if it is not documented. He specifically described a “self-fulfilling prophecy” at play with participants who subscribe to this stance:

*“Interviewer: So it’s interesting that this has been sort of an ongoing topic when I talk to people, when I get a chance I’ve talked to people on the other side of the spectrum who say they like to take pictures of these moments and their reasoning is obvious - they say I just won’t remember that moment if I don’t take a picture of video of it.*

*Participant (Spencer): Well that’s a self-fulfilling prophecy, because you are taking yourself out of the moment to preserve it, so yeah, you’ll have a picture but yeah I kind of remember that.”*

This points to the idea that travelers have blindly accepted that documentation is the only means of preserving and recollecting Tourism Moment memories. That is, because they have already subscribed to this position on documentation, they in essence relinquish and qualify any moment not documented as permanently forgotten. Although a seemingly simple resignation on the

surface, there is reason to believe this exact mindset ‘pigeonholes’ travelers to have to document each and every special moment on a trip. Others, on the anti-documentation group, questioned the frequency in which people actually look back on past trips via pictures/videos. While a picture/video could prove to be a very effective memory cue, these participants believe most people rarely recall documented Tourism Moments. And this is especially the case considering most documentation occurs via a smartphone, and thus the pictures/videos remain digital and are rarely printed (Batchen, 2013). As Erika notes, printed pictures/videos give people a reason to take time and examine the documented moments:

*“So I don’t understand that, and I like the distality of holding a book, so that means when my son comes up to visit we can sit together and turn the pages and look at the book, and remember all those moments.”*

The assumption Erika makes here is that physical prints do a better job at drawing people to sit down and reminisce more so than the digital images that are stored in smartphones. With fewer people printing photographs, there is less of a chance that the memory cueing benefits of documentation are leveraged. Moreover, the assertion that the Tourism Moments documented with a smartphone are rarely referenced is further substantiated by the growing influence of social media. Specifically, there is an increasing trend indicating travelers take pictures/videos solely for the purpose of sharing on social media, and not preservation. This means travelers today have little to no intention to look back on their documented travel experiences as they document only as a means of storytelling online. This dynamic was brought up by participants and is specifically exemplified by Isabel in discussing her husband’s documentation practice:

*“You know, I don’t know because that’s my biggest complain about when people do it, so you took that video do you watch it?? I don’t know if he does or not, I would venture to guess probably not, I think he takes those videos to show other people. To illustrate his experience, like oh look at how cool this concert was.”*

For these types of travelers, the utility of a picture or video then ends once it is posted on social media as it has served its purpose of storytelling. Accordingly, more and more travelers are prioritizing sharing over preservation when it comes to the documentation of their Tourism Moments. And this is only further fueled by the growing use of ephemeral social media sites – i.e., the posting of documented moments as ‘stories’ which disappear after 24 hours. Hence, based on conversations with participants, there is some cause for concern that one of the most effective memory cues (i.e., pictures/videos) are rarely being leveraged to recollect Tourism

Moments. Other participants raised a different point regarding their reasoning for not documenting Tourism Moments. These participants were not concerned with the frequency to which documented moments are referenced, but rather, the quality of the recollection experience that a picture or video affords. The excerpts from both Lena and John regard their concern that although one may be able to recollect via a picture/video, the emotions experienced during a moment may be lost:

*“... but I think if we’re able to not take that photo and be more present and focus more on how that moment makes you feel, those feelings you know you’re going to remember how it made you feel.” (Lena)*

*“If I think about each one, I think I can bring it up vividly except the emotional attachment...” (John)*

In particular, Lena highlights the advantage of not documenting such that choosing to be completely in tune to the moment at hand ensures that the emotions experienced can be better recollected later in memory. In turn, and as John noted, a picture or video may help one remember that a Tourism Moment happened but will be limited in recollecting the associated emotional experience.

Another participant, Stan, brought up another intriguing issue in the heavy dependence on pictures and videos to recollect Tourism Moment memories. At a point in the interview when discussing his Tourism Moment that he documented, Stan expressed an uncertainty for the ‘source’ of his Tourism Moment memory: “I was trying to figure out if that is my memory or the memory of the video footage.”. Here, Stan questions whether what he is recollecting is only what he saw in the footage, or the actual experience he lived through. Accordingly, one by-product of documenting Tourism Moments is a sort of blended memory in which the episodic details of the recollected memories are sourced from both the actual lived experience as well as the video or picture referenced. And it is this very idea, along with the aforementioned issues, that seems to discourage some travelers from documenting their best moments on a trip (despite the acceptance of its long-term cueing benefits). They believe documenting indicates you are sacrificing the chance to dedicate your entire visual and mental attention to the moment – and this is simply a trade-off they are not willing to make. As so many of these participants expressed, the act of documenting occupies your attention and is thus often a distraction away from taking in the present moment. To conclude then, these participants choose to prioritize the in-moment experience over the long-term recollective experience of their Tourism Moments.

#### ***3.4.4.4 The Importance of Attentiveness and Faith for Recall***

Travelers who choose not to document a Tourism Moment place emphasis on making the most of the in-moment experience. Knowing they will not have the use of a picture or video as a memory cue later, these travelers work at consciously ‘engraining’ and ‘forging’ what is transpiring during the Tourism Moment into their memory. Participants spoke of doing so in two distinct manners. First, many were convinced that the likelihood of recalling a Tourism Moment memory depends mainly on the degree of attentiveness dedicated to the experience unfolding. This simply implies that travelers who are very present and live in the moment will be best able to recall the memory later. In fact, these participants recognize a direct one-to-one connection between being attentive and the solidification of a memory:

*“... but I don’t really know if anybody was talking, I was kind of like you said, I was in that moment because that’s what gets engrained in my brain.” (Elena)*

*“I was definitely more mindful than I had been in a while yeah...which is why I remember it...” (Raquel)*

Accordingly, it seems that the absence of distraction in combination with a wholehearted investment into only the moment before the traveler is critical. Even in Elena’s moment, the idea that no one during the moment was talking showcases the strong degree of attentiveness required to foster a successful memory encoding. Alternatively, other participants expressed a more proactive and intentional tactic to facilitate the best engraining of their Tourism Moment memories. For instance, two participants described needing to zero-in on evoking and being in tune to the sensory experience within a Tourism Moment. This is described well by Lynn in how she grasps onto the senses she experiences during her moment:

*“Well it is, I do like having the picture of it but I also like to emblazon the thing in my memory by looking at it, and feeling it, and feeling the air in my face, and the smell of the trees, whatever else, the smell of the ocean air. I can’t get that in a camera.”*

As she and others noted, attuning to one’s senses is critically important and an aspect which the act of documenting fails to provide. The long-lived notion of taking a mental picture, that is, dedicating a sharp eye at examining one’s gaze at distinct parts of the present experience was also a popular approach discussed. Along with attending to the sensory consumption, others such as Raquel discussed a sort of hypothetical ‘mental switch’ that is turned on to best ingest the present moment:

*“This is going to sound weird, but I think I was thinking I hope I remember this moment you know, like I think I was thinking like hey try to remember this because I remember because when we’re far away I’ll want to be able to picture sitting here with him and singing this song, so I do that sometimes, when I’m experiencing something like that I guess...”*

As showcased in this excerpt, travelers attempt to tap into a deeper level of cognitive consumption by both consciously and subconsciously forcing themselves to increase their awareness of the moment at hand. This overtaking in how a Tourism Moment is consumed in part appears to be an effort to compensate for not having a picture or video to depend on in the future. These participants feel that prioritizing the in-moment consumption serves as a suitable substitute for documentation. Whether this is true is uncertain and outside the scope of this study as it raises the question as to which form of consumption is best for recall. At least for a distinct group of travelers, taking themselves out of a Tourism Moment to document it goes against their fundamental belief of needing to be present to best recall it later.

Along with a ‘live-in-the-moment’ approach, several participants discussed the importance of not overthinking the matter and just needing to have faith that the memory of the Tourism Moment will stick. This alludes to a seemingly blind trust where one is advised to not worry over and question one’s capability of recalling memories. Interview participants expressed an unwavering confidence such that they ‘just knew’ their moment from the previous year will never be forgotten. Quotes such as “I trust I will remember this moment” and “those were probably the ones that we’ll carry with us for a long time” represent participants who need not even question the recallability of their moments. As mentioned earlier, this strong confidence stems from the sheer significance and uniqueness of the Tourism Moment experience as showcased by Erika’s description of her moment: “... it was just pretty magical, I won’t forget that.” Other participants in juxtaposing against memories held via pictures/videos felt certain that the organic memories we hold onto are going to resurface eventually, and so, there should be little concern with losing the memories. And this circles back to the ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ brought up earlier. Those travelers who document every Tourism Moment appear to lack an inherent trust in their own memory, and as such, feel forced to ensure their memory is artificially supplemented by pictures and videos. Yet, several participants advise the need to simply let go and rely on our memory system to preserve our best travel moments. Accordingly, this represents



a ‘blind’ faith in the other direction. Not a blind faith in pictures and videos, but of themselves and an optimism that their cherished Tourism Moments will resurface as memories on their own.

### **3.5 Summary and Discussion**

#### **3.5.1 Summary**

This study’s general focus was two-fold. First, it was initially proposed that there existed a fleeting yet intriguing experience during leisure trips which was labeled as a Tourism Moment. Accordingly, this paper sought to establish an empirically-grounded conceptualization of Tourism Moments, as well as understand how travelers experience this moment first-hand. Based on travel blog data and discussions with 23 interview participants, the following conceptualization of the Tourism Moment was developed: a fleeting, temporally short experience which emerges suddenly and is immediately deemed as intriguing or captivating. Additionally, a Tourism Moment was found to feature six fundamental experiential characteristics: 1) the feeling of stepping in and out of the moment; 2) short and fleeting; 3) unexpected and stumbled upon; 4) suspending of time and reality; 5) snapping back to reality upon its conclusion; and 6) experientially distinct. These six fundamental characteristics provide a baseline description of the lived experience for any traveler’s Tourism Moment. However, through the analysis it was also discovered that there existed a range of four different types of Tourism Moments. Each moment type features the six fundamental characteristics noted prior while featuring a slightly different nature to the experience. The four types of Tourism Moments are as follows: 1) Spectator Tourism Moment; 2) Participatory Tourism Moment; 3) Sightseeing Tourism Moment; and 4) Private Tourism Moment. These four moment types help showcase a thorough and comprehensive description of what a Tourism Moment experience entails. The findings also addressed the importance of Tourism Moments against the trip at large. It was learned that travelers go into trips knowing there are ‘moments to be had’, and so, the realization of their Tourism Moments fulfills this internal desire. Moreover, Tourism Moments were seen to function as either differentiators of trips or as an added value to trips.

The second overarching objective of this study intended on investigating the role that Tourism Moments may have in the memory recollection process. Within this aim, it was first discovered that Tourism Moments are capable of inciting a highly vivid memory when relived.

In other words, travelers can live through again their past Tourism Moment from memory in such a way that they are able to mentally time travel back to that experience. This high degree of reliving vividness was even found to be maintained for memories of Tourism Moments aged multiple decades. Accordingly, it can be concluded that Tourism Moments represent one of the only avenues in which people can relive past trips. Yet, it was also discovered that Tourism Moment memories are rarely recollected in reality, indicating the benefit of vivid reliving is not leveraged. A number of factors were discussed as influencing the recallability of Tourism Moments, such as the critical role that tangible memory cues play in keeping the memories active. Also interesting was the discovery of two very different groups of travelers in their mentality for how they consume and recollect their Tourism Moment memories. One group is characterized by their willingness to sacrifice their in-moment consumption of the moment for the sake of memory preservation via documentation. This group subscribes to the belief that any experience not documented via a picture or video will be automatically lost from memory, and so, hold a willingness to mediate their visual consumption of their Tourism Moment through documenting. The second group follows a blind faith in trusting that their Tourism Moment memories will be there even when they do not document them. This group of travelers prioritize paying full attention and engagement with the experience unfolding before them, rather than using a camera to disrupt this consumption. It is through this full engagement in the experience that they believe will ensure that the memory of the moment remains intact years later. As was evident throughout the interviews, participants were strongly aligned with either of these two groups. Hence, further research is required to explore the motivations and implications for travelers on both sides of this position. Yet, what is blatantly clear is just how precious and valuable Tourism Moments are for travelers. They are not only the experiences that can be relived vividly from past trips, but also hold significance for being some of the most important memories in people's lives.

### 3.5.2 Discussion

#### 3.5.2.1 *A Rhythmic Conceptualization of the Tourism Experience*

Much like it was discussed at length in the literature review, Quan and Wang (2004) were not content with the long-standing tourism experience conceptualization of associating “the whole tourist experience to the peak experience” (p. 299). The overarching paradigms of the social science perspective, tourist gaze, and modernistic perspective have collectively projected a romanticized image of the tourism experience such that every encounter, interaction, and observation of the touristic environment resembles a peak experience – the tourist maintains the same high degree of ‘peak’ experiential quality at all times ended only by their return home. In other words, tourism researchers by and large have subscribed to a conceptualization that the entirety of a trip is experienced as one uniform peak-like experience. Sentiments of this conceptualization remain active today, as exemplified in the recent paper by Chen and Yoon (2019). Based on their findings, they conclude that travelers’ novelty seeking has an indirect effect on life satisfaction through tourism experiences. Essentially, their paper suggests that to experience novelty, and improve life satisfaction, one needs only to visit a new destination. The assumption being made here is that an entire trip is experienced as novel simply by being onsite at a new destination and seeing new attractions. Accordingly, this coincides with the overarching and traditional conceptualization of characterizing the entirety of any given trip as peak-like, novel, extraordinary, or otherwise special.

As exemplified by the present findings, the existence of Tourism Moments challenges this widely accepted tourism experience conceptualization. In-depth discussions with travelers in this study portrays a tourism experience that is much more rhythmic, sporadic, and fluctuating in nature. In direct contrast, the entirety of a trip is not typically experienced as one continuous peak experience. Instead, the tourism experience may be best conceptualized as a trip featuring a rhythmic series of dull experiences (lows), ordinary experiences (norms), and peak-like experiences (Tourism Moments), all of varying durations. Tourism experiences are simply not uniform as the degree of stimulation and engagement varies within a given trip. This is largely evidenced in how participants in this study described how they seemingly stepped in and out of their Tourism Moments. Specifically, it was found that travelers are vividly conscious of the sudden spike in stimulation when a Tourism Moment begins, and subsequent drop when the

moment ends. In particular, travelers vividly recognize the seconds following the conclusion of a Tourism Moment as they are faced with the truth that this ultra-heightened degree of distinct experience only occurs a few times on their trip. In other words, travelers have a conscious awareness that trips are not always peak-like and incredible throughout.

The findings coincide with a slew of recent tourism research advocating for the reorientation of the tourism experience as fluctuating and rhythmic in nature. In one regard, the present findings serve as an extension of the research by Kim and Fesenmaier (2015). Their field research demonstrated the wide variation in stimulation felt by a traveler even within a single discrete tourism activity. For instance, within the one-hour activity of ‘visiting a park’, one participant’s emotional arousal spiked to a heightened level at various instances. In a way, the present study offers rich anecdotal support for their study such that the spikes detected in their research may be instances of Tourism Moments encountered by travelers. Perhaps just as telling is how their study detected many moments of very low emotional arousal (i.e., boredom) during otherwise planned ‘fun’ touristic activities. This is also in line with the presence of ‘downtime’ during leisure vacations, which goes in direct opposition of the uniform peak portrayal of tourism experiences. Finally, in their paper ‘A Theory of Structured Experience’, Ellis, Freeman, Jamal and Jiang (2019) showcase that even within a staged and delivered leisure experience, there are many subjective elements that determine the varying degree of stimulation experienced in any given tourism experience.

Additionally, event segmentation theory can further help explain how tourism experiences are not uniform and continuous in nature. Event segmentation theory argues that people experience life as a series of discrete events which are separated by event boundaries which demarcate a beginning and end point to experiences (Radvansky & Zacks, 2014). Tourism Moments were shown to exhibit very clear and definitive beginning event boundaries. In other words, people could consciously recognize in the present that a new event is underway with the beginning of their Tourism Moment. Additionally, certain types of Tourism Moments such as the ‘Cinematic Scene’ featured a definitive ending event boundary to the experience. Tourism Moments as having sharp event boundaries provides support that there is not a continuous uninterrupted flow of experience within any given trip. Travelers within a trip consciously and subconsciously recognize when they have undergone a new and distinct event through the form of a Tourism Moment. It is very recognition of Tourism Moment’s event boundaries which give

traveler's the underlying sense that their trip is experienced as a series of varying degrees of experientially distinct events.

The reorientation of the tourism experience conceptualization as rhythmic rather than uniform carries important implications for tourism research moving forward. In one regard, it challenges researchers to further explore the significance of seemingly short and micro-level experiences which occur within a trip. Perhaps studying tourism experiences at the scale of the entire trip, as has been done for so long, ignores the fruitful opportunity to better identify the specific events that matter most to travelers. Moreover, the peak and uniform portrayal of tourism experiences perhaps also overvalues the role of destinations in traveler's overall tourism experience. With such a conceptualization, seemingly any leisure-based destination could deliver the same highly stimulating tourism experience. Given a rhythmic view on the tourism experience, it promotes a need by researchers to truly investigate how much influence a destination has on the lows and highs of any given trip. Finally, and perhaps most important, a rhythmic conceptualization should inspire researchers to understand what a fluctuating tourism experience feels like from the traveler's perspective. There presents opportunity to describe and document the degree of consciousness for the wide fluctuation experienced on a trip. While this study focused on the fleeting peaks of trips, there is much room for exploring the valleys in experiences preceding and proceeding Tourism Moments.

#### ***3.5.2.2 Tourism Moments as Necessary Reversals***

Further, the findings suggest that the fluctuations in arousal that Tourism Moments incite are not only part of the tourism experience, but also an integral part of keeping the trip refreshing at large. It was found that Tourism Moments function to kickstart the positive fluctuations felt by travelers, and in turn, diversify the flow of experience. This conclusion stems from how the Tourism Moments analyzed were often experiences that were fundamentally different than: 1) the purpose of the trip overall; 2) the types of activities typically experienced on a trip. For instance, Lucy's Tourism Moment involved exploring and observing the pyramids at the Chichén Itzá heritage site. As she noted herself, this was in direct contrast to the array of relaxing and beach-oriented experiences she had encountered up to that point on the trip. In a different yet parallel example, Matt cherished his solitude Tourism Moment of overlooking the campsite by himself partly because it was one of only instances in which he was alone on his socially-

oriented group trip. Hence, it is the experience of change which acts to raise the significance of the Tourism Moment, as well as ensuring a dynamic trip overall.

Reversal Theory helps elucidate and support the role of Tourism Moments as the necessary reversals within any given trip. The central tenet of this theory contends that pleasure for a particular experience is derived when a desired change in arousal occurs (Apter, 2001). The desired change is predicated on a person's metamotivational state wherein one either seeks a rise or decrease in arousal (Apter, 2001). In short, Reversal Theory is concerned with people's interpretation of their lived experience. For instance, low arousal eliciting experiences (i.e., lounging on a beach) may be pleasurable and induce a sense of relaxation until a point of repetitiveness that leads to boredom, and in turn, displeasure. Only in undergoing a higher arousing experience can this displeasure return to pleasure. Hence, it is the felt change in arousal which produces the sense of heightened pleasure. It is posed then that Tourism Moments serve as some of the most vivid and sharpest reversals in arousal within a tourism experience. In fact, Apter (1982) argues that the sense of pleasure is further magnified with a quicker and more extreme reversal which is line with Tourism Moment's rapid onset and suddenness in emergence.

Although the change in arousal is central to Reversal Theory, the present findings indicate that at least within the context of tourism and travel, all that may be needed is a change in the nature or type of experience. And as previously mentioned, what may be more important is the drastic difference in the change. Hence, Tourism Moments are valuable in that they are perhaps the most vivid forms of changes felt within a trip. In essence, travelers implicitly have an individual level of fluctuation or feeling of change that must occur on their respective trips (Larsen, 2013). The emergence of a Tourism Moment then is the materializing of these changes. Tourism Moments combat the sense of complacency or over-exuberance felt when the continuity of experiences remains the same. As supported by Reversal Theory, this study sheds light on the importance of diversifying experiences within any given trip— and the significant role that Tourism Moments play in this part. Change is inherently beneficial to a trip, and Tourism Moments give traveler's the impression that their otherwise continuous experience is dynamic.

### ***3.5.2.3 Tourism Moments as Eudaimonic Experiences***

When digging deeper into the essence of Tourism Moments, a close parallel with the principles of eudaimonia can be seen. In short, eudaimonic experiences refer to events that elicit the sense of fulfillment, achievement, and an overall feeling of meaningfulness (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Largely characterized as ‘meaningful experiences’, happiness from experiencing eudaimonia is sourced when a person is fulfilling their psychological wellbeing. While Tourism Moments were typically always hedonic in nature (with one notable exception), it was equally as clear that travelers did not just cherish them because they were highly enjoyable. Tourism Moments seem to tap into one or more of the four elements of the PERMA framework, which is a conceptualization often associated with eudaimonia (Seligman, 2011). The PERMA framework features the elements of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. In theory, a eudaimonic experience features any or all of these elements as the recipe for acquiring feelings of self-fulfillment and human flourishing (Filep, 2014).

Accordingly, the eudaimonic nature of Tourism Moments helps explain travelers high regard for their occurrence. Travelers do not seem to value them simply because they are highly enjoyable experiences. While Tourism Moments certainly elicited strong positive emotions, interview participants were often quick to share many other pleasurable and enjoyable moments which occurred during their trips. And yet, they were also often quick to clarify that there was ‘something’ distinct about Tourism Moments. Only through a closer examination of their Tourism Moment did it reveal the presence of eudaimonia at the core of their experience. Tourism Moments, as eudaimonic experiences essentially give travelers the sense that they walk away from their trips with more than a good time. Recent tourism research provides support that travelers’ overarching view of their trip stems from both a hedonic component and eudaimonic component (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017; Zátori & Beardsley, 2018). For instance, Matteucci and Filep (2017) showcased the significant value when travelers embark on experiences that resonate deeply with a personal self. Similarly, research into the allure of ‘dark tourism’ also illuminate travelers’ desire for more than the hedonic (Nawjin & Biran, 2018). This research helps to further support the role of eudaimonia in tourism as Tourism Moments are seen to be a rich source for satisfying this eudaimonic component.

More pointedly, it is proposed that there are two tiers in determining traveler's holistic satisfaction with their leisure trips. The first tier, which is the hedonic aspect, is typically taken care of continuously throughout a typical leisure-oriented vacation. In fulfilling this initial and fundamental tier, travelers can walk away content with their leisure trip. Yet, the findings suggest that Tourism Moments are cherished because they tap into the second tier of eudaimonia, ensuring a more comprehensive degree of overall satisfaction and wellbeing – i.e., the realization of both an emotional and psychological wellbeing. Or as one participant characterized it, trips without the eudaimonic-centric Tourism Moments are 'flat', indicating that travelers value experiences that offer more than enjoyment and pleasure. The utility of Tourism Moments then is the creation of a more holistically content traveler at the end of the trip.

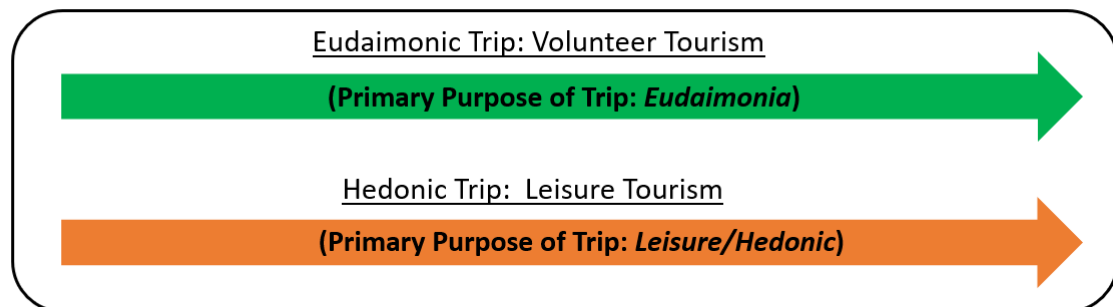
Moreover, this study also challenges the dominant view of the tourism literature in inferring that eudaimonic experiences are only achieved through undergoing unique types of trips or tourism activities. For instance, Knobloch, Robertson, and Aitken (2017) explored the significance of eudaimonic outcomes in tourism experiences through examining the unique activities of skydiving, whale-watching, and white-water rafting. Similarly, Matteucci and Filep (2017) interviewed 20 travelers who participated in flamenco music and dance courses and identified several experiential dimensions of a eudaimonic tourism experience. Perhaps most telling of the field's constrained view on eudaimonic experiences is the work by Smith and Diekkman (2017). They developed a 'spectrum of wellbeing' in which the opportunity for eudaimonic wellbeing emerges only once one moves past the hedonic and leisure-based forms of tourism (e.g., beach vacation). Seemingly only through choosing eudaimonic-oriented travel such as cultural tourism, volunteer tourism, or a spiritual pilgrimage can a traveler hope to encounter meaningful and fulfilling experiences.

Yet, as the many stories shared by participants reveals, moments rich in eudaimonic elements are found in even the most leisure and hedonic oriented trips. Interestingly, while Smith and Diekkman (2017) propose that eudaimonia cannot be achieved through a hedonic-oriented trip, their wellbeing spectrum also indicates that hedonic moments may be featured in eudaimonic-oriented trips. Figure 5 showcases a direct parallel to their proposal in demonstrating that the quality of wellbeing and happiness in any given trip is not monolithic in nature – e.g., just like a spiritual pilgrimage can feature hedonic moments, a beach vacation can feature eudaimonic moments (as Tourism Moments). Moreover, Figure 5 visually depicts a new way of



conceptualizing the place of eudaimonic experiences in tourism in which the emergence of eudaimonic experiences is not predetermined by the type of trip. Tourism Moments by their very nature correspond with the core principles of eudaimonia, and it was evident that the emergence of these moments is independent of an overarching ‘purpose’ of the trip. Tourism Moments emerge unexpectedly and unannounced, occurring anytime and anywhere within any given trip. As research on transformative experiences showcased (Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017), experiences that go beyond a hedonic satisfaction do not require a specialized form of travel, ultimately suggesting meaningful and self-fulfilling experiences are more abundant than previously suggested.

### Traditional View of Eudaimonia in Tourism Experience



### Updated View of Eudaimonia in Tourism Experience

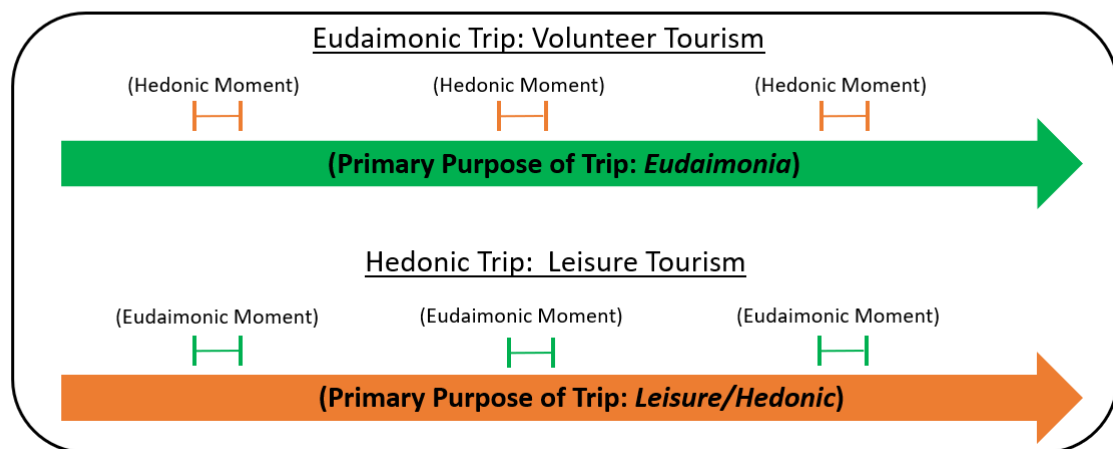


Figure 5. Updated Portrayal of Eudaimonia in Tourism

#### ***3.5.2.4 The Quality of Consumption – A New Metric for Evaluating Experiences***

This study also helped highlight a need for future research to focus more on the quality of consumption as a measurement of experiences. Both hedonic and eudaimonic metrics are well-established for assessing experiences, and of course, satisfaction has long been a popular way to operationalize traveler's assessment of their tourism experiences. And yet, it was apparent that something in addition to hedonic and eudaimonic elements was at play in explaining the significance of Tourism Moments. Only through closely examining each participant's narratives was it seen how there was a qualitatively distinct form of consumption associated with Tourism Moments. This quality of consumption refers to the nature in which travelers took in and internalized their experience as it occurred in real time. It was evident that it was effortless for travelers to become totally present and savor their experience wholeheartedly and genuinely during Tourism Moments. Akin to the principles of mindfulness (Dutt & Ninov, 2016), travelers invoked a natural and judgement-free sense of appreciation to what is happening around them. That is, how they experienced the moment was just as significant as what they experienced.

Perhaps then it is suggestive that almost none of the interview participant's Tourism Moments were associated with their respective destination's popular attractions or activities. Participants in this study visited some of the most infamous destinations around the world (e.g., Paris, Los Angeles, Venice), and yet, their Tourism Moments were of experiences one could not find on a TripAdvisor 'Must See' list. One participant, although primarily going to Los Angeles for a Paul Simon concert, experienced her Tourism Moment while visiting a childhood neighborhood. Another participant, although visiting some of the most famous destinations around Europe, experienced her Tourism Moment inside a casual cruise ship bar while winding down the end of the day.

Thus, while travelers may find a destination's top attractions and activities highly enjoyable, this study suggests there is perhaps something inherently different to how these popular experiences are consumed. In one regard, there is a significant build-up of anticipation beforehand when it comes to a destination's top attractions/activities (Cherifi, Smith, Maitland, & Stevenson, 2018; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). With weeks to go before their trip, travelers have ample opportunity to savor their upcoming experiences (e.g., read travel reviews and watch videos of the experience), and all the while, raise their level of expectation and excitement for what is to occur (Chun, Diehl, & MacInnis, 2017). The result of the latter is two-fold. First,

having heard so many good things about a particular destination's experience, travelers may feel a pressure to experience positive emotions when it actually occurs regardless of how they truly feel about it. In other words, travelers may force contrived positive emotions, and as such, dedicate too much attention in trying to manipulate how they are supposed be feeling. Secondly, their minds may wander and invite meta-cognitive thoughts that focus on assessing during the experience whether it is living up to their prior expectations (Berry, Wall, & Carbone, 2006; Oliver & Burke, 1999). And thus, the quality of consumption is diminished as this outside noise disrupts the natural internalization process when experiencing. To further crystallize this point, the excerpt by one of the interview participants is reintroduced:

*“so like when you go see something, like a tourist attraction, or when you go have some experience that like a lot of other people have done, or you know was supposed to be big, there's a lot pressure about how you feel when you see it because you've taken time off work, or spent a lot of money to get there... and there's a lot of expectation and pressure, so sometimes I think that that pressure could like ruin some of those [touristy] moments, or make them not as memorable because you're so worried about how to package it or if you're feeling the way you should, or if the money was worth it, or whatever...”*

Similar sentiments can be found in prior research (Beverland & Farrelly, 2009; Lyu, 2016; Tribe & Mkono, 2017), in which an otherwise implicit or explicit sense of pressure and negotiation surround the very attractions and sights that draw travelers to a destination. In fact, this revelation was hinted at decades ago by tourism researchers in how the popular pre-planned destination activities foster a compromised degree of consumption: “Many tourist behaviors are scripted. This applies particularly to guided tours where a planned pattern of the day's activities is given to visitors. It is highly likely that many tourists attend to the outline of the day's events and then experience much of the trip mindlessly.” (Pearce & Stringer, 1991 p.142).

And so, it is perhaps the exact absence of a felt pressure which brings travelers to cherish Tourism Moments. Being mostly unexpected and serendipitous, travelers have no prior opportunity to grow a strong anticipation and high expectation of the experience. Thus, when the Tourism Moment emerges most travelers seem to block out any internal or external noise and are able to be true to themselves and the moment at hand. This quality of consumption appears aligned with existential authenticity, describing the instances in life where one acts in a way that adheres to a true self and disregards any institutionalized roles (Heiddeger, 1996). Within the context of tourism, achieving moments of existential authenticity reflects a form of experiential

consumption void of angst and rich in free expression (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). Similarly, this study's Tourism Moment also has resemblance with Cary's 'Tourism Moment', describing when a tourist loses this identity as a tourist during fleeting periods of deep absorption in an activity (Cary, 2004). Hence, Tourism Moments further showcase the deep value that travelers place on how they experience what they experience. No longer should the quality or nature of how travelers consume their tourism experiences be taken for granted. This study is evidence that experiences in which a traveler does not overthink how they feel or what they think about an experience stand as the most valuable. Thus, the study of the quality of consumption in tourism experiences is required to further explore its value for travelers.

#### ***3.5.2.5 A Rejuvenated View on Memory and Tourism Experiences***

The memory of our trips is the only thing that remains once we arrive home. It should then be no surprise that the intersection of tourism experiences and memory is a highly valuable research agenda for tourism research. The present and dominant contribution in this area lies in the study of 'Memorable Tourism Experiences' or 'MTEs'. Since the work by Kim (2010), many researchers have followed suit and adopted their conceptualization and theoretical framework in understanding what makes tourism experiences memorable. Even today, MTE research remains the dominant body of work as it pertains to the memory of tourism experiences (e.g., Kim & Chen, 2019). Ironically however, there is concern that the study of 'Memorable Tourism Experiences' has little to do with the memory of tourism experiences. In one regard, empirical research studying MTEs rarely, if ever, utilize a means in which to objectively measure participants' memory in any degree or fashion (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). That is, this line of MTE research does not attempt to measure if the 'memorable tourism experiences' they study are indeed memorable. Considering the decades of research in the sub-disciplines of psychology (cognitive, behavioral, neurological), it is surprising that tourism research has neglected the extensive variety of memory measurements available.

MTE research has served as a fruitful first effort at highlighting the importance of needing to investigate how tourism experiences come to be memorable. Yet, it is clear that there is much room for development. There is still little understanding for what determines the memorability of tourism experiences. Also of great need is a better conceptualization for what constitutes a memorable tourism experience beyond the actualization of a few experiential

elements. Moreover, there lacked a study which sought to operationalize the memory of tourism experiences in order to determine how memorable they are in the first place. In addition to the latter, this study served to, in essence, go back to square one and understand how the experiences that occur during trips are remembered in the first place. Exploring the role of memory through the lens of Tourism Moments helped showcase the reality of the memories of tourism experiences.

In referencing the long line of psychology research on memory, this study identified degree of reliving and recall as the best approach to conceptualize and operationalize memorability. Through introducing reliving and recall, it brings back a focus on the retrieval processes involved with the memory system and the experience of how people remember (e.g. Yonelinas, 2002), rather than a deterministic approach that assumes all experiences featuring certain experiential dimensions will be easily remembered. The findings of this study suggest that Tourism Moments may offer some of the only windows of opportunity to relive past trips. It was apparent, and as past research supports (Conway, 2009; Williams, 2008), that travelers' entire trip is not able to be relived vividly. Our autobiographical memory system acts efficiently (Conway, 2005), and so, the majority of the events which transpire across a trip do not retain their episodic details. Accordingly, we cannot pick and choose any point of a past trip to live through again. Tourism Moments were shown to be highly vivid memories, even those which occurred decades ago. This means Tourism Moment memories offer a rich and vivid autonoetic consciousness experience in which people can virtually relive these moments through mental imagery in almost the same manner as when it occurred.

Thus, Tourism Moments give us the comforting sense that we can derive enjoyment again from our past trips in some way. While we may remember many semantic details of experiences from the trip (i.e., what we did), these do not elicit an experience of reliving as is vividly experienced with the memories of Tourism Moments. And as research on savoring experiences indicates, being able to relive experiences rather than just remember they occurred matters. Bryant, Colette, Smart, and King (2005) found that participants who were able to relive past experiences through mental imagery savored these experiences more so than those who simply remembered the experience but did not relive them. Being able to savor a past experience is beneficial for fostering a strong sense of enjoyment and appreciation in the present (Chun, Diehl, & MacInnis, 2017), and has even been linked to an improvement in one's quality of life

(Fletcher & Eckberg, 2014). Tourism Moments then may be some of the only travel memories which foster this deep and beneficial savoring experience. Unlike done before in the tourism literature, this study showcases both what constitutes a memorable tourism experience (e.g., degree of reliving), and the value held in ensuring this memorability.

Regarding the second component of memorability, that being recall, participant's candid stories of how often they have actually remembered their Tourism Moments is quite telling. Surprisingly, it was discovered that participants rarely recalled the memories of their Tourism Moments. Despite being the highlight of the trip and representing an experience that was highly intriguing and impactful, most participants had not freely recalled their moment within the last year. Free recall refers to the ability to retrieve a memory without the aid of a memory cue (Anderson & Bower, 1972). The finding of this low rate of recall for Tourism Moments in a way shatters the romanticized label of 'Memorable Tourism Experiences'. It essentially suggests that memorable tourism experiences are not inherently memorable. When even the most significant experiences from a previous trip are rarely recalled, then it is highly likely that most other experiences encountered during any given trip are never recalled. This directly challenges MTE research because the concept of a memorable tourism experience presumes an 'on demand' portrayal of how memory functions. In contrast, this study indicates that it takes a lot of work to ensure the recall of tourism experiences. In fact, the findings indicate that it is just as important what happens after the experience concludes as what occurs during it for improving the recallability of tourism experiences. Many of the participants' Tourism Moments appeared to feature several of the MTE experiential dimensions found in past research, and yet, these moments suffered from the same low recall rate.

Thus, the recallability of tourism experience memories does not seem entirely predicated on the absence or presence of a few specific aspects of experience as MTE research would suggest. In exploring the memory for people's most cherished moments in travel, there exist post-moment dynamics which prove critical for improving the low recall of moments. For instance, it was seen that physical cues, when kept in close proximity inside one's home, help keep the memory of Tourism Moments at the forefront of one's memory. Co-experiencing Tourism Moments also is seen to be beneficial in increasing the motivation to keep these shared memories alive, as has been also found in prior research (Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018). Even sharing the Tourism Moment with a social media audience was shown to help as

this audience can aid in reminding the traveler of their moment upon return home. Hence, the role of memory cues (either tangible or intangible) may serve as a more significant influence on the memorability of tourism experiences. The role of elaboration for engraining a memory with repeated retrievals of tourism experience memories cannot be understated. Along with the present findings, prior research showcases that the more often that a memory is retrieved, as well as the depth in engagement with the memory, the better that the subsequent recall rate will be (Fisher & Craiker, 1980; Ritchey, 1980). In sum, it appears the reason for the low recall rate of Tourism Moments lies in the lack of consistent cues generated on a day-to-day basis.

It is hoped that this paper inspires tourism scholars to reconsider a new direction in the research agenda on memory and tourism experiences. This is a challenge to stand on the decades of valuable memory research conducted by our colleagues in the various disciplines of psychology. There is no need to start from scratch in our field, as there exist many established theories and frameworks backed by cognitive, behavioral, and neurological psychology research. Recent efforts in the tourism literature have provided examples. Using pre-established measures from psychology, Jorgenson et al. (2019) developed the ‘Tourism Autobiographical Memory Scale’ in the hopes of beginning to better understand the impact of tourism experiences memories. In borrowing from the years of evidence in how the long-term memory system functions, Tung, Lin, Zhang & Zhao (2017) developed a ‘Framework of Memory Management and Tourism Experiences’ to showcase the sequence involved with the encoding, consolidation, and retrieval of tourism experiences as memories. This study utilized the established concepts of degree of reliving and recall as the sole metrics in conceptualizing memorability of Tourism Moments. If memory research in tourism such as this is hoped to continue, it is advised that the literature moves away from the potentially misleading practice of labeling an experience ‘memorable’ simply because a traveler checks off a prescribed set of experiential dimensions. As the present findings evidence, the memorability of tourism experiences is much more complex than this.

### **3.6 Implications**

#### **3.6.1 Theoretical Implications**

One of the primary contributions of this research to theory is it presents the Tourism Moment as a prominent element of the tourism experience. A conceptualization of the Tourism Moment was created, as well as the identification of its key experiential characteristics. The Tourism Moment experience brings to light a very real and discrete phenomenon that travelers vividly recognize and even anticipate during their tourism experiences. Accordingly, the identification of this unique experience presents a valuable opportunity for researchers to learn about what constitutes travelers' standout experiences within their trips. In doing so, a clearer view of the experience of tourism at large may be understood when accounting for the existence of Tourism Moments. In one regard, Tourism Moments may carry the most experiential substance within any given tourism experience.

This research also contributes to the longstanding theoretical discourse on the tourism experience in a different regard. The existence of the Tourism Moment directly challenges the traditional position which projects the Tourism Experience conceptualization as monolithic, peak experience, which constitutes the entirety of the trip. With such a conceptualization, researchers tend to take for granted the dynamic nature of experience within a trip. Tourism Moments reveal trips only reach a heightened level of experiential distinctness only a few times within a Tourism Experience, and not throughout the entire trip. Recent research corroborates this finding (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015). Accordingly, I advocate for future research that investigates micro-level experiences that occur within a trip (e.g., Cary, 2004), rather than the big picture portrayal of the tourism experience as the entirety of the trip. Doing so may uncover some novel understandings of not only the Tourism Moment experience but also in how the tourism experience conceptualization is discussed in the literature.

The revelation of Tourism Moments as eudaimonic experiences adds valuable insight for the research stream of eudaimonia in tourism experiences. Generally understood in this research area is how travelers may only obtain eudaimonic experiences through eudaimonic-oriented trips such as volunteer tourism or religious tourism (Smith & Diekkman, 2017). That is, a traveler must undergo these distinct types of travel in order to experience eudaimonia. The present findings provide evidence that directly challenges this underlying assumption. Tourism



Moments, as featuring prominent eudaimonic elements, occur in even the most leisure-oriented types of trips (e.g., ‘beach vacation’). This revelation requires additional research to understand its significance. For instance, future research may explore whether eudaimonic experiences within leisure trips are qualitatively different in nature than within eudaimonic-oriented trips.

This study’s findings also contribute greatly for the tourism’s literature’s understanding of how travelers remember their tourism experiences. It was discovered that Tourism Moments, despite being one of the most experientially distinct experiences on a trip, are rarely recalled again from memory. This directly challenges the longstanding view of the ‘memorable tourism experience’ concept which assumes any tourism experience will be automatically memorable if it features a particular aspect of experience (Kim, 2010). Instead, it appears tourism experiences are highly vulnerable to memory decay even months after they occur. It is recommended that future research work ‘backwards’ to explore various explanations for the low memorability of tourism experiences. From a broader theoretical view, this study is a reminder of the highly complex and elusive nature of memory. No longer should we continue to project a formula-like view of memory wherein the memorability of a tourism experience can be predicted by a tidy set of dimensions.

### **3.6.2 Practical Implications**

As the findings would suggest, the idea of Tourism Moments is a powerful marketing angle to leverage. The interviews revealed travelers who are not only cognizant of the existence of Tourism Moments but also anticipate the emergence of ‘their’ respective Tourism Moment at a destination. Or as one participant expressed, travelers just know there are ‘moments to be had’ on any given trip. This then points to a consideration of reorienting destination marketing strategies that focus on selling moments, and not places. Since many embark on travel for the hope of obtaining these cherished Tourism Moments, destinations need to present their destination as a fruitful breeding ground for such experiences. This requires a marketing strategy that focuses less on providing a comprehensive coverage of a destination’s sights and attractions, and more on promoting how travelers can find their moments anywhere and anytime at their destination. A Tourism Moment is a very simple, concrete, and bounded experience to bottle up and promote in any advertising medium. As it appears, destinations have picked up on the value of promising desirable moments, rather than just a desirable place. Nebraska, Morocco, London,

and Kerala are just a few destinations that have created marketing campaigns centered on the promise of offering travelers the opportunity for ‘Moments’ at their destination (Kerala Tourism - "Your Moment is Waiting", n.d.; Miller, 2019; Nebraska Tourism Commission 2015-2017, 2015; Thomson "Moments" by Rainey Kelly Campbell Roalfe/Y&R, 2016). A few examples of promoting the idea of Tourism Moments used by Nebraska Tourism Commission in their advertisements include: “They’ll never outgrow the moment”, “Time doesn’t slow down. But there are certain moments. Unforgettable moments. That just stick”, “And there you are, in the moment.”. And as history has proven, this moment-focused campaign has resonated with travelers as Nebraska has seen a 6.09% increase in their website traffic, 25.6% increase in social media followers (increase of 13,805), and the highest lodging tax collection recorded in history at almost 5.5 million dollars in 2018. The idea of promising moments can also be seen across other industries as well, including the hotel industry (McAteer, 2018; Peninsula, 2018). Hence, the promise of moment-like experiences has already begun to be understood as a valuable lure to drive business. With a society increasingly attracted with packaging and sharing their lives on social media through the form of short ‘stories’ or ‘moments’, now is the time to better learn about what these moments entail. And perhaps most importantly, this study offers rich evidence that these ‘promised’ moments are not an illusion in travel and are indeed vividly experienced and recognized as distinct events by travelers.

The interview findings also revealed a very worrisome revelation. It was found that within the year that it occurred, participants rarely or never recalled the experience of their Tourism Moment. In other words, despite it being one of the best experiences of the trip, people seem to never have an opportunity to remember it again. Accordingly, this challenges destination marketers to address this problem directly. The present findings offer at least one possible solution. It was found that having a physical memory cue present inside one’s home helps to keep the memories of past travel experience active for one’s memory system. Examples of physical memory cues used by interview participants included candle votives, decorative magnets, and cultural paintings. In particular, it seems that there stands a higher chance that travelers will possess these memory cues if they offer an aesthetic value. That is, it seems that participants were not just featuring these artifacts for memory preservation, but rather for their decorative appeal. Yet, it was apparent of the indirect influence these aesthetic artifacts had on improving the recallability of tourism experiences. Hence, it is advised that DMOs seek to

develop or improve their destination's art scene to entice travelers to bring back appealing mementos worthy of serving as home décor rather than just tacky souvenirs that become lost in the back of a drawer. The idea is to create opportunities for spontaneous recollection experiences of Tourism Moments well after the trip. And as research indicates, improving the recallability of past travel experiences bodes well for destinations as the memory of past trips offers utility in the present and familiarity which may positively affect people's desire to revisit that destination again (Barnes, Mattsson, & Sørensen, 2016; Elster & Loewenstein, 1992; Kim, Lehto, & Kandampully, 2019; Yan & Halpenny, 2019).

This study also produced insight on the emergence of two very different groups of travelers regarding their consumption behavior and beliefs on memory. Regarding the nature of consumption, Group A is strongly inclined to video-record or photograph their best travel moments every time they arise, whereas travelers in Group B consciously choose to not use their cameras and desire to only observe/participate in the moment. Almost all of the 23 interview participants could be clearly categorized into one group or the other, suggesting most travelers align with only one of these two groups. Hence, it is of upmost importance to consider there exists two fundamentally different travelers in how they choose to consume a destination's best Tourism Moments. Should destinations facilitate Group A's desire to document every Tourism Moment, or encourage mindfulness/attentiveness during Tourism Moments as wished by Group B? As it stands, tourism destinations across the world seem divided in which consumption behavior to support. On one end, there are destinations which have developed tactics such as creating WiFi hotspots or hashtag signs to encourage travelers to take more pictures/videos at a destination's popular sights (Gonzalo, 2014; Penn, 2017, San Francisco WiFi, n.d.). On the other end, other destinations have recognized the growing trend of mindfulness and instead chosen to encourage their visitors to be more attentive during their best moments. One example includes an art museum in Amsterdam who created a massive campaign which encourages travelers to draw the art they observe rather than just document it, with the hope being that this facilitates a deeper connection with the experience (Dunne, 2015). There then exists inconsistencies from destinations in which consumption behavior to facilitate and encourage. With the identification of these two very different traveler groups in this study, there is the possibility that destinations may be alienating one of these two groups with their chosen strategy. Hence, destinations are encouraged to better understand their visitors' consumption preferences before determining

which approaches to employ. With travelers aligning strongly with one of the two travel groups, it may be advised that destinations take a neutral approach in encouraging certain consumption behavior for the time being until further insight about these groups is learned.

These two traveler groups are seen to also differ on their beliefs on the memory preservation of their travel experiences. Group A (i.e. documenting group) believes that the only way to preserve the memory of their travel experiences is to take a video or picture of the experience. That is, they believe the memory of any travel experience that is not documented will be effectively gone forever. Group B, on the other hand, have a sort of blind faith in their own memory and believe Tourism Moments will remain in their long-term memory without the aid of a picture or video. This divide in how travelers believe they can remember their past travel experience memories is made particularly concerning considering the low recall issue previously discussed. How do destinations determine how to improve the recallability of travel experiences when there exist two very different traveler beliefs on how to best preserve travel memories? As a starting point, destinations are encouraged to recognize that these unique beliefs may dictate how travelers believe they will recall past travel experiences. With more insight about these two traveler groups, and their views on memory preservation, destinations may be able to create separate strategies for improving the recall rate of travel experiences tailored specifically for each group. For instance, Group A may be encouraged to reflect back on the pictures and videos they've taken from past trips, while Group B may require a more reflective exercise that serves to naturally cue up past memories.

### **3.7 Limitations and Future Research**

It is important to reveal the limitations associated with this research. First, the specific convenience sampling and recruitment approach perhaps attracted a specific type of traveler. The recruitment flyer specifically asked for participants to share their “most memorable and special moments” from a past trip. In that regard, it can be concluded that only participants who already possessed a Tourism Moment to share were involved with the study. This perhaps could explain why most participants were able to easily identify a Tourism Moment to discuss when prompted during the interview. It would be interesting to learn about the Tourism Moments of less ‘prepared’ participants. Similarly, it was also apparent that many of the participants held a deep passion for travel. This surfaced through the face-to-face conversations as many expressed how

travel was a big part of their lives. It would then be needed for future research to recruit less frequently traveled participants to learn whether the nature of Tourism Moments would be any different for those who travel less. Another limitation that needs to be disclosed is the use of a Constructivist Grounded Theory analysis. Central to this approach is that the researcher along with the participants construct and create the insight that produces a study's findings (Charmaz, 2014). In that sense, there is an inherent researcher bias that is baked into the study's findings, and so, the generalizability of the findings are always limited and confined. Despite efforts taken to bring any and all relevant internal biases to the surface via memoing throughout all stages of the methodology, it is naïve to conclude the findings produced are free from subjectivity. Another limitation regards the identification of the four types of Tourism Moments. The range of Tourism Moment types produced are a product of the small sample size of 18 participants. Perhaps a bigger sample size, or even a different set of participants would have resulted in a slightly different typology than what emerged. A natural next step to validate the four types of Tourism Moments would be to conduct a quantitative study in which the emotions and cognitive aspects of each type of moment are measured so that an exploratory factor analysis may be conducted to measure the distinctiveness for the experience of each moment type. An example study of the latter was conducted by Anaya, Miao, Mattila, and Almanza (2016) in which three types of 'consumer envy' experiences were distinguished based on their emotional and cognitive appraisals.

Finally, there are distinct limitations regarding the element of memory as was conceptualized and operationalized in this study. Regarding the degree of reliving, it is important to again stress that the survey results of this study are not meant to be generalizable. Although the survey results found Tourism Moments to be highly vivid memories, this was based on a very small sample size of only 18 participants. Similarly, to truly conclude that Tourism Moments are some of the most vividly relived travel memories, the results needed to be compared against experiences not qualified as Tourism Moments. In other words, this would have required measuring the vividness of participant's other experiences on the trip to acquire a reference point. In addition, the low recall rate found in this study is again only anecdotal in nature. Accordingly, it is recommended that future research is conducted to attempt a more objective approach in understanding the memorability of Tourism Moments. At the minimum, this would involve a quantitative study in which participant's are asked to identify two

experiences that will be assessed: 1) a short experience that resembles a Tourism Moment; 2) a short experience that is non-significant. Thereafter, both the reliving vividness and recall frequency of both experiences would be measured to get a better grasp on how well Tourism Moments are remembered.

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## **CHAPTER 4: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF SMARTPHONE-ENABLED DOCUMENTATION ON THE CONSUMPTION AND MEMORABILITY OF TOURISM MOMENTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The smartphone is now well understood as one of the most influential pieces of technology that has emerged from within the last decade. One of the areas of the travel experience most impacted is the ability to document. The act of documenting has always been closely tied to the travel experience; however, the introduction of the smartphone has only amplified its presence and impact. The smartphone allows for quick access to a high quality camera capable of storing seemingly endless amounts of photos and videos, while also being internet-connected to share instantly. These key affordances have resulted in travelers taking more pictures and videos during their travel experiences than ever before (Richter, 2017). Moreover, travelers may also be more conscientious than ever of ensuring their documenting efforts result in high quality imagery (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas (2016). It can thus be concluded that there has been an increase in both the quantity and quality of the photos/videos produced by travelers worldwide. And therefore, the act of documentation via a smartphone requires a closer examination in tourism research.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of scholarly attention on the specific impacts of smartphone documentation in tourism. While there exists an extensive log of research on documentation over the span of tourism research, much of the most cited work predates the emergence of the smartphone (Crang, 1997; Markwell, 1997; Jenkins, 2003; Larsen, 2005). Of the work conducted post-inception, conceptual research papers dominate this category (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016a; Larsen, 2014; Li, Sharpley, & Gammon, 2019). A few notable exemptions exist (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas 2016; Lyu, 2016), however even these do not explicitly focus on the act documenting via a smartphone. In addition, there has yet to be a definitive acknowledgement by the tourism research community that the act of documenting a travel experience represents an inherently different form of consuming an experience than just the act of observing. As it stands, researchers may either stand on one of two possible positions as it regards the act of documenting – some view documentation as an enhancer of experiences (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010) whereas others view it as a disruptor (Sontag, 2002). Recently, Dinhopl and Gretzel (2016a) proposed that videography during a travel experience requires a

different cognitive mindset than both photography or observation. With the increasing use of smartphones for documenting (Richter, 2017), there is a vital need for a study that finally empirically examines how the act of documenting inherently affects how a traveler consumes an experience, and the subsequent implications of this effect. With the smartphone having an increasingly strong cognitive pull over people's behavior (Ward, Duke, Gneezy, & Box, 2017), now is a time to explore this topic.

One aspect that stands to be the most affected by smartphone documentation is the memory of travel experiences. Given the understood relationship between how a person consumes an experience and their subsequent memory of the experience (Craik & Lockhart, 1972), choosing to document a travel experience may prove consequential from a memory standpoint. However, there has yet to be a study that empirically examines the impact of documenting (in any form) on how travelers remember their experiences. Moreover, the topic of memory within the tourism research literature is rather limited in its scope. Despite memories being of high importance as it regards to travel, most research has chosen to subscribe to a similar pathway of studying the topic of 'memorable tourism experiences' (or 'MTE') (e.g., Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Lee, 2015; Sthapit, 2017). This line of research has received criticism of late for being overly focused on the identification of experiential dimensions, and for possibly having little to do with memory at all by alluding more to a highly enriching experience (Jorgenson, et al., 2019). MTE research essentially proposes that any given travel experience has a chance of being 'memorable' if it features any one of several experiential dimensions (e.g., novelty). Important to note however, MTE research rarely, if ever, actually measures participants' memories for the experiences they deem to be highly memorable. And so, there is a dire need for a fresh approach in memory research in tourism. Specifically, a study that seeks to empirically and directly test what affects how well a traveler truly remembers a past travel experience. In doing so, it will help overcome the limitations of MTE research which has been the primary source for memory research in tourism within the last decade, and in turn, help partly explore what truly determines how well a traveler remembers their experiences.

When referencing the literature beyond tourism research regarding the possible impacts on memory of smartphone documentation, there is still much more work to be done. Essentially, there exists contradicting evidence that has shown documenting to be both an impairment to and enhancer of memory. Henkel (2014) conducted a two-part experiment which found participants

who documented during an experience remembered far fewer details of that experience from memory. Additionally, subsequent research has backed up this initial evidence (Barasch, Diehl, & Zauberman, 2014; Soares & Storm, 2018). However, alternative evidence has found there to be no impairment effect of documentation, concluding those who document do not remember any less or more than those who do not document (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017). It thus remains a mystery as to what direction the effect of documentation will have on how travelers will remember what they document.

The focus of this study will not just be on the memory of travel experiences, but specifically on the memory of Tourism Moments as researched in part one of this dissertation. A Tourism Moment was defined as a fleeting yet particularly striking experience that only lasts for a few seconds to minutes. Travelers do not just document any travel experience, but the best experiences within their trips as was found in study one. It is these short brief seconds to minutes of experience that come to become the most significant and memorable from a past trip, and what this paper refers to as Tourism Moments. As was also found in study one, many travelers either choose to document these Tourism Moments, or instead, only observe them occur and not document. As such, this study seeks to follow up and examine specifically the impact of documentation on Tourism Moments because of their distinct characteristic and importance to travelers.

Travelers document the majority of their trip with a smartphone, and yet little is understood as to the ramifications of this seemingly ubiquitous act in travel. At the core of this research is the assumption that the nature of how a traveler lives through an experience is fundamentally different when they choose to document it rather than just observe it. And it is because of this distinction that should impact how a traveler later remembers that experience. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to examine if the consumption and subsequent memory of a travel moment differs between those travelers who document (i.e. video-record) and those who do not document but simply observe it. The findings of this study will carry both theoretical and practical implications. For theory, this will help advance memory research in tourism by moving beyond the MTE standard, and also, by directly examining the impacts of one of the most prevalent practices in travel. The findings will also be relevant for destinations as travelers post-trip memories of their experiences will determine their return intention and likelihood to promote the destination to others. Destinations will learn just how vulnerable their travelers'

memories are, and what ‘form’ of consumption (documentation or observation) is more beneficial for memory-purposes.

## **4.2 Literature Review**

### **4.2.1 The Stages of Memory**

Besides a few notable exceptions (e.g. Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2016; Stylianou-Lambert, 2012), surprisingly little research has been conducted on deeply exploring the interplay between documentation and tourism experience. The latter is even more surprising considering the increasing ease of documentation afforded by smartphones in recent years. Certainly, one area of tourism research that is virtually non-existent pertains to the study of how documenting tourism experiences impacts the subsequent memorability of those experiences. As will be detailed in the following sections, insight from other fields (e.g. cognitive psychology) offer divergent evidence regarding why and how smartphone-based documentation impacts the memorability of Tourism Moments. Psychology research has learned a great deal about how the human memory system works. As such, to follow is a brief explanation of how the memories come to be formed, retained, and retrieved. Understanding this helps showcase how smartphone documentation may come to impact the memory of Tourism Moments.

The conceptual framework in Figure 6 illustrates the traditional three-stage memory framework as recently synthesized by Tung, Lin, Qiu Zhang, & Zhao (2016). This memory framework represents theories from some of the most established literature in psychology (e.g. Baddeley, 1986). In this study, the framework will serve as the underlying foundation explaining how documentation of Tourism Moments is related to the memorability of Tourism Moments. Essentially, the framework depicts memory as a process in which the successful retainment of an experience into long-term memory stems from three separate stages. In the encoding stage, I posit that documentation can influence the encoding of the moment as a memory. Much of the proceeding discussion will focus on this link between documentation and the in-moment consumption. In the consolidation stage, sharing of documented moments on social media is positioned to influence the post-encoding memory processes by which they are relayed into long-term memory. Finally, the prior impacts of documentation on encoding and consolidation are then argued to predict how moments are retrieved from long-term memory. This general

sequence stems from various long-established memory process models such as Atkinson-Shiffrin model (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968), Broadbent’s Filter Model (Broadbent, 1958), and most recently, the Baddeley Working Memory Model (Baddeley, 2000). Each ‘stage’ of the memory process will be described next.

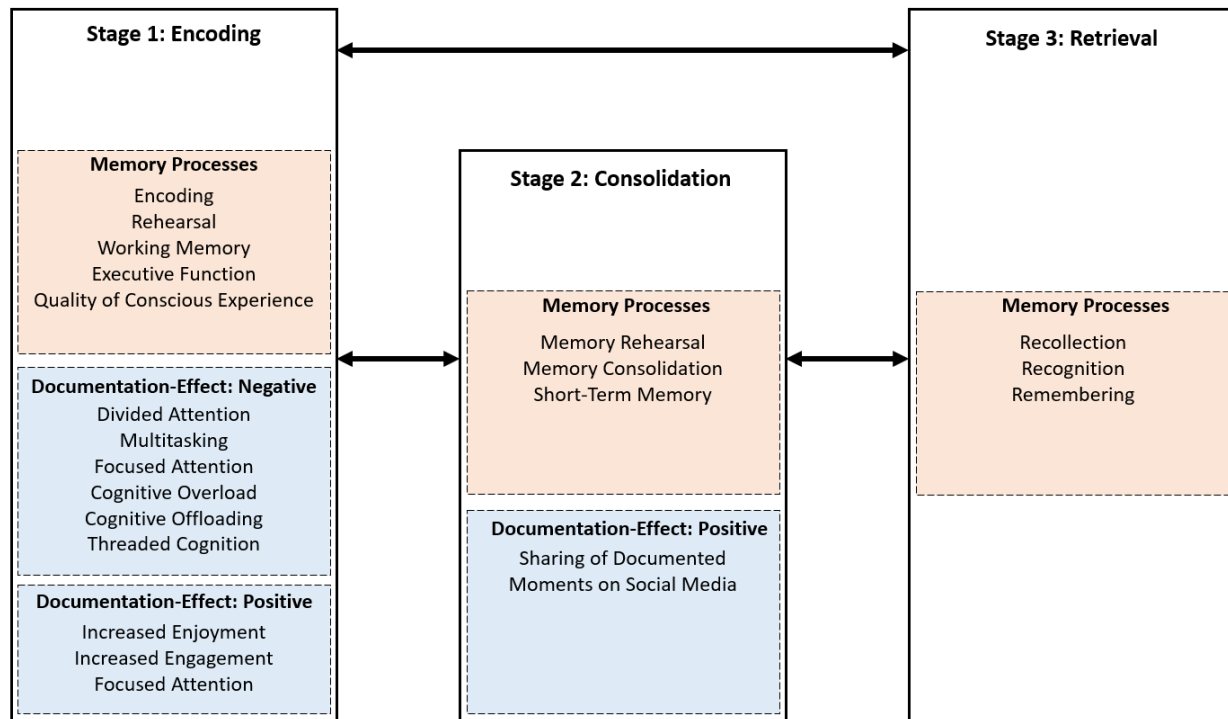


Figure 6. Three-Stage Memory Framework

#### 4.2.1.1 Encoding

The birth of any memory begins with encoding which constitutes how information from our present environment is being received and initially processed. Encoding is facilitated through the sensory memory system whose sole responsibility is to sort through only sensory information that is relevant (Winkler & Cowan, 2005). This means much of what we encounter is filtered out and not even processed. Three key types of sensory information are collected. Acoustic encoding facilitates information related to sound and spoken words, visual encoding captures imagery in one’s present environment, and tactile encoding receives input for the sense of touch (Cowan, 1998). While all three aspects of sensory are pivotal, research has showcased strong evidence that visual encoding and information stored in the iconic memory is perhaps the best for memory

retrieval (Brewer, 1988; Conway & Fthenaki, 2000; Darwin, Turvey, & Crowder, 1972; Greenberg, Eacott, Brechin, & Rubin, 2005). Further, encoding is known to be a product of both perception and attention. Craik and Lockhart (1972) argued for a differentiation in the level of processing involved in encoding which determines the sustainability of any given stimulus. Specifically, perception is akin to sensory memory such that the brain is constantly collecting a large amount of stimuli in our environment, even for that which is subconscious to us. Whereas, attention in encoding represents a deeper level of processing in which we attend to and make sense of what the brain is perceiving through the senses. While this is overly simplified, a successful encoding process is one that results in the creation of a memory trace. In neuroscience terms, a memory trace or engram is when there is a neurological change in the brain after encoding has occurred (Thompson, 1976; Tonegawa, Pignatelli, Roy, & Ryan, 2015). Of most relevance to this study is how the ‘quality’ of encoding determines how well this memory trace is initially engrained. If encoding is a process, then the deeper or more involved the processing of an experience, then the higher chance that the memory will be retained (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). As such, much research has forwarded evidence for the encoding-diminishing effects of inattentiveness or distractions (Mack, Erol, Clarke, & Bert, 2016). At this encoding stage, initially processed stimuli is very vulnerable and elusive even when it is retained in what is referred to as the working memory. The working memory describes one of the three major components of memory system (i.e., working memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory). In essence, all stimuli that is being encoded ‘remains’ in the working memory until processes which occur in the next stage occur (i.e., consolidation). At this initial encoding stage, several factors can positively influence the strength of encoding, a few examples include: distinctiveness (Hunt, 2003), strong emotions (Murty, Ritchey, Adcock, & LaBar, 2010), personal meaningfulness (Westmacott & Moscovitch, 2003), depth of cognitive processing (Craik & Lockhart, 1972), and associations (Hunt & McDaniel, 1993). In sum, what happens initially at encoding establishes whether or not a Tourism Moment will stand a chance at being recollected in the future.

#### ***4.2.1.2 Consolidation***

The next phase responsible for the successful long-term retainment of a Tourism Moment memory is consolidation. Consolidation involves a further solidification of the initial memory trace created during encoding. While an initial connection of neurons are sparked during coding, it is important for these set of neuron connections to remain intact and intertwined again in the future (Lynch, 2004) – and this is where consolidation comes in. Within the education context, psychologists refer to a retention interval as the crucial and vulnerable timeframe that determines the likelihood of recollection (Toppino & Cohen, 2009). From the ‘system’ perspective, the memory of an experience transfers from the ‘working memory’ over to the short-term memory, and in turn, the long-term memory thereafter. The exact time range of when this transfer occurs during consolidation varies (Fiebig & Lanser, 2014), but many psychologists consider the 24-hour period after the initial encoding to be critical (Litman & Davachi, 2008; Tse, et al., 2007). Essentially, the consolidation stage is key to successful retrieval because it is when unstable memories work to get programmed more permanently in the long-term memory. This process of consolidation can function very quickly. Years of research have showcased how any degree of rehearsal of information immediately following encoding can significantly improve memory recall (Rammsayer & Ulrich, 2011; Woodward, Bjork, & Jongeward, 1973). This means that the second to minutes immediately following a Tourism Moment are very important to ensuring the long-term memorability of that experience. To be clear, the consolidation stage involves two key sub-phases of memory rehearsal and memory consolidation. While this will be elaborated in more detail later, memory rehearsal is related to keeping memories active in the immediate working memory whereas memory consolidation refers to processes closer to transitioning a more solidified memory into long-term memory (Craig & Watkins, 1973; Drexler & Wolf, 2017). Much like encoding, the quality of consolidation is directly tied to the future memorability of an experience. For instance, sleep is understood to play a big role in the consolidation of experiences from the past day such that a lack of sleep can actually damage the stabilization process for memories (Stickgold, 2005). There are deep neurological mechanisms at play during sleep specifically, and consolidation in general, which help to solidify the memory. Ultimately, consolidation is a very vulnerable stage in which a prospective memory works an uphill battle to combat multiple types of interferences which may deteriorate the consolidation process (Dewar, Garcia, Cowan, & Sala, 2009). The successful result of consolidation ultimately



consists of the transfer of the memory into the long-term memory system where thereafter, the memory maintains a theoretical permanence.

#### ***4.2.1.3 Retrieval***

Retrieval represents the third and final stage of the memory system. It regards how memories stored in the long-term memory come to be recollected and remembered. Given this research is dealing with the memories for experiences specifically, retrieval enters the jurisdiction of the autobiographical memory system. This regards a distinction between the experience of remembering semantic information such as that involved with remembering historical facts for an exam and experiential information for events in one's personal past (Tulving, 1979, 1985, Baumgartner, Sujan, & Bettman, 1992; Rubin, 1996). That is, a tourist does not just have a memory of tourism experiences, tourists have an autobiographical memory of their tourism experiences. Another distinction that can be made is between autobiographical memories which are of our own experiences (i.e., autobiographical memories), or of others (i.e., episodic memories) (Conway, 2005). As it pertains to autobiographical memories, Conway and Pleydell-Pearce (2000) proposed that these memories come to be organized according to a 'knowledge base'. If autobiographical memories are memories for our personal past experiences, then they believed these memories are not just stored freely but are categorized. Specifically, their autobiographical memory model contains autobiographical memories that can be categorized at varying levels of specificity in a partonomic hierarchy structure in which memories are specified at discrete and interlinked levels. In short, memories of tourism experiences are retrieved from the autobiographical memory as episodic memories. Retrieval of an episodic memory however involves two very different paths. Tulving (1985) distinguished between the retrieval of an episodic memory as involving either auto-noetic consciousness or noetic consciousness. Auto-noetic consciousness describes the opportunity to mentally relive a past event in almost the same manner in which it occurred. Noetic consciousness is void of this reliving nature and represents only a conceptual remembrance of what occurred without episodic details of how it occurred. At least as it concerns the retrieval of tourism experience memories, a high-quality retrieval represents an ability for the rememberer to vividly step back in and live through the experience once more.

#### **4.2.2 The Possible Impacts of Smartphone Documentation on Tourism Moment Memories**

With a general understanding of how the memory system works, attention now moves to exploring what effects smartphone documentation may have on how a traveler remembers their Tourism Moment memories. This study proposes that the act of introducing a smartphone to document a Tourism Moment may inherently alter how that moment is experienced and later remembered. As previously discussed, the encoding stage plays a very important first role in dictating how well any given memory will be engrained into the long-term memory.

Accordingly, the act of documenting with a smartphone directly implicates the quality of encoding that occurs during a Tourism Moment. As will be detailed in the following sections, insight from various fields such as cognitive psychology and neuropsychology offer divergent evidence regarding why and how smartphone-based documentation impacts this quality of encoding, and in turn, the memorability of Tourism Moments. Currently, there lies evidence that documentation could either impair or improve how Tourism Moments are remembered. In either regard, both positions showcase that there are in-moment consumption effects of documentation that alters how the memory may be encoded.

##### ***4.2.2.1 Evidence for Documentation-Related Impairment of Tourism Moment Memories***

At the surface, and from a cognitive psychological perspective, documenting implies that the experience is being interrupted because it requires cognitive and attentional resources to execute the task (Henkel, 2014). Mindfulness principles would corroborate the latter in the sense that undocumented moments are experiences in which attention is more fully dedicated (Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006). From this position, documentation represents a potential impairment to the future memorability of moments. The following sub-sections provide a variety of evidence supporting the position that travelers who document a Tourism Moment may remember those moments less than those who do not document, but merely observe.

###### ***4.2.2.1.1 Divided Attention, Multitasking***

From a cognitive psychology perspective on divided attention and multitasking, the use of a smartphone to document a Tourism Moment represents a traveler who conducts two different tasks seemingly simultaneously: 1) the primary task of visually observing and interacting with

the moment; 2) the secondary functional task of appropriately capturing the moment via a smartphone device (Gardiner & Parkin, 1990). Research under the topics of divided attention and multitasking offer extensive insight regarding how the dual task of documenting a moment while also trying to observe the moment impairs the memory of it (Craig, Eftekhari, & Binns, 2018; Roda, 2011; Rothbart & Posner, 2015; Sahakyan & Malmberg, 2018). Divided attention is generally defined as the attempt to process more than one stimulus either simultaneously, or in rapid shifts between the stimuli (Chen & Yan, 2016). The most relevant version of multitasking to this study is media-multitasking, defined as “engaging in one medium along with other media or non-media activities (Zhang & Zhang, 2012, p. 1883). Considering both theories are conceptually similar in many ways, empirical evidence from research on both topics pertain to the same dual-task impairment of documentation.

Over 30 years of research has established that dividing attention in some form can impair memory substantially. Particularly, research has identified encoding specific memory impairments, confirming that the quality of attention dedicated to a stimulus dictates later memory (Baddeley, Lewis, Eldridge, & Thomson, 1984; Craig, Eftekhari & Binns, 2018; Gardiner & Parkin, 1990). Neuropsychology research corroborates this conclusion in identifying memory impairments due to divided attention as stemming from areas in the brain where memory encoding processes typically occur (Iidaka, Anderson, Kapur, Cabeza, & Craig, 2000; Oren, et al., 2016; Uncapher & Rugg, 2008). Other research has also shown that subjects with permanent damage to areas in the brain known to facilitate encoding of episodic memories are more adversely affected by divided attention – in other words, dividing attention during an experience directly impacts the encoding mechanisms responsible for developing a long-term memory (Mangels, Craig, Levine, Schwartz, & Stuss, 2002). Studies in other areas of psychology also conclude that working memory, a system largely responsible for transferring episodes into long-term episodic memories (e.g. Baddeley, 2000), is also highly susceptible to impairment effects during divided attention situations (Germano, Kinsella, Storey, Ong, & Ames, 2008; Makovski, Sussman, & Jiang, 2008).

Multitasking is closely aligned with divided attention such that it represents a person who attends to two or more different tasks (i.e. stimuli) within the same timeframe. Media-multitasking is a subset of multitasking as it focuses on the concurrent usage of media-related devices during non-media activities (Ralph, Thomson, Cheyne, & Smilek, 2014). Unsurprisingly,

multitasking comes at a cost to cognitive processing (Kemker, Stierwalt, LaPointe, & Heald, 2009; Uncapher, Thieu, & Wagner, 2016). Much of multitasking research has been conducted within the academic setting, with findings concluding that students who multitask during learning circumstances demonstrate lower memory recall of material (Bowman, Waite, & Levine, 2015; Chen & Yan, 2016; May & Elder, 2018). One study discovered that students during a lecture who were not distracted, as compared to students who were distracted via a multitasking condition, had significantly higher scores on a recall test (Kuznekoff & Titsworth, 2013). Similar to divided attention, multitasking overstrains working memory processes which are critical for transitioning initially encoded memories into long-term memory (Rothbart & Posner, 2015; Ziegler, Mishra, & Gazzaley, 2015)

Together, divided attention and multitasking research paint a picture where choosing to document a Tourism Moment indicates one cannot dedicate the same attentional and cognitive resources as the alternative: to simply observe the moment as it unfolds. Specifically, and from this perspective, documentation acts to divert attention away from the primary stimulus in the Tourism Moment, resulting in a poor quality of conscious attention, and in turn, a weaker remembrance overall (Gardiner & Parkin, 1990).

#### *4.2.2.1.2 Cognitive Overload, Cognitive Offloading*

Two theories grounded in cognitive psychology offer additional evidence in the position of documentation of Tourism Moments as resulting in memory impairment. Cognitive overload theory is one of the primary underlying explanations for why divided attention and multitasking is so damaging to memorability. Humans possess a limited capacity of attentional resources, which restrains the amount of incoming stimuli we can appropriately dedicate attention to (Sweller, 1994). An attempt to devote attention to two incoming tasks equally results in an overload to the attentional capacity, limiting cognitive performance as a result (Roda, 2011). Said differently, a cognitive overload situation equates to a shallow level of cognitive processing of incoming stimulus (Junco & Cotton, 2012). Consequently, overloading attentional capacity results in long-term memory impairments. This is manifested through impairing the working memory system, essentially restricting the quality of the experience encoded into long-term memory (Gruszka & Necka, 2017; Roda, 2011). Considering the human brain can only retain 3 to 5 chunks of information at a time (Cowan, 2010), travelers who choose to document their

experiences are perhaps straining this finite resource and in turn, their ability to grasp what is transpiring before them.

Along the same lines, cognitive offloading is the use of some external object (e.g. computer) to alternatively process some task or stimulus in lieu of actual internal cognitive processing, so as to minimize the cognitive demand (Risko & Gilbert, 2016). In the context of this study, that which is documented may be less deeply internalized to memory because one is relying on the camera to remember what happened. Cognitive offloading has seen increased attention in recent years, with one study finding that internet search platforms (e.g. Google) have led to people having lower rates of recall for information if they know they can simply ‘look it up’ (Sparrow, Liu, & Wegner, 2011). Along these same lines, Fawns (2013) forwarded the idea of a ‘blended memory’, asking “But to what extent does taking the photograph change the experience itself due to an assumption that we will use this footage in the future to help us remember the present?” (p. 7). Documenting a Tourism Moment then, implies that the traveler is cognitively processing the moment shallowly, instead depending on the smartphone camera to log the moment as a memory. A sort of false sense of security is experienced when the traveler has mentally determined that the moment at hand does not require their full attention for memory preservation. In a sense, a shift is made in which the attentional resources are moved away from the observation and consumption of the experience at hand to the act of documenting the experience. As a result of this cognitive shift, the traveler must exclusively rely on the availability of the photo or video to recollect and relive the memory of the experience documented (Fawns, 2013).

#### *4.2.2.1.3 Threaded Cognition*

Another distinct feature of documenting a moment while also trying to observe it is that both of these tasks require the same sensory input – visual sensory. Threaded Cognition Theory stipulates that an interference in cognitive processing surfaces when the same sensory modality is required to complete two or more tasks at roughly the same time (Salvucci & Taatgen, 2008). A bottleneck effect has been observed such that “if two tasks want to use the visual system at the same time, only one of them can proceed, and the other task will have to wait” (Borst, Taatgen, & van Rijn, 2010, p. 364). Alternatively, stimuli that requires two different sensory input (i.e. visual vs. auditory) does not produce interference effects. For instance, one study found that the

reaction times for a dual-task requiring both auditory inputs simultaneously was slower than a dual-task requiring the visual and auditory modalities (Salvucci & Taatgen, 2008). So long as the two tasks in a dual-task or multitasking circumstance makes use of the same sensory system, cognitive performance necessary for encoding experiences as memories will deteriorate.

Documenting a moment while also trying to observe the moment as it unfolds are two separate tasks that both require the same visual sensory modality. According to this theory, only one task can be cognitively process appropriately, and it can be argued that it is the primary task of observing the moment that is relegated. David (2017) argues that due to mobile technology, multitasking situations are becoming increasingly common, and points to Threaded Cognition Theory as pivotal for explaining the impairing or productive effects of multitasking with technology. As it stands, the threaded cognition research in a multitask setting has showcased that even simple dual tasks can have a significant negative impact on a person's psychological wellbeing (David, Kim, Brickman, Ran, & Curtis, 2015).

#### *4.2.2.1.4 Documentation-Specific Research Supporting Memory Impairment*

Many of the previously discussed theories proposing an impairing effect of documentation on memory have been utilized as guiding explanations in research directly examining this effect. Henkel (2014) drew from both divided attention and cognitive offloading in her research on the influence of documentation on memory. She posited that “photographing a scene may divide one’s attention, similar to when people multitask by using cell phones while driving or walking” (p. 397), and from a cognitive offloading standpoint, she noted “taking a photo could serve as a cue to dismiss and forget]” (p. 397). With these theories grounding her research, an experimental study was conducted, where it was found that participants who documented an experience had a significantly lower accuracy in remembering the details of the experience, as compared to participants who merely observed the experience unfold.

Similarly, Barasch, Diehl, and Zauberman (2014) hypothesized that documenting indicates the camera acts as a physical and mental barrier between the individual and the experience documented. Interestingly, their findings revealed that although participants subjectively felt they remembered experiences better when documenting (i.e. cognitive offloading effect), objective assessments of their memory proved they actually remembered fewer details of the experience. This effect was further exacerbated when the camera interface

was perceived to be more intrusive. Other studies have also found similar documentation-caused memory impairments on experiences, with even auditory/verbal information of an experience being less remembered when documenting (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017; Zauberman, Diehl, & Barasch, 2013). In a recent study, participants who documented an experience using an ephemeral application (e.g., Snapchat) only remembered half of the details for a simulated experience, as compared to participants who only observed the experience (Soares & Storm, 2018)

To summarize the position detailed in this section, documentation functions to disrupt natural cognitive and attentional processes involved with the consumption of an experience. In turn, this disruption leads to an impairment in how well those documented experiences are encoded as long-term memories. Thus, there is valid concern in the increasingly prevalent act of smartphone-enabled documentation privileging external artificial memory (i.e. photographs, videos), over internal biological memory (i.e. mind-based) (Fawns, 2013). And as a result, a conclusion pointing to damaging effects of memory for experiences that are documented with a smartphone.

#### ***4.2.2.2 Evidence for Documentation-Related Enhancement of Tourism Moment Memories***

In addition to the obvious advantage of having a physical record of the experience (e.g. photograph/video), the mere act of documentation on its own can be alternatively argued to improve memory for Tourism Moments. Despite documentation serving as a secondary task that must be completed along with taking in an experience, documentation may help in only further zeroing in on the moment itself (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017). That is, the secondary task of documenting does not interrupt the moment, it actually enhances the consumption of it. Certain tourism studies have alluded to the latter, portraying documentation as an embodied act (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016a; Stylianou-Lambert, 2012). The subsequent discussion will center around the arguments for documentation as an advantage for remembering Tourism Moments. As in the previous section, documentation is positioned to impact the consumption of moments, and in turn, the encoding of Tourism Moments as memories.

#### *4.2.2.2.1 Increased Enjoyment*

Documenting an experience can strengthen the memorability of that experience when it serves as an added source of enjoyment. Within the tourism context, documentation has been portrayed as a ‘performance’, indicating that the traveler can find enjoyment in both the experience being documented as well as the act of documenting itself (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016a). Unfortunately, no tourism-related research has explored this view further. In the domain of cognitive psychology however, one study posed the following question: “how does photo-taking affect people’s enjoyment of their experience?” (Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch, 2016, p. 120). Across 9 experiments, their study convincingly found that photo-taking increased the enjoyment of experiences when compared against subjects who did not photograph their respective experience. Specifically, photo-taking increased the enjoyment of a bus tour, dining experience, virtual safari tour, museum, and an arts-and-crafts project. Although they did not explicitly measure memory in this study, substantial evidence exists in the link between positive affect and memory (e.g. Cahill & McGaugh, 1995; Kensinger, 2009). As an exemplifier, the broaden-and-build theory helps explain one element of this link. Research within this area has showcased that experiencing positive affect broadens one’s cognitive processing of whatever experience is being consumed at that time (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010; Fredrickson, 2001). This broadened sense of cognitive processing is manifested in dedicating visual attention to a wider range of environmental stimuli, and to having a wider range of thoughts during the experience (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005; Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010). In turn, this broadening effect leads to more peripheral details of an experience being recorded, which is central to recollecting autobiographical memories (Gable & Harmon-jones, 2010; Talarico, Berntsen, & Rubin, 2009).

Yet again, how does one reconcile the overload effect for the multi-tasking perspective of smartphone documentation? Interestingly, research has found that multitasking involving a media device such as a smartphone increases the enjoyment of the overall experience (Hwang, Kim, Jeong, 2014; Chinchachokchai, Duff, & Sar, 2015). While there may be a cognitive overload effect still in play with multitasking, the added increase in enjoyment for these experiences may serve as a buffer or even overcome the impeding effects to cognitive processing of a documented moment. Moreover, the experimental study by Rubenking (2017) suggests that the impairing effects of multitasking are nullified if the primary task is emotional in nature. Given most Tourism Moments may be emotionally-oriented, the cognitively demanding nature



for the circumstance of documenting the experience may not impair memory as previously discussed. Instead, documenting a moment may make it more enjoyable, fueling the chances it will be better encoded as an episodic memory.

#### *4.2.2.2.2 Increased Engagement*

Documentation is believed to also immerse the documenter more into the experience being documented. Some within the tourism field credit documentation for turning otherwise passive observation-oriented consumption of experience into a performance where travelers become a part of the experience (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016b; Stylianou-Lambert, 2012). Empirical evidence supporting these propositions come again from cognitive psychology research. Early on, research findings provided initial support that documenting an experience helped heighten the sense of immersion in an experience, especially for relatively mundane experiences (Barasch, Diehl, & Zauberman, 2014; Zauberman, Diehl, & Barasch, 2013). Even in the research by Henkel (2014) on documentation as a memory impairment, it was revealed that documentation is more action-oriented than merely observing, which may actually benefit memorability. The study by Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch (2016) again provides the most direct and substantive support for this documentation-related memory benefit. The enjoyment effect on memory noted earlier was found to be mediated by engagement such that memory improved for experiences because documentation increased the feeling of engagement. In one of their many studies, documentation increased engagement levels in an experience by over 150%. These findings effectively demonstrate that documenting is a fundamentally more active and performative level of consumption than observation. As it regards to memory, the traveler who is more engaged in their Tourism Moment will more sharply encode that moment into long-term memory (Park & Hastak, 1994; Park, et al., 2014).

#### *4.2.2.2.3 Focused Attention*

In direct contrast to the points made about divided attention in the prior discussion, the alternative viewpoint posits that documenting an experience exemplifies that more focused and selective visual attention is being given. This perspective is summarized well by Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, and Zauberman (2017), “In order to decide what to photograph, people must search

for aspects of an experience that they may wish to capture. Consequently, volitional photo taking requires attention to visual aspects of an experience, which should improve memory for visual content” (p. 1057). By utilizing eye-tracking technology, it was revealed that people fixate longer (i.e. visual attention) on an object in an experience when documenting (Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch, 2016). Based on this theoretical grounding of increased focused attention, their recent experimental study forwarded evidence that documentation improves memory recognition of visual content of an experience (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017). In fact, this is one of the first studies to reveal that the mere act of documenting improves the memorability of that which is documented. Again, these researchers attribute the memory improvement to the increased focused attention afforded by photographing an experience. Interestingly, the prior study cited showcasing documentation as a memory impairment found that this impairment effect disappeared when photographing involved zooming in on a specified aspect of the experience (Henkel, 2014). Collectively then, documentation appears to facilitate attentional focus towards documenting a moment. In other words, Tourism Moments are dedicated a richer level of visual attention when they are documented, helping forge the moment as a memory during encoding.

#### **4.2.3 Sharing Documented Moments on Social Media**

Storytelling is a historically common practice during tourism experiences. Much has been discussed in the tourism literature about the role of post-trip storytelling in reproducing the lived experience through narrative means (Cary, 2004; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2008).

Documentation, in particular, is attributed to greatly facilitating such storytelling efforts by sharing tangible scenes to improve context (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016a). As it pertains to this research, a by-product of storytelling via shared documentation is that it aids in forging those experiences into memory (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Yu, Anaya, Miao, Lehto, & Wong, 2018; Zhong, Busser, & Baloglu, 2017). Referring to this notion specifically, Tung and Ritchie (2011) state, “Overall, it is in our view that storytelling acts to both consolidate and recover experiences from memory...” (p. 1373). It is important to highlight that storytelling in tourism studies has been discussed overwhelmingly from the perspective of the post-trip stage. Yet today, millions of tourism-related photos and videos are shared on social media while vacationers are still on their trip, and smartphones have directly fostered this reality (Choe, Kim, & Fesenmaier, 2016;

Morris, 2015; Vacationing the Social Media Way, 2018). Considering the majority of documented tourism experiences are shared very near to when the experience occurred, this presents a very unique opportunity related to memory processes. In essence, a traveler who shares a documented Tourism Moment on social media shortly after it occurs is engaging in memory rehearsal and consolidation, in turn more deeply engraining it as a long-term memory. Memory rehearsal and memory consolidation are two similar yet distinct processes in the memory system. In both regards, I position that the sharing of documented Tourism Moments on social media parallels memory rehearsal and consolidation when the sharing occurs shortly after the moment occurred. Memory rehearsal is the act of sustaining a recently encountered object or experience in working memory (Craik & Watkins, 1973). Intuitively, and as strongly supported by experimental studies, when one is not allowed to perform memory rehearsal for a new stimulus, the subsequent long-term memorability of it fades substantially (Baddeley, 1986; Cowan & AuBuchon, 2008). This is especially pertinent to episodic memories such as memories of Tourism Moments where “through rehearsal, or lack of it, and associated inhibition, most Ems (episodic memories) may be lost within a short period” (Conway, 2001, p. 1381). Of the two types of memory rehearsal (elaborative and maintenance) elaborative rehearsal represents an effort to link one’s new experience with past or additionally new encounters and is especially helpful in predicting future memorability. In fact, elaborative rehearsal distinctly fosters the act of remembering a previous experience, while maintenance rehearsal only affects the ability to know that a past experience occurred (Gardiner, Gawlik, & Richardson-Klavehn, 1994). Whereas memory rehearsal pertains to holding new experiences in working memory, memory consolidation regards a more upstream process related to stabilizing the initially encoded experience into long-term memory (Drexler & Wolf, 2017). Synaptic consolidation specifically occurs within the first few hours after exposure to the experience, and explicitly represents the transfer of recently lived experiences into long-term memory storage such as autobiographical memory (Drexler & Wolf, 2017). Consolidation effectively hardens the recently formed memory such that the chances of subsequent memory decay significantly reduce after this consolidation stage (Dudai, 2004). Thus, any factor that comes into play within hours after initial encoding of a stimulus can facilitate memory consolidation.

Collectively, both memory rehearsal and memory consolidation are established memory processes backed by decades of empirical research confirming their importance in dictating how well an object or experience is recollected from memory. Accordingly, there is strong inclination that the sharing of documented Tourism Moments on social media is related to memory rehearsal and consolidation in several ways. Regarding memory rehearsal, much like verbally repeating a span of digits or letters after exposure (e.g. Baddeley, Thomson, & Buchanan, 1975; Craik & Watkins, 1973), the act of posting a documented Tourism Moment on social media serves a similar function. Sharing of documented experiences is a carefully thought-out process with travelers typically taking great care in deciding how to best portray their experience via the captions associated with the shared image or video (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2015; Wang & Alasuutari, 2017). In posting the documented moment, they are effectively engaging in storytelling which allows another opportunity to relive what just transpired in the moment, shortly after it occurred (Robinson, 2014). Thus, it is through this act of posting the shared moment which presents a unique opportunity for travelers to rehearse their moment near to when it occurred, in turn more deeply encoding the experience into memory. Even at a more surface level, the mere interaction with the image or photo when posting on social media represents a visual rehearsal through immediately re-exposing them to the tangible scene of the moment (Watkins, Peynircioglu, & Brems, 1984).

In a similar fashion, the sharing of documented Tourism Moments is related memory consolidation. Whereas memory rehearsal pertains to how shared documents help relive the moment shortly after it occurs (i.e. within minutes), memory consolidation comes into play when travelers revisit their shared documented moments within hours after the moment occurred. In other words, it reinforces the initial memory trace aided by the prior memory rehearsal of merely posting the documented moment. It is quite rare for a traveler to simply share a documented moment on their social media page during a trip and not revisit that same post until after the trip is over. Instead, it is more likely that travelers will review their shared photograph or video the hours following the initial post to see if they have received any response from their social media audience (i.e. likes or comments), or simply to reexperience the moment again through the shared post. In fact, in a recent qualitative study on shared tourism experiences, (Lo & McKercher, 2015) revealed that "... [audience reaction will dictate whether images remain or are deleted. Pictures were removed if the participants did not gain the type of response desired...] (p.

113). This implies travelers keep a close pulse on their recently shared travel experiences on social media. There is a social psychology operating such that people are subconsciously pulled back to their recently shared content to determine if it received a positive reception from their social media audience (Seiter, 2016). It is likely that these ‘check-ins’ on recently shared documented moments directly facilitate memory consolidation by further expediting the consolidation process while also strengthening the memory trace as well (Drexler & Wolf, 2017). Every time a traveler uses their smartphone to check back on their shared Tourism Moment represents an opportunity for that moment to be relived and thus, further engrained into long-term memory.

#### **4.2.4 Literature Review Summary & Hypotheses**

This research is largely motivated by the continually growing and varied impacts of the smartphone on the travel experience. Despite travelers taking more pictures/videos than ever before (Richter, 2017) and smartphone camera technology improving dramatically each year, tourism research has yet to appropriately explore how this growing phenomenon impacts the travel experience. Accordingly, there is a need to begin understanding how the documentation of travel experiences is inherently affecting the traveler and their experience. To address this gap, this study chose to focus on how smartphone documentation may influence the memories of temporally short travel experiences. In reviewing the literature on memory research in tourism in Chapter 2, another blatant limitation was identified. Within at least the last decade, the study of tourism experience memories has almost exclusively been founded within the framework of the ‘Memorable Tourism Experience’ perspective. While certainly informative, it was argued that a new approach was needed which centered on more explicitly and directly operationalizing the memorability of tourism experiences. In one aspect, this means adopting theories and principles from the field of psychology to directly test how smartphone documentation may come to impact how Tourism Moments are remembered.

Accordingly, much focus of this literature review was on exploring a possible link between smartphone documentation and traveler’s memories of their Tourism Moments. First, the memory system was reviewed to showcase the process in which experiences come to be engrained as permanent memories. Of particular emphasis were the stages of encoding and consolidation as being crucial in this regard. During the encoding stage, the quality of

consumption was seen to be instrumental in the initial creation of the memory trace whereas the consolidation stage determined whether the initial memory trace would become solidified into the long-term memory. With an understanding of the three-stage memory system, evidence was collected regarding what role, if any, smartphone documentation may have on Tourism Moment memories. Interestingly, divergent evidence was shown to exist such that smartphone documentation may possibly function as either an impairment or enhancement to the solidification of a Tourism Moment into the long-term memory. Inconsistent and even contradictory findings suggest there requires further research on how the picture-taking or video-taking of a tourism experience may affect how that very experience is later remembered. For instance, documenting a Tourism Moment is believed to increase the enjoyment in the experience, and in turn, benefiting its memorability (e.g., Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch, 2016) – yet, other research indicates that while more enjoyable, documenting overloads a traveler’s cognitive capacity which negatively impacts the proper encoding of the documented moment into memory (Roda, 2011). The first set of hypotheses is interested in first testing if the nature of consumption differs when an experience is documented. For instance, is there a difference in how engaged a traveler is with an experience when they document versus when they do not? The second series of hypotheses zeroes on testing if documented Tourism Moments are remembered differently. Several memory metrics adopted from the field of cognitive psychology are utilized to explore any possible nuances in how a documented Tourism Moment memory is distinct. The third set of hypotheses serves as a follow-up to the two prior set of hypotheses. If there are indeed significant findings from any of these initial series of hypotheses, then interest moves to specifically identifying the reasons for the differences found. Finally, the last hypotheses are interested in testing if documented Tourism Moments which are shared also have an effect on how they are remembered. In summary, the complete set of hypotheses are as follows:

**H1: There will be a difference in how Tourism Moments are consumed between Tourism Moments that are documented compared to those that are just observed**

- **H1a:** There will be a difference in the *visual attention* dedicated to a Tourism Moment between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed
- **H1b:** There will be a difference in the *enjoyment* of a Tourism Moment between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed

- **H1c:** There will be a difference in the *engagement* dedicated to a Tourism Moment between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed

**H2: There will be a difference in how Tourism Moments are remembered between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed**

- **H2a:** There will be a difference in the *recallability* of Tourism Moments between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed
- **H2b:** There will be a difference in the *ease of recall* of Tourism Moments between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed
- **H2c:** There will be a difference in the *accuracy* of Tourism Moments between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed
- **H2d:** There will be a difference in the *vividness* in which Tourism Moments are relived between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed
- **H2e:** There will be a difference in the *confidence* for the memory of Tourism Moments between those that are documented compared to those that are just observed

**H3: A traveler's consumption experience of their Tourism Moment will predict how they will remember the experience**

- **H3a:** A traveler's *visual attention* dedicated to the Tourism Moment will predict how they will remember the experience
- **H3b:** A traveler's *engagement* with their Tourism Moment will predict how they will remember the experience
- **H3c:** A traveler's *enjoyment* of their Tourism Moment will predict how they will remember the experience

**H4: There will be a difference in how Tourism Moments are remembered between Tourism Moments that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media**

- **H4a:** There will be a difference in the *recallability* of Tourism Moments between those that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media

- **H4b:** There will be a difference in the *ease of recall* of Tourism Moments between those that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media
- **H4c:** There will be a difference in the *accuracy* of Tourism Moments between those that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media
- **H4d:** There will be a difference in the *reliving vividness* (autobiographical recollection) of Tourism Moments between those that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media
- **H4e:** There will be a difference in the *confidence* in the memory of Tourism Moments between those that are shared on social media compared to those that are not shared on social media

## 4.3 Methodology

### 4.3.1 Experimental Design

The overall purpose of this study is to examine if there are differences in how travelers remember experiences they document with their smartphone. To address this, it was determined that an experimental approach would be the best choice. Specifically, a true randomized experiment which tested the main effect of the following two experimental conditions was conducted: 1) consumption condition: documentation vs. observation); 2) sharing condition: sharing vs. no sharing. This design treated the consumption condition as a within-subject factor and the sharing condition as a between-subjects factor. The use of a virtual reality experience was utilized to conduct the experiment. The virtual reality experience as a proxy for the travel experience is growing in acceptance in the tourism literature (Yung & Khoo-Lattimore, 2019). Accordingly, virtual reality was deemed as appropriate for this research.

### 4.3.2 Stimuli

The experiment involved participants living through a virtual reality vacation. Specifically, participants wore an Oculus Go virtual reality headset and experienced a continuous 8-minute virtual reality experience. Within this virtual reality experience, a scenario was presented to each participant instructing them to imagine they are on a vacation to Seattle, WA, and that the virtual



reality scenes they are to encounter are actual travel experiences they live through. That is, they are to imagine as if they are actually experiencing the scenery in the virtual reality experience in the present on this vacation to Seattle. The virtual reality content used within each 8-minute experience included a series of scenario descriptions, still virtual reality images, and virtual reality video clips. All virtual reality content used was in the format of 180 degree stereoscopic (i.e., 3-dimensional) which is believed to allow for a more vivid and realistic virtual reality experience (Ling, Brinkman, Nefs, Qu, & Heynderickx, 2012). The scenery captured featured popular tourist attractions and sights from around the Seattle, Washington metropolitan area. The virtual reality content was filmed by the researcher using a 3D virtual reality camera called the Vuze XR 3D 5.7K camera.

Once again, the flow of the virtual reality experience featured scenario descriptions/instructions, virtual reality images, and two short virtual reality video clips. As will be discussed in greater detail shortly, the two video clips embedded within each virtual reality experience represented the main experimental stimuli, whereas the still images served to facilitate the experimental vacation scenario. Both the virtual reality images and video clips were filmed from the first-person perspective to enhance the realism of the virtual vacation. The images used included scenery of Seattle attractions and sights such as the Space Needle, Pike Place ‘fish toss’, and a popular city viewpoint. The two video clips in each virtual reality experience were meant to represent two individual Tourism Moments that the participant encountered on their virtual vacation. Each video clip was one minute in length, the first video clip (i.e., Tourism Moment) occurred near the beginning of the virtual reality vacation, and the second video clip towards the end. In order to diversify the types of scenes used for the experiment, four different video clips were created. The first set of video clips featured a view of the Snoqualmie Falls near Seattle, and the second clip placed the participant on a tour ferry and showcased a view of the Seattle skyline in the background. The second set of video clips featured the participant on a downtown high-rise hotel balcony overlooking the streets and Puget Sound nearby, and the second clip placed the participant in front of the famous ‘Troll’ landmark in Seattle. The hope was that the types of Tourism Moments used were varied enough that the results were not restricted to only one type of setting/scenery. Figure 7 presents examples of the scenario scripts which guided the participant within the virtual reality experience, and figure 8 is an example of one of the still images of Seattle scenery used.

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this study.  
For the next five minutes you will go through a 'virtual' tourism experience.  
Specifically, you will be presented with a vacation scenario.  
Please imagine yourself as experiencing the circumstances described as best as possible.

Now, imagine that you are about to go on a two-day trip to Seattle as a vacation  
with your significant other (e.g. spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend).



First, you start your day off  
at the popular Pike's Place Market

Figure 7. Examples of the Experiment Scenario Script



Figure 8. Example of the Virtual Reality Experience

### **4.3.3 Assignment of Experimental Conditions**

There are two main experimental conditions in this study each featuring two levels: 1) consumption: documentation and observation; 2) sharing: sharing and no sharing. The consumption condition was chosen to be a within-subject effect and the sharing condition to be a between-subjects effect. Participants in the within-subject consumption condition were subjected to both levels of the consumption condition. As detailed earlier, the two video clips were meant to represent two Tourism Moments that participants experienced during their virtual vacation to Seattle. As such, the consumption condition was primed via these two Tourism Moments. Essentially, one of their Tourism Moments would be documented with a smartphone while the other was not. For the Tourism Moment assigned to the documentation treatment, participants saw from the first-person perspective an arm video recording the present experience before them with a smartphone as shown in figure 9 below. Participants were instructed to focus their sight almost exclusively on the smartphone screen as if they were recording the video themselves in reality. This was meant to simulate the act of video recording an experience with a smartphone. Alternatively, in the Tourism Moment assigned to the observation treatment, participants were instructed to simply observe the experience before them as mindfully as possible with no smartphone obstructing their view as was done in the documentation treatment. Further, these two levels of the within-subject condition were counterbalanced within each set of the two video clips (i.e., Tourism Moments). This was done in order to eliminate the type of Tourism Moment as an explanatory factor affecting any of the relationships found between documentation and memory. Figure 9 showcases how the two levels were counterbalanced across two of the four possible combination of Tourism Moments. In addition, figure 10 presents an illustration of the entire experimental procedure and subsequent questionnaires conducted by participants.

**Tourism Moments Combination #1**

**Tourism Moments Combination #2**

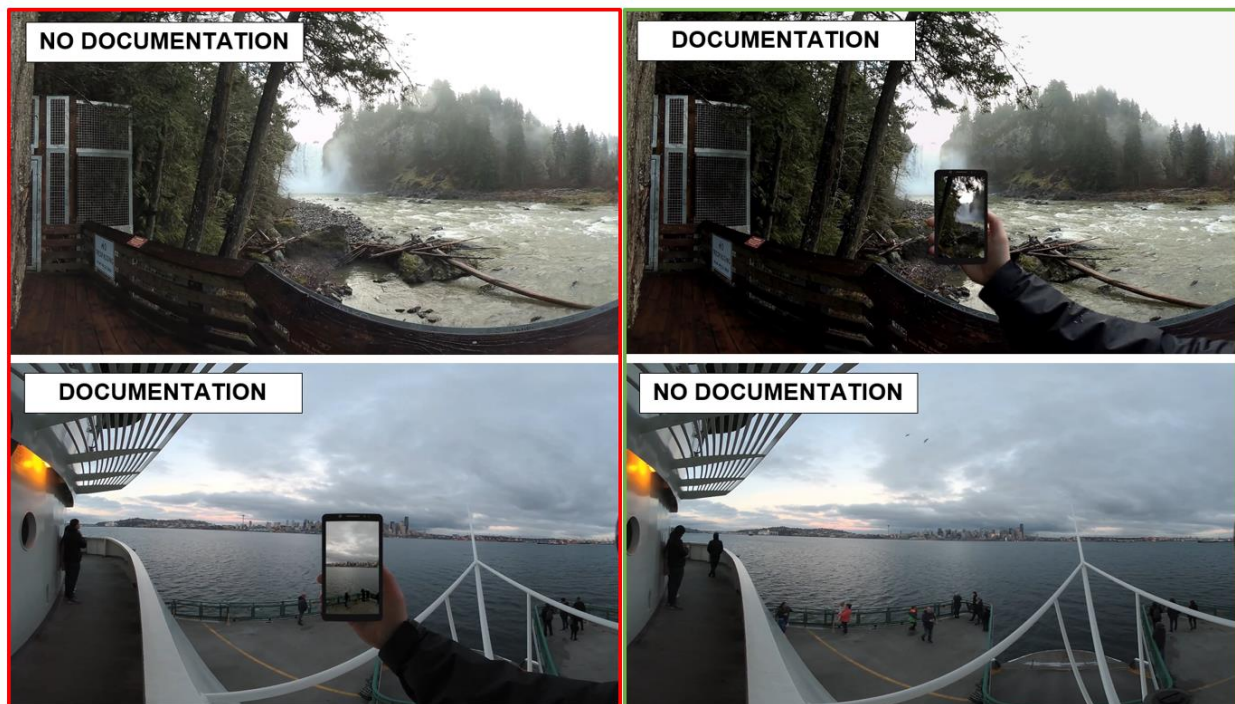


Figure 9. Counterbalancing the Within-Subject Consumption Condition

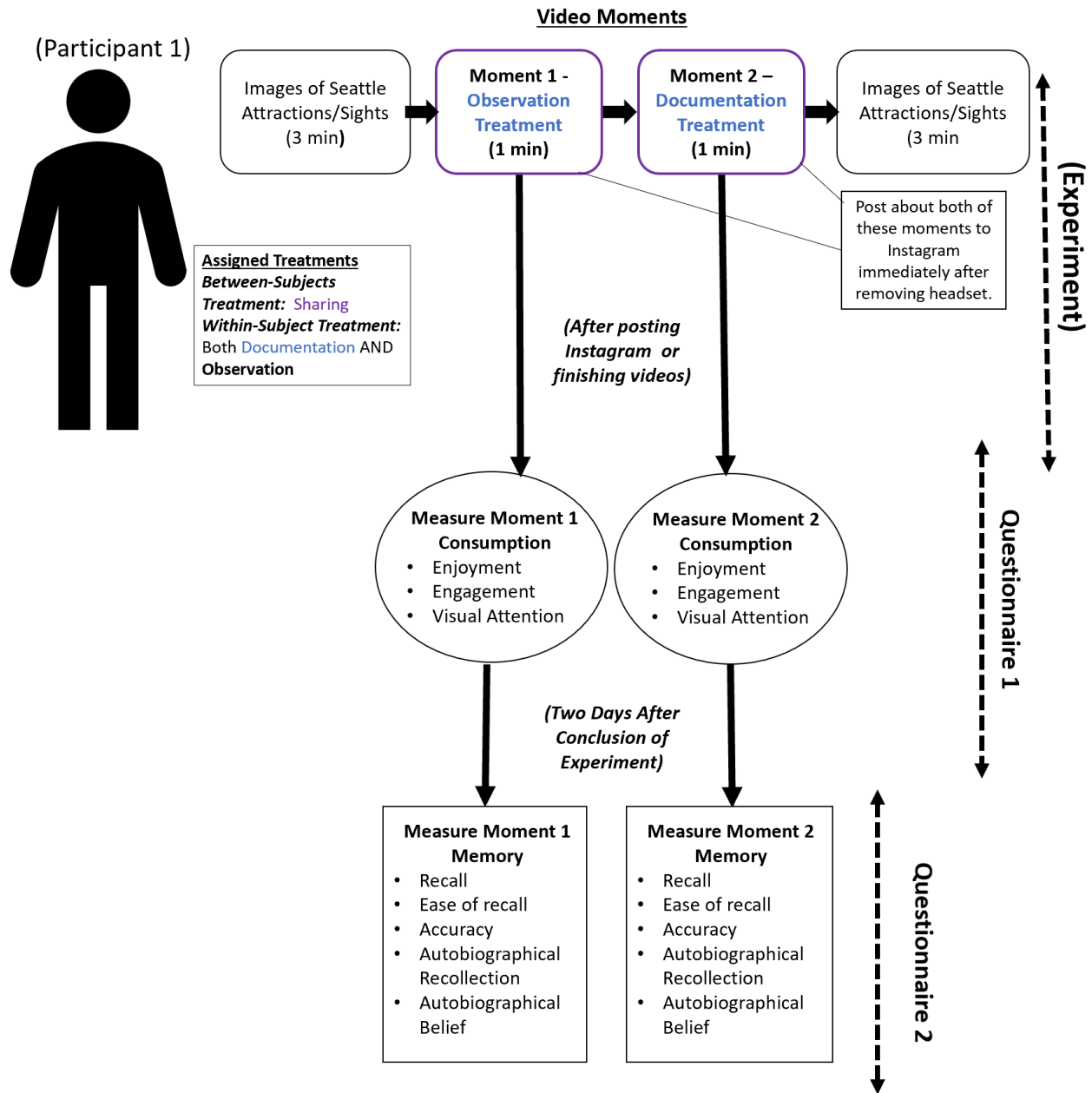


Figure 10. Visual of Entire Study Process for Participants

To prime the between-subject sharing condition, participants were asked to either share one of the moment experiences on Instagram or not. For the sharing treatment, participants upon the conclusion of the virtual reality vacation experience were asked to write a short caption on an Instagram post which contained images from both the Tourism Moments they encountered. This sharing simulation was conducted on a mock Instagram account using the researcher's smartphone. Figure 11 showcases a few different examples of posts written by some of the actual research participants. The objective of this procedure was to simulate the instance in which a traveler shares an image to their social media account immediately after the conclusion of their Tourism Moment. As discussed in the literature review, this act of sharing functions as a means to rehearse the Tourism Moment and improve its memorability. For the no-sharing treatment, participants were not asked to do anything after the virtual vacation concluded. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two treatments.

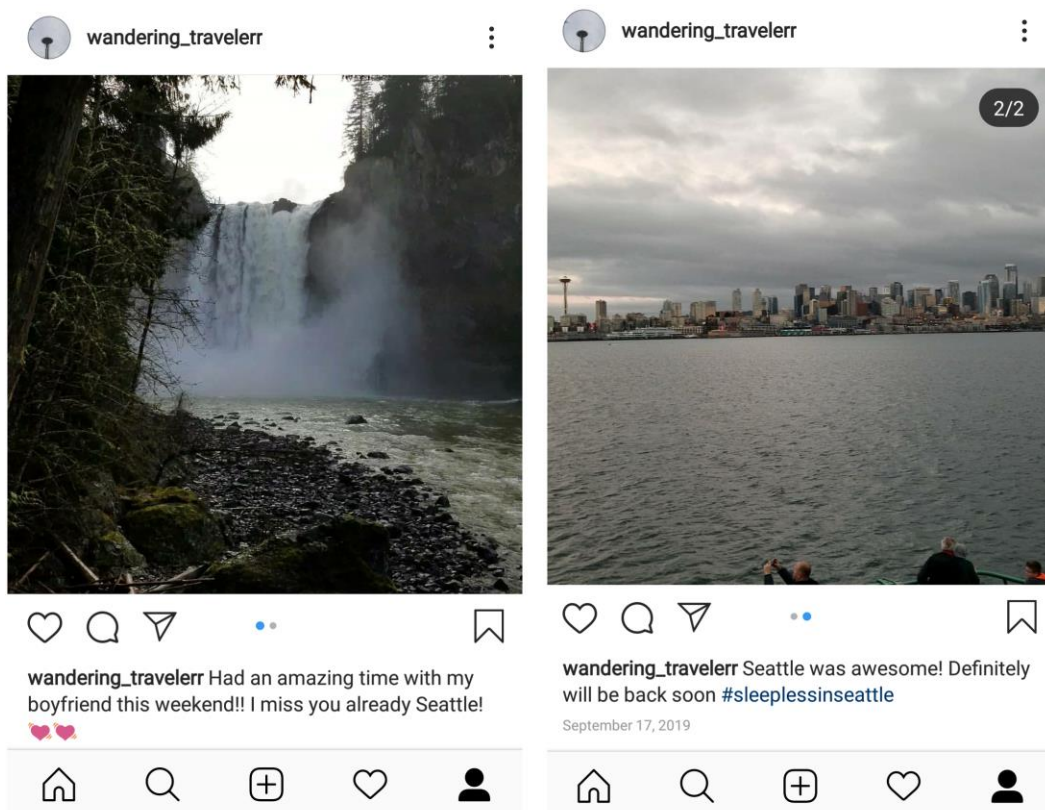


Figure 11. Example Visuals of the Stimuli for the Shared Documented Tourism Moments

Figure 12 presents an illustration of the two conditions and its varying treatment levels applied within one experiment session for three different participants. As is evident, it was only the two Tourism Moments in every experiment which were manipulated and assigned a treatment. Great care was taken to ensure that every participant's experiment experience was similar except for the two manipulated experimental conditions. For instance, in addition to the use of noise-canceling headphones, a script was created to ensure the same directions were given to each participant.



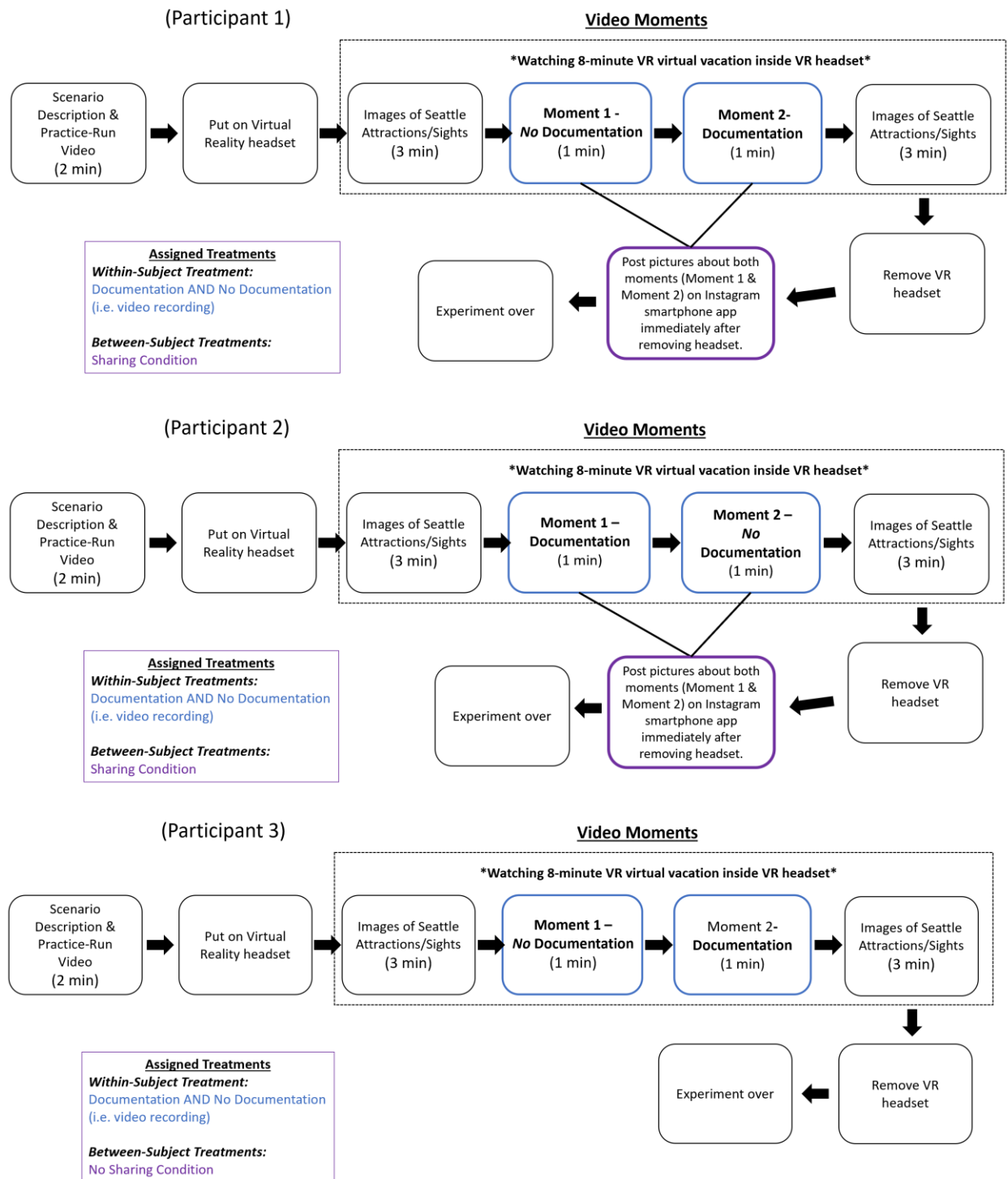


Figure 12. Examples of How Both Experimental Conditions Were Assigned



#### **4.3.4 Procedure**

The process in which the experiment was conducted was the same for every participant except for the assigned conditions. Upon their signature of the IRB consent form and an assurance that they did not suffer from any medical concerns such as epilepsy, participants first did a quick virtual experience trial. This trial involved going through a 90-second virtual reality experience which featured scenes unrelated to the Seattle virtual vacation but whose content was in the same nature (i.e., 3D, 180-degree content). The purpose of this trial was to ensure that participants were not sensitive to extreme disorientation or dizziness from the virtual reality environment and to also familiarize them with the virtual reality environment to lessen any initial ‘shock’ factor. Along with the virtual reality headset, participants also wore noise-canceling headphones to omit any outside noise from the surrounding area around the recruitment table. Upon the conclusion of the virtual reality experience, participants were given a brief period of time to unwind and orient themselves back from the virtual reality environment. Thereafter, participants completed the first questionnaire for the study. In total, the entirety of the experimental session took approximately 15 to 20 minutes on average.

#### **4.3.5 Sample & Data Collection**

A convenience sampling approach was employed to recruit participants during the timeframe of April 2019 and then again in September 2019. The general recruitment strategy involved setting up recruitment tables at six different academic institutions. To do so, the researcher reserved tables which were typically located in areas with heavy foot traffic on the institutions’ campus. Signage that read “Want to earn \$10? Want to try a virtual reality vacation? If so, come participate in a 20-minute experiment here” was utilized to attract visitors to the recruitment table. Anyone who approached the recruitment table was given a brief overview of the study and invited to participate in the experiment if interested. As an incentive to participate, visitors were offered \$10 total in compensation - \$5 in cash immediately upon concluding the experiment and \$5 via Venmo or gift cards upon concluding the second survey two days later. Figure 13 showcases an example of the recruitment table set up in the student union building of two universities. As can be seen in the figure, the recruitment table served to both recruit participants and as the location in which the experiment took place. Prior research has established the

appropriateness and suitability of a recruitment strategy in which participants are recruited ‘off the street’ for an experiment (Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch, 2016).

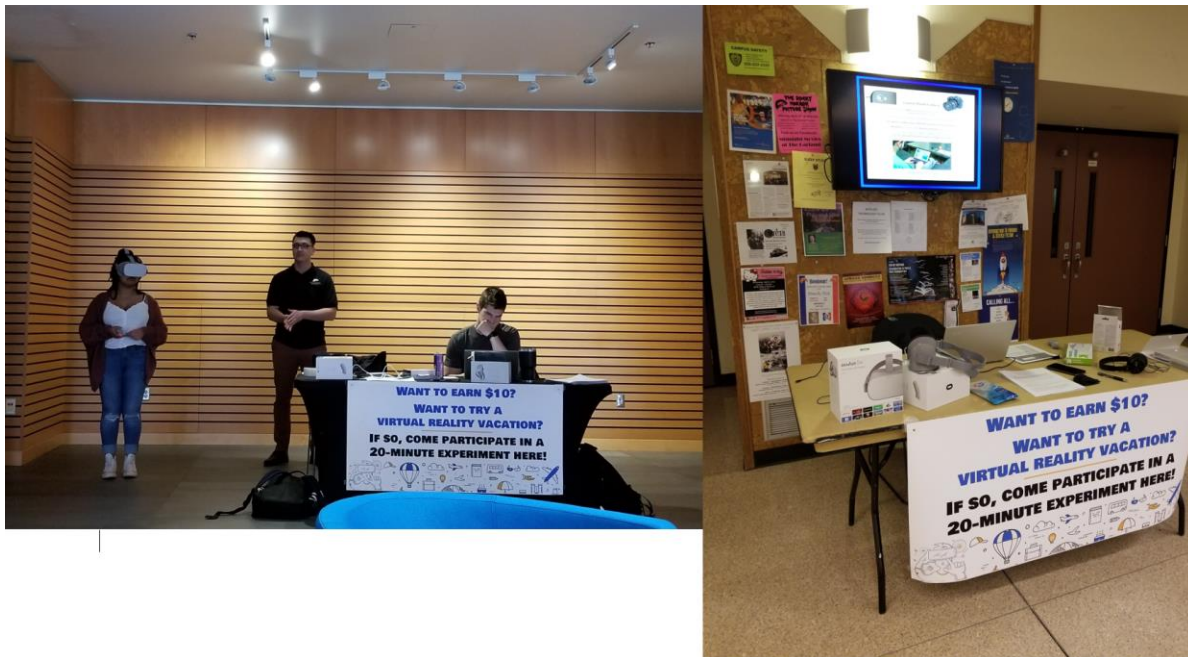


Figure 13. Examples of Recruitment Table Set-Up

As expected by the nature of the recruitment locations, the majority of the sample were university and community college students. A few exceptions to the latter included a handful of university staff members. It is typically understood that while limiting the generalizability of the findings, a homogenous sample such as is featured in this study lessens the concern for external sociodemographic ‘noise’ explaining any significant results (Bornstein, Jager, & Putnick, 2013). Table 4 below presents a summary of the sample’s demographic profile.

Table 4. Sample Demographic Profile

	Percentage of Sample
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	52.30%
Female	45.70%
Non-binary	.01%
Prefer to describe as something else	.01%
Prefer not to say	.01%
<i>Age</i>	
18-24	74.80%
25-34	15.20%
35-44	5.30%
45-54	3.30%
55-64	1.30%
Over 65	0%
<i>Education</i>	
High school graduate, diploma, or the equivalent (eg. GED)	17.2%
Some college credit, no degree earned	58.9%
Trade/technical/vocational training	2.6%
Associate degree	13.2%
Bachelor's degree	6%
Master's degree	2%
<i>Ethnicity/Race</i>	
White	58.3%
Hispanic or Latino	17.9%
Black or African American	6.6%
Native American or Indiana	2.6%
Asian or Pacific Islander	7.3%
Other	7.3%

#### 4.3.6 Measurements

At the conclusion of every experiment session, each participant was asked to complete the first questionnaire designed to measure their in-moment consumption of the Tourism Moments they experienced within the virtual reality vacation. The intention of the first questionnaire was to examine if the nature of the experience is fundamentally different when a traveler uses a smartphone to document the experience. The questionnaire included items which measured the following variables: enjoyment, engagement, and visual attention. Demographic information was

collected at this point. Tables 5 and 6 present a summary of the measurement items along with the reliability scores for each measurement.

Table 5. Questionnaire 1: Consumption Variables

Consumption Variables	Description	Item(s) or Procedure	Source	Scale Reliability
Enjoyment	Indicates how much they enjoyed the moment	Participants rated their level of enjoyment for the moment using four items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7= Strongly agree): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>This experience gave me pleasure.</i></li> <li>2. <i>This experience gave me a sense of enjoyment</i></li> <li>3. <i>This experience made me feel good</i></li> <li>4. <i>This experience made me feel uncomfortable</i></li> <li>5. <i>This experience was fun</i></li> </ol>	Childers, Carr, Peck, & Carson, 2002; Tsaur, Yen, & Hsiao, 2013	$\alpha = .87$
Engagement	Indicates how deeply engaged and immersed they were during the moment.	Participants rated their level of engagement using four items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7- Strongly agree): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>I felt like I was really a part of the experience</i></li> <li>2. <i>I really got into the experience</i></li> <li>3. <i>I was totally absorbed in where I was at during the experience</i></li> <li>4. <i>During the experience , my mind was on other things at the same time</i></li> </ol>	Brockmyer, 2009; Diehl, Zauberman, & Barasch, 2016; Huang, 2006)	$\alpha = .78$

Table 5. Continued

Visual Attention	Indicates how much visual attention they dedicated to the moment before them as it unfolded.	<p>Participants rated their attention using four items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strong disagree, 7=Strongly agree):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. I watched the experience before me entirely through my own eyes</i></li> <li><i>2. My visual attention was on other things besides the experience before me</i></li> <li><i>3. I focused 100% of my visual attention only on the experience before me</i></li> <li><i>4. Given how much visual attention I dedicated to the experience, I am confident I will remember the visual details of this experience in the future</i></li> </ol>		$\alpha = .70$
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To measure the impact of documentation on the memory of Tourism Moments, participants were sent a second self-administered questionnaire two days after their experiment session was conducted. This questionnaire measured their memory of the two Tourism Moments they experienced. Different aspects of memory were assessed in order to capture a more comprehensive evaluation of how well participants remembered their Tourism Moments. To do so, free recall, ease of recall, accuracy, autobiographical recollection, and autobiographical belief measures were implemented - see exact measurements in table below.

Table 6. Questionnaire 2: Memory Questions

<b>Memory Variables</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Item(s) or Procedure</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Scale Reliability</b>
Free Recall	Indicates whether participants can freely recall an experience from memory, without the use of a cue or prompt	Participants were asked if they can recall any of the four Tourism Moments experienced (yes/no). If answered yes, participants were asked to type a brief description of all recalled moments to verify. This ultimately assesses whether Tourism Moments were deeply engrained as long-term memories.	(Henkel, 2014; Yonelinas, 2002)	N/A
Ease of Recall	Indicates how effortful it is to recollect an experience from memory	Participants rated the ease of recall for the moment in question on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = extremely difficult; 7 = extremely easy): <i>How easy was it for you to remember the memory of the experience that you described as Video #1 above?</i>	(Butler & Wolfner, 2000)	$\alpha = .70$
Accuracy	Indicates how extensive and accurate an experience is remembered	Participants will be prompted with questions regarding visual details of the moments they recognized/recalled - e.g. What color were the elephants?	(Barasch et al., 2017; Henkel, 2014)	N/A

Table 6 continued

Autobiographical Memory (Recollection & Belief)	Reflects the meta-cognitive judgements related to the recollection process of an autobiographical memory	<p>Participants completed the Autobiographical Memory Questionnaire. Specifically, only items that measure the following two components of autobiographical memory of 1) Belief and; 2) Recollection, Some of the items were reworded based on Rubin, Schrauf, &amp; Greenberg, 2003).</p> <p><u>Belief Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>As I think about the memory of this experience, I just know it happened, and can't actually remember it.</i></li> <li>• <i>I could be persuaded that my memory of the experience is wrong.</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you believe this experience in your memory really occurred in the way you remember it and that you have not imagined or made up anything?</i></li> <li>• <i>Would you be confident enough in your memory of the experience to testify in a court of law?</i></li> </ul>	(Fitzgerald & Broadbridge, 2013; Rubin, Schrauf, & Greenberg, 2003)	<p>Belief: <math>\alpha = .75</math></p> <p>Recollection: <math>\alpha = .85</math></p>
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Table 6 continued

		<p><u>Recollection Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>As I remember the experience, I feel as though I am reliving the original experience as if it were happening right now</i></li> <li>• <i>As I remember the experience, I can hear it in my mind as if it were happening right now</i></li> <li>• <i>As I remember the experience, I can see it in my mind as if it were happening right now</i></li> <li>• <i>As you remember the experience, how intensely can you feel the emotions now that you felt then?</i></li> <li>• <i>How clear is your memory for the physical setting where the experience took place?</i></li> <li>• <i>How vivid is your general memory for this experience?</i></li> </ul>		
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A number of possible control variables were identified as relevant for the study. First, it is understood that the ability to remember a past experience is highly idiosyncratic, and people vary widely on their personal memory functioning (Small, Strern, Tang, & Mayeux, 1999). Accordingly, it was deemed necessary to account for the individual differences in participants' dispositional memory strength given the dependent variables all regard different aspects of memorability. To do so, a modified version of the self-report memory strength measurement by Gilewski, Zelinski, and Schaie (1990) was utilized which featured eight items on a 7-point Likert scale ( $\alpha = .81$ ). Secondly, there was some concern that participants may vary on whether they discuss their virtual reality vacation with others. This was identified as concerning because the act of sharing or engaging in storytelling of a past experience positively influences how well that experience is remembered (Braash, 2008; Sarica & Usluel, 2016; Tung, Cheung, & Law, 2018). To account for this possible factor, participants were asked the following question: "Did you discuss your virtual vacation to Seattle with anyone since the experience occurred?" (Yes, No, Not Sure). Another potential outside influence identified regarded participants' past personal experiences with any of the places showcased during the Tourism Moments shown to them during the virtual experience. The destination used for the virtual reality vacation was Seattle which is in the same state as all the universities/colleges used for recruitment in this study. Accordingly, many participants could have potentially already visited the places shown in their Tourism Moments, which could mean their ability to remember the Tourism Moments is based more on their past experience than with the consumption condition assigned. To control for this factor, participants were asked to report the frequency of their past experiences with the places seen during the Tourism Moments, along with the recency of their last visit – e.g., "In the past, how often have you visited the Snoqualmie Falls (as shown in the virtual vacation to Seattle)?", "When was the last time you visited Snoqualmie Falls?". Finally, it was determined that people's disposition to want to document the experience during their best travel moments may be very different from participant to participant. In fact, study 1 in this dissertation revealed that travelers are either highly inclined to document every interesting moment during a vacation, or highly inclined to ensure they do not document and just observe. For those participants that are dispositioned to not use a smartphone to document their best moments, being forced to do so in this experiment may inflict a certain degree of angst and unfamiliarity which may impact their enjoyment of the experience, and subsequently, how they remember the experience. As such, a

single item was included which asked participants their likelihood to take a picture or video of their best travel experiences on any given vacation in the future (1=Not likely at all, 7 =Very likely). After running correlation analysis with both the independent and dependent variables, it was shown that only the control variables of memory strength and prior discussion of Tourism Moments were seen as having any possible influence on the results, and so were included in the subsequent analyses.

#### **4.3.7 Pilot Study**

Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted in March of 2019 to test the design of the experiment and survey measurements. A total of 10 people participated in the pilot study who were friends of the researcher. Given the unique nature of the virtual reality experiment design, particular focus was on assessing the viability of the procedure. As a result, participants provided many constructive suggestions for improvement. Several minor adjustments to the scenario descriptions embedded within the virtual reality experience were made which served to improve the understandability and realism of the experiment scenario. Minor changes to the procedure included logistical concerns such as purchasing noise-canceling headphones to enhance the participant's immersion into the virtual reality experience. The script which guided the experiment instructions was also improved upon due to the pilot study. Perhaps one of the most beneficial changes that arose from the pilot study was the identification and removal of certain virtual reality scenes. Some participants reported feeling slightly dizzy or disoriented during some of the virtual reality scenes they encountered. As a result, these scenes were either replaced or adjustments were made using a video editing software (Adobe Premier) to significantly reduce the dizzying effects. Several additional procedural changes stemmed directly from the pilot study which helped dramatically improve the validity and realism of the design. The pilot study was also responsible for the modification of both the questionnaire measurements employed. A few examples of these changes include: 1) reducing the length of the memory survey; 2) changing the wording for some of the survey instructions and questions; 3) emphasizing that the participants were to answer questions as if the virtual tourism experience had actually occurred to them; 4) removal of visual aids in the survey that may have helped participants answer some of the subsequent memory questions. Overall, the pilot study proved highly influential in polishing all

aspects of the main study such as the data collection, recruitment, experiment design/procedure, measurements, and analyses.

#### **4.3.8 Manipulation Checks**

Several measurements were enacted to function as manipulation checks for the experiment. First, participants answered a series of questions to verify the successful implementation of both the consumption condition and sharing condition. Two questions were included to ensure the consumption condition manipulation: 1) “Compared to real life, how realistic did it feel video recording the [Tourism Moment] experience on the virtual phone?”; 2) “During the [Tourism Moment] experience, I concentrated on the phone screen as I normally do when I actually video record an experience with my phone in real life.”. The consumption condition was successfully manipulated as participants reported a mean average of 4.68 (1=Highly unrealistic, 7=Highly realistic) for the first question, and 4.49 (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree) for the second question for agreeance out of a 7-point Likert scale. The sharing condition reflects the instance in which a traveler immediately shares their documented Tourism Moment on social media. In essence, this is meant to represent an opportunity to rehearse and savor the Tourism Moment they just encountered. Accordingly, a three-item, 7-point Likert scale measurement was borrowed and modified from Chun (2009) to capture the sharing condition ( $\alpha=.84$ ). For instance, one question asked: “After the virtual vacation was over, I had an opportunity to think back on the waterfall and ferry experiences.” The manipulation for the sharing condition was considered successful as participants’ average mean score for the measurement was 5.36. Given that the study relied on participant’s ability to imagine themselves as being on a vacation through the virtual reality experience, it was important to ensure that the proposed scenario was appropriate. First, participant’s sense of presence inside the virtual reality environment was measured based on a modified scale of the igroup presence questionnaire (igroup.org). The 7-point Likert scale was reliable ( $\alpha=.80$ ), and participants overall reported a moderately high sense of presence inside the virtual reality environment ( $M=5.00$ ) suggesting a vivid degree of immersion into the virtual vacation. In combination, the realism of the virtual reality vacation was also assessed and confirmed using two questions on a 7-point Likert scale ( $M=4.01$ ). Finally, the realism of the described scenario and its ease of understanding were also assessed. The scenario presented within the virtual reality experience was meant to have participants live through a vacation.

Participants reported the scenario to be realistic ( $M=5.49$ ) and found it easy understanding the scenario described ( $M=6.29$ ).

- Sense of presence (VR)
- Simulation fidelity
- Scenario realism
- Scenario understandability
- Smartphone documentation realism
- Sharing condition manipulation check

#### **4.3.9 Data Analysis**

This section will briefly summarize the analyses plan (see Table 7) employed to address the four sets of research questions posed in this study. The first set of research questions (RQ1a, RQ1b, RQ1c) intended on capturing a baseline understanding regarding any differences between how a traveler lives through an experience depending on their decision to document or not.

Specifically, measuring any possible differences in how a traveler enjoys their experience, is engaged with their experience, and how much visual attention is dedicated to the experience. A series of three one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted to answer the first set of research questions. The within-subject condition of consumption featured two levels: 1) documentation; 2) observation. Again, the dependent variables included were enjoyment, attention, and engagement.

Both a series of one-way repeated measures ANOVA and a series of General Estimating Equations analyses were employed to address the second set of research questions. The objective of the second set of research questions was to identify if participant's remembered experience differed depending on whether or not they documented their prior experience. A General Estimating Equations analysis ('GEE') was employed to answer the following research questions: RQ2a and RQ2c. GEE was selected because the dependent variables of interest for these research questions were dichotomous (recall and accuracy). Although a binomial logistic regression is typically appropriate for dichotomous dependent variables, this analysis is not able to be conducted when the independent variable is repeated as is featured in this study (Martin, n.d.). Instead, GEE serves to account for the correlations stemming from the repeated

measurements of the same dichotomous dependent variable from one participant. In the context of this study, GEE provides an odds ratio for the likelihood that the dependent variable could occur: e.g., the likelihood that a traveler would recall the moment from memory. One-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted for RQ2b, RQ2d, and RQ2e, which all featured the following continuous dependent variables: ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, and autobiographical memory belief. For both GEE and the repeated measures ANOVA, documentation was once again included as a within-subject effect.

A series of two hierarchical multiple linear regression models and one binary logistic regression model were ran to address the third set of research questions. While a baseline assessment of the variance in the consumption experience based on documentation was captured in the first set of research questions, it was necessary to go further and identify any links between participants' consumption experience and their memory. Specifically, the goal of these regression analyses was to examine how a traveler consumes their experience will impact their memory of that experience. The independent variables and dependent variables were as follows: IVs: enjoyment, attention, and engagement, DVs: ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, and accuracy.

Finally, research question four sought to examine whether the act of sharing a Tourism Moment on social media impacts how they remember that shared experience. To address this research question, the between-subjects effect of sharing was included in models for a univariate general linear model (GLM) analysis and a binary logistic regression analysis. The univariate general linear model analyses pertained to the continuous dependent variables whereas the binary logistic regression analyses pertained to the dichotomous dependent variables. The related dependent variables included all five memory variables used in the second set of research questions: recall, ease of recall, accuracy, autobiographical memory recall, and autobiographical memory belief. It is important to clarify that only the participants from the documentation treatment, and not the observation treatment, were used for these analyses. This is because the goal of the research question four was to determine if the sharing of Tourism Moments which are documented impacts memorability – thus, this cannot include the observation condition as travelers typically do not share pictures on social media of Tourism Moments they did not document.

Table 7. Summary of Analyses Employed

Research Questions	Analysis	Purpose
<p>RQ1: Does documenting a moment affect how the moment is consumed (i.e., experienced)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RQ1a: Does documenting a moment affect the visual attention dedicated to a moment?</li> <li>• RQ1b: Does documenting a moment affect the enjoyment of a moment?</li> <li>• RQ1c: Does documenting a moment affect the engagement with a moment?</li> </ul>	One-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA	To assess whether documenting a Tourism Moment impacts how that experience is consumed.
<p>RQ2: Does documenting a moment affect how it is later remembered?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RQ2a: Does documenting affect the recall of the moment from memory?</li> <li>• RQ2b. Does documenting affect how easy they can recall the moment from memory (ease of recall)?</li> <li>• RQ2c. Does documenting affect their accuracy of the moment memory (accuracy)?</li> <li>• RQ2d. Does documenting affect the vividness in which they relive the moment from memory (autobiographical recollection)?</li> <li>• RQ2e. Does documenting affect their confidence in the moment memory (autobiographical belief)?</li> </ul>	<p>General Estimating Equations</p> <p>One-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA</p>	To assess whether documenting a Tourism Moment impacts how that experience is remembered
<p>RQ3: Does a travelers' consumption experience predict how they will remember the experience?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RQ3a. Does enjoyment predict how Tourism Moments are remembered? (ease of recall, accuracy, autobiographical recollection)?</li> <li>• RQ3b. Does engagement predict how Tourism Moments are remembered? (ease of recall, accuracy, autobiographical recollection)?</li> <li>• RQ3c. Does enjoyment predict how Tourism Moments are remembered? (ease of recall, accuracy, autobiographical recollection)?</li> </ul>	<p>Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regression</p> <p>Binary Logistic Regression</p>	To determine whether a traveler's consumption experience can explain their remembered experience

Table 7. Continued

<p>RQ4: Does sharing a <i>documented</i> moment on social media affect how it is later remembered?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RQ4a: Does sharing a documented Tourism Moment affect the recall of the moment from memory?</li> <li>• RQ4b: Does sharing a documented Tourism Moment affect how easy they can recall the moment from memory (ease of recall)?</li> <li>• RQ4c: Does sharing a documented Tourism Moment affect their accuracy of the moment memory (accuracy)?</li> <li>• RQ4d: Does sharing a documented Tourism Moment affect the vividness in which they relive the moment from memory (autobiographical recollection)?</li> <li>• RQ4e: Does sharing a documented Tourism Moment affect their confidence in the moment memory (autobiographical belief)?</li> </ul>	<p>Binary Logistic Regression</p> <p>Univariate General Linear Model</p>	<p>To assess whether sharing a documented Tourism Moment on social media impacts how that experience will be remembered.</p>
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## 4.4 Results

### 4.4.1 Examining the Differences in Consumption Experience Between Documented and Observed Tourism Moments

A series of three one-way repeated measures ANOVA were conducted to compare the effect of documentation on enjoyment, attention, and engagement between documented and observed moments. The analysis confirmed there was a significant effect of consumption condition on all three dependent variables except enjoyment: attention (Wilks Lambda = .97,  $F(1,149) = 5.28$ ,  $p = .02$ ), engagement (Wilks Lambda = .97,  $F(1,149) = 4.89$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Comparing the means between conditions revealed that participants in the documentation treatment (as opposed to observation treatment), reported dedicating significantly less attention to their Tourism Moment ( $p = .02$ ): documentation ( $M = 4.97$ ,  $SD = .10$ ), observation ( $M = 5.16$ ,  $SD = .09$ ). Second, the results revealed that participants in the documentation treatment (as opposed to observation treatment) reported being less engaged with their Tourism Moment ( $p = .03$ ): documentation ( $M = 4.95$ ,  $SD = .10$ ), observation ( $M = 5.16$ ,  $SD = .09$ ). Together, these results indicate that

documenting may be detrimental to the consumption of Tourism Moments. Table's 8 and 9 present the ANOVA results for all three dependent variables.

Table 8. ANOVA Results

<b>Outcome Variables</b>	<b>Wilks Lambda</b>	<b>Hypothesis DF</b>	<b>Error DF</b>	<b>F-Value</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
Enjoyment	.96	1	149	.79	.38
Attention	.97	1	149	5.28	.02
Engagement	.97	1	150	4.89	.03

Table 9. Mean Comparisons Between Documentation and Observation Conditions

<b>Outcome Variable</b>	<b>Mean (Experiment Condition)</b>	
	Documentation	Observation
Enjoyment	5.49	5.57
Attention	4.97	5.16
Engagement	4.95	5.16

#### 4.4.2 Examining the Differences in Memory Between Documented and Observed Tourism Moments

Both a series of one-way repeated measures ANOVA and a series of General Estimating Equations (GEE) analyses were conducted to investigate the various ways documentation may affect the memory of Tourism Moments. For the dichotomous dependent variables of recall and accuracy, two separate GEE analyses were conducted for each with consumption condition as a predictor and memory strength as a covariate in both models. The QIC Goodness-of-Fit values suggested a good fitting model for both recall (225.62) and accuracy (299.67). The main effect of consumption was found to be a significant model effect for both the recall and accuracy dependent variables: recall (Wald Chi-Square = 5.62,  $p < .05$ ), accuracy (Wald Chi-Square = 8.34,  $p < .01$ ). Further, the parameter estimates results showed that those who document a Tourism Moment are 96% more likely to recall that memory later, as compared to those who only observed. Additionally, those who document a Tourism Moment are 97% more likely to accurately remember details from their Tourism Moment as compared to those who only observe



the experience. Together, the results indicate that just the act of documenting a Tourism Moment alone significantly improves the memorability of the experience later. Table 10 summarizes the GEE results for both models.

Table 10. GEE Results for Effect of Documentation on Recall and Accuracy

<b>DV</b>	<b>QIC Goodness-of-Fit</b>	<b>Main Effect: Consumption</b>	<b>Parameter Estimates</b>
Recall*	225.62	Wald $\chi^2$ : 5.62, $p=.02$	Wald $\chi^2$ : 7.29 P-Value: .02 Exp(B): 1.96 95% CI: 1.12, 3.42
Accuracy*	299.67	Wald $\chi^2$ : 8.34, $p=.004$	Wald $\chi^2$ : 8.34 P-Value: .004 Exp(B): 1.97 95% CI: 1.24, 3.13

\*Analysis conducted with the observation condition as the reference category

A series of three one-way repeated measures ANOVAs were executed to analyze any effects of the consumption condition on the three continuous dependent variables of ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, and autobiographical memory belief. The analyses indicated the only significant main effect of consumption condition found was on autobiographical memory belief: (Wilks Lambda = .91,  $F(1,107) = 11.02$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Comparing the means between treatments revealed that participants in the documentation treatment (as opposed to observation treatment), reported having less confidence in their accurate recollection of their Tourism Moment: documentation ( $M = 5.27$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ), observation ( $M = 5.32$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ). Table 11 presents a summary of the ANOVA results for all three dependent variables and table 12 presents the mean comparisons between the two groups.

Table 11. ANOVA Results

<b>Outcome Variables</b>	<b>Wilks Lambda</b>	<b>Hypothesis DF</b>	<b>Error DF</b>	<b>F-Value</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
Ease of Recall	.99	1	71	.86	.36
Autobio Memory Recall	.96	1	107	2.72	.10
Autobio Memory Belief	.91	1	107	11.02	.001

Table 12. Mean Comparisons Between Documentation and Observation Conditions

<b>Outcome Variable</b>	<b>Mean (Experiment Condition)</b>	
	Documentation	Observation
Ease of Recall	6.15	6.22
Autobiographical Memory Recall	4.98	5.03
Autobiographical Memory Belief	4.95	5.16

#### 4.4.3 Examining the Relationship Between the Consumption Experience and Memory Experience of a Tourism Moment

A series of two hierarchical multiple linear regression models and one binary logistic regression were executed to answer the third set of research questions. In the first model, ease of recall was regressed onto the independent variables of enjoyment, engagement, and attention after accounting for memory strength in the first step. The resulting model proved significant,  $R^2 = .18$ ,  $F(4,65) = 4.46$ ,  $p < .05$ . Tests of simple slopes further indicated that only enjoyment was a significant predictor of ease of recall ( $b = .30$ ,  $SE = .18$ ,  $p = .05$ ). In the second model, autobiographical memory recall was regressed onto enjoyment, engagement, and attention after accounting for memory strength. The resulting model proved significant,  $R^2 = .38$ ,  $F(4,100) = 15.00$ ,  $p < .001$ . Tests of simple slopes further indicated that only enjoyment was a significant predictor of autobiographical memory recall ( $b = .43$ ,  $SE = .11$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Finally, in the third model, a binary logistic regression model was conducted in which accuracy was regressed onto enjoyment, engagement, and attention. The model provided an overall percentage correct prediction rate of 60.1% and explained 4% of the variance in accuracy. Moreover, only

enjoyment again proved to be a significant predictor of accuracy such that participants with one factor score above the mean were 43% more likely to accurately recollect their Tourism Moment: Wald Chi-Square = 4.66,  $SE = .16$ ,  $\text{Exp}(B) = 1.42$ ,  $p < .05$ . Table 13 summarizes the results for both the linear and binary logistic regression results.

Table 13. Results for Linear and Binary Regression Analysis

	<i>t or Wald <math>\chi^2</math></i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b or Exp(B)</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>% Correct</i>
<b>Ease of Recall</b>								
Overall Model				3.62	4	.01	.18	
Enjoyment	1.97	.05	.30					
Engagement	.98	.33	.19					
Attention	-.96	.34	-.16					
<b>Autobiographical Memory Recall</b>								
Overall Model				15.00	4	.00	.38	
Enjoyment	3.82	.00	.43					
Engagement	.34	.74	.05					
Attention	1.64	.10	.19					
<b>Accuracy</b>								
Overall Model							.04	.60
Enjoyment	4.66	.03	1.42		1			
Engagement	.30	.58	.90		1			
Attention	.56	.45	.88		1			

#### 4.4.4 Examining the Difference in Memory Between Tourism Moments That Are Shared and Not Shared

Both a series of three univariate general linear models and two binary logistic regression models were conducted to investigate the various ways sharing on social media may affect the memory of documented Tourism Moments. For the dichotomous dependent variables of recall and accuracy, two separate binary logistic regression analyses were conducted for each with the sharing condition as a predictor and memory strength as a covariate in both models. The model which predicted for recall provided an overall percentage correct prediction rate of 85% and explained 10% of the variance in recall. Alternatively, the model which predicted for accuracy provided an overall percentage correct prediction rate of 56% and explained 2% of the variance in accuracy. Parameter estimates results showcased that the sharing condition was not a significant predictor for either recall or accuracy: recall (Wald Chi-Square = 2.65,  $SE = .58$ ,

$Exp(B) = .39, p = .10$ ), accuracy (Wald Chi-Square = 1.23,  $SE = .39$ ,  $Exp(B) = .65, p = .27$ ).

These results suggest that there is no difference in the ability to recall a Tourism Moment memory or accurately remember details of the experience between moments that are shared and not shared on social media.

A series of three different univariate GLM analyses were conducted in which the sharing condition was tested as the between-subjects main effect with memory strength as a covariate. The results for all three analyses indicated that sharing did not have a significant main effect for all three dependent variables of ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, and autobiographical belief. Table 14 and 15 presents the results summary for all three GLM analyses conducted, along with the relevant means. Taken together, it appears that the sharing of a documented Tourism Moment makes no difference on how a traveler will remember that Tourism Moment later.

Table 14. GLM Results

<b>Outcome Variables</b>	<b>Type III SS</b>	<b>Hypothesis DF</b>	<b>Error DF</b>	<b>F-Value</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
Ease of Recall	6.83	1	91	3.58	.06
Autobiographical Memory Recall	1.44	1	107	1.29	.26
Autobiographical Memory Belief	2.85	1	107	2.64	.12

Table 15. Mean Comparisons Between Shared and No-Shared Conditions

<b>Outcome Variable</b>	<b>Mean (Experiment Condition)</b>	
	<b>Sharing</b>	<b>No Sharing</b>
Ease of Recall	6.15	5.60
Autobiographical Memory Recall	4.86	5.09
Autobiographical Memory Belief	5.11	5.44

#### 4.4.5 Assumptions Addressed

A number of assumptions were checked for both the repeated measures ANOVA and the GEE analyses. Namely for the repeated measures ANOVAs, the data was examined for outliers, normality of distribution, and sphericity. SPSS Version 26 was utilized to examine all assumptions. To detect extreme outliers, only observations which were greater than three times the interquartile range (IQR) were detected and examined further. Although the  $IQR \times 1.5$  'rule' is common, research has shown this is not an appropriate marker to classify observations as outliers (Hoaglin & Iglewicz, 1987). Accordingly, only four outliers were identified for the following dependent variables: enjoyment (documentation condition: 1 case), ease of recall (documentation condition: 2 cases; observation condition: 1 case). After removing these outliers and rerunning their respective analysis, the results were not affected greatly and so the outliers were kept in the dataset. Further, three different metrics (Shapiro-Wilks, skewness, kurtosis) were examined to assess the normal distribution of all dependent variables related to the repeated measures ANOVAs. For the exception of the autobiographical memory recall dependent variable, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic was significant at the .05 level for both the two conditions across all the dependent variables. Although this would indicate a violation of normality, it is also widely understood that the Shapiro-Wilks normality test (along with other parametric normality tests) are best suited for samples less than 50 as normality is rejected in virtually every case as the sample size increases thereon (Elliott & Woodward, 2007). Therefore, skewness and kurtosis statistics were also referenced to further evaluate normality. In regards to the enjoyment dependent variable, results showcased a slightly moderate left skewness with values of -1.06 and -1.04 for the documentation and observation conditions respectively. Further, the ease of recall dependent variable showcased a concern for a normality violation. A moderate left skewness was identified with values of -1.84 and -1.87 for the documentation and observation conditions respectively. Additionally, the kurtosis statistic for the observation condition for ease of recall was just slightly above the 3.0 threshold at 3.12. Together, these normality results overall suggest little concern for the validity of the data, and even so, the Central Limit Theorem supports that these slight violations to normality are irrelevant and ANOVA analysis is generally robust. Additionally, sphericity, which pertains to the differences in variance between pairs of conditions, is assumed to be met across all dependent variables as there were only two conditions in the documentation factor. Finally, the only pivotal assumption pertaining to a GEE analysis

regards to the specification of a proper working correlation structure. A working correlation structure refers to the designation of how the observations for the dependent variables are correlated. Given the context of the study, an independent correlation structure was selected as it was deemed that a participant's perception of the documented Tourism Moment is unrelated to their perception of the observed Tourism Moment. It is important to note however, that the GEE analysis is robust against the misspecification of the correct correlation structure (Zeger & Liang, 1986).

## **4.5 Summary and Discussion**

### **4.5.1 Summary**

This study sought to explore the relationship between smartphone documentation and the memory of Tourism Moments. Four sets of research questions were addressed to provide an open and initial investigation into this timely topic. Each set of research questions will be briefly summarized next before presenting a discussion on the theoretical and practical implications of these findings.

*RQ1: Does documenting a moment affect how the moment is consumed (i.e., experienced)?*

First, the results showcased that the nature in which travelers consume their Tourism Moments are fundamentally different when they document compared to when they just observe them. It was found that participants were less engaged with the experience and paid less visual attention to the experience when they were documenting the Tourism Moment. This suggests the act of documenting compromises a traveler's ability to become completely absorbed by their Tourism Moment, unlike when they only are tasked to freely observe and consume the experience.

However, there was no difference in how enjoyable participants found their Tourism Moment to be between those who documented and only observed. In fact, enjoyment was rated as very high in both documented and observed Tourism Moments suggesting taking a video or picture of the Tourism Moment experience does not hinder nor benefit the affective experience.

*RQ2: Does documenting a moment affect how it is later remembered?*

With an understanding of the differences in how documentation affects the consumption of Tourism Moments, the second set of research questions turned to learning how documentation may impact the subsequent memorability of Tourism Moments. The analyses produced mixed results regarding how travelers' memories are impacted by the sole act of documenting. On one end, documenting has a clear and significant positive impact on how travelers will remember their Tourism Moments. The act of documenting was found to improve the likelihood that they would freely (without a cue) recollect the moment occurring, and in addition, will ensure that the details of the experience are accurate. Interestingly, it was also found that participants had a lower confidence in the factual episodic details of the recollected experience from memory of these documented Tourism Moments. Together, this indicates that although they are more likely to randomly recollect a highly accurate memory of their Tourism Moment, travelers have little faith in the memories of these documented Tourism Moments. Further, there were no differences in the ease of recall or autobiographical memory recollection between documented and observed moments. In other words, once a Tourism Moment memory is cued in some way, travelers who just observed the experience have the same high ease in bringing the experience back from memory, and perhaps more importantly, have the same degree of vividness in the reliving of that Tourism Moment.

*RQ3: Does a travelers' consumption experience predict how they will remember the experience?*

Moving beyond the role of documentation, this study also sought to get a better understanding of the link between how travelers consume a Tourism Moment and their subsequent memory of that moment. The purpose was to verify more precisely what aspects of the consumption experience are most important for determining the memorability of Tourism Moments. The regression analyses provide evidence that only enjoyment was a significant predictor for ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, and accuracy. Specifically, the more a traveler enjoys their Tourism Moment, the stronger the memory of the experience will be for those three important aspects of memory. Interestingly, the degree of engagement with and attention to the Tourism Moment was never close to being a significant predictor of memorability.

*RQ4: Does sharing a documented moment on social media affect how it is later remembered?*

Finally, the last set of research questions explored any possible impact that the sharing of documented Tourism Moments may have on its memorability. Given the increasing practice in

travelers sharing their best travel experiences on social media, it was identified as having a potential role in affecting the memory of Tourism Moments. The results showcased that for those Tourism Moments that were documented, there is no difference in its memorability (measured as ease of recall, autobiographical memory recall, autobiographical memory belief) whether it is shared or not shared on social media immediately afterwards. Worthwhile to note, the impact of sharing on ease of recall was marginally insignificant ( $p=.06$ ), with shared Tourism Moments having a higher rating in this memory variable. However, it is ultimately most appropriate to conclude that the act of posting a video or picture of a Tourism Moment immediately after has no clear impact on how well it is later remembered.

#### **4.5.2 Discussion**

##### ***4.5.2.1 The Positive Impact of Smartphone Documentation on Memory***

The results of this study also suggest that the act of documenting a Tourism Moment serves to dramatically improve the memory of that experience. More specifically, the Tourism Moments which were documented (as opposed to just observed) had higher ratings of free recall and accuracy – i.e., travelers are more likely to randomly remember the Tourism Moment happened without a cue, and, will remember more details of the experience accurately. For tourism research, these findings help highlight how one of the most prevalent practices in travel impacts the memory of experiences. While extensive research has been conducted on what constitutes a ‘memorable tourism experience’ (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012), this study advances memory research in tourism further by identifying more concretely one factor in travel which directly impacts memorability of experiences. MTE research has been criticized in part because it typically does not explicitly measure memory of participants’ experiences, and only assumes high memorability in these studies (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2014). In contrast, using established metrics from cognitive psychology, this study directly operationalized and measured memorability of a past travel experience and tested the direct impact of documentation. As a result, it was seen that how well a traveler remembers a travel experience may be less about the emergence of a specific experiential dimension (e.g., novelty), and more about a traveler’s decision to utilize their smartphone to document what occurs.



So why would the simple act of taking a picture or video with a smartphone serve to improve the recallability and accuracy of a Tourism Moment? As it pertains to recall, this paper proposes that the added element of performativity and embodiment as discussed in the tourism literature explains why there is an enhancement in the likelihood to freely recall a prior experience due to documenting. Tourism researchers view documentation as a deeply embodied experience wherein a traveler becomes a participant (rather than just observer) in the experience and performs with the camera (Edensor, 2000; Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). In this light, the traveler carries a purpose and becomes a producer of experience rather than just a recipient of experience (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016b; Stylianou-Lambert, 2012). It is exactly due to this increased sense of embodiment, involvement, and performance which creates a strong memory of the experience. Embodied cognition theory represents a suitable theoretical explanation for the latter. This theory represents how various cognitive dynamics can be explained by how our bodies interact with the present environment (Shapiro, 2019). Pertaining to the context in this study, this means that how travelers remember any given experience is partly determined by the physical act of handling a camera and acting upon it to record what is happening before them. In contrast, the act of observation lacks a vividly embodied experience because the observer does not enact any physical bodily force upon the environment before them. Holding a smartphone, moving it according to the subject and scene, zooming in on specific elements are all subtle examples of very meaningful physical bodily-related movements. Embodied cognition theory would suggest that it is the compilation of all of these physical enactments of documenting that have an indirect association with how they come to recollect the experience later (Shapiro, 2019; Vallet, et al., 2017). In essence, the cognitive mind prioritizes the memory for experiences of when “I did something” rather than when ‘I witnessed something’. As it regards to accuracy, it can be proposed that documenting functions to zero in on the visual elements of the scene unfolding during a Tourism Moment. The only two studies which found the act of documenting to be beneficial for memory provide a similar theoretical explanation (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017; Henkel, 2014) – the act of documenting serves to direct sharp and focused attention to the most striking visual features of an experience. In contrast, the act of just observing a Tourism Moment reflects a more broadened and scattered visual consumption which results in a vague engraining of the experience’s visual details into memory. As such, a traveler

who documents their Tourism Moments more accurately remembers what occurred because of the forced added visual attention dedicated to a few distinct instances of the experience.

#### ***4.5.2.2 The Crossroads Effect of Smartphone Documentation***

The results of this study speak to a larger emerging dilemma for the modern-day traveler. Smartphones have made it easier and more enticing than ever to document the best experiences on a leisure trip. Yet, the decision whether document or not has profound ramifications for travelers that impact both their onsite and post-trip wellbeing. It was found that choosing to document Tourism Moments with a smartphone disconnects them from the experience (lower engagement, lower visual attention) but significantly strengthens the memory of the experience (higher recall rate, higher accuracy). As such, the impact of documentation has differing effects on the consumption experience and memory recollection experience indicating that travelers are forced to make a tradeoff for what matters most to them. To contextualize the ramifications of each decision, it is helpful to understand what highly connected and highly memorable experiences offer respectively. Pertaining to the affected consumption experience, one specific consequence is the subsequent impact on the restorative quality of the trip overall. ‘Being away mentally’ is one dimension seen to positively affect the restorative potential of a destination (Lehto, Kirillova, Li, & Wu, 2017; Lehto, 2013). I contend that the repeated decision to document most of the Tourism Moments on a given trip negatively impacts the traveler’s overall sense of recovery. Disengaging from the experience and devoting less attention to the visual elements of the scene when documenting means the traveler is not mentally receptive to the restorative qualities of the destination. This mental disconnect across many Tourism Moments over the course of the trip may ultimately prevent travelers from realizing the full restorative potential of their destination (Gill, Packer, & Ballantyne, 2019). On the other hand, the strength of a Tourism Moment memory carries its own unique set of benefits. This is because the opportunity to savor a past experience is shown to offer people a highly enjoyable and vividly enriching experience in the present (Chun, Diehl, & MacInnis, 2017). In fact, one of the findings of study 1 in this dissertation revealed that the recollection of a Tourism Moment can provide mental ‘boosts’ that improve one’s day-to-day psychology wellbeing. By not documenting a Tourism Moment, the ability to deeply savor that experience, and benefit from temporary improvements in psychological wellbeing is missed. Ultimately, the choice is left to the traveler

to determine what is most important to them – a sense of recovery at the end of the trip or the opportunity for brief improvements in one’s daily psychological wellbeing months and years after the trip. Of course, more research on this matter would be required to validate the extent of these proposed consequences from smartphone documentation during travel.

#### ***4.5.2.3 Is the Role of Mindfulness and Attentiveness Overrated?***

Both the areas of tourism and cognitive psychology have discussed much about the related constructs of mindfulness and attentiveness. Both ideas reflect an experience in which the experiencer is sharply engaged and focused only on the present situation unfolding before them (Craig & Lockhart, 1972; Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). Additionally, both mindfulness and attentiveness are believed to have positive effects on the memorability of experience (Mack, Erol, Clarke, & Bert, 2016; Moscardo, 2017). Intuitively, the more one is engaged and devoting full attention to the experience, the stronger that experience will be forged into memory. In recent years, tourism research related to mindfulness has increased in popularity. Some have shown the benefit of creating mindful tourism experience for promoting learning and altruistic tendencies in travelers (Moscardo, 1996; Wamsler, 2018). For instance, Chan (2019) conducted an experiment which found that embedding mindfulness in tourists increases their awareness for the cultural and environmental consequences of their travel practices. Yet, most pertinent to this study, many have suggested a definitive link between mindful tourism experiences and a strengthened memory of these experiences (Chen, Scott, & Benckendorff, 2017; Moscardo, 2017; Tung, Lin, Zhang, & Zhao, 2017). However, the present findings dispute these suggestions outright. First, the act of documenting is closer to mindlessness in that it forces a narrowed perspective in how to take in the present experience. In fact, the results support that documented tourism were lower in engagement and visual attention – i.e., participants were more mindful during Tourism Moments they did not document. In addition, there was no difference in enjoyment between the mindfully oriented observed Tourism Moments and the mindless oriented documented Tourism Moments. Yet despite the compromised mindful experience, the results also demonstrated that participants better remembered the Tourism Moments they documented, as opposed to the moments they just observed mindfully. Further, the results also showcased that engagement and attention were not significant predictors for any of the three memory dependent variables assessed. Together, it can be concluded that travelers who are more

mindful during their travel experiences will not remember their experiences any better later on. Recent studies in both cognitive psychology and human-computer interaction have also challenged the long-standing belief for the memory-benefits of mindfulness (Craig, Eftekhari, & Binns, 2018; Segijn, Voorheld, Vandeberg, Smit, 2017). One plausible explanation offered by Rubenking (2017) is that more emotionally charged experiences are sheltered from the ‘damaging’ effects of mindlessness on memory. As it stands, this paper proposes that travelers need not worry nor be obsessed with ensuring they achieve a highly attentive and mindful degree of cognitive dedication during their most cherished tourism experiences.

#### ***4.5.2.4 Validating the Continued Importance of Enjoyment for Memory Purposes***

Enjoyment during travel experiences has long been recognized as one of the most salient emotions. The latter is especially true as it regards to the impact of enjoyment on how travelers remember their experiences. Research has forwarded considerable evidence that enjoyment is one of the top influential experiential dimensions of a ‘memorable tourism experience’ (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Kim & Ritchie, 2014). However, the memorability of participants’ experiences is usually only assumed in these research studies as participants are typically not asked to report the strength of their memorable tourism experience. Utilizing a true randomized experiment design, this study provides one of the first empirical evidences for the direct effect of enjoyment on how well a traveler remembers an experience. Accordingly, it both addresses a research gap and confirms the prior findings from MTE research regarding enjoyment. Moreover, this finding speaks to a broader discussion regarding a recent trend in the tourism research community in highlighting the significance of eudaimonia (Filep & Laing, 2019; Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017; Lengieza, Hunt, & Swim, 2019). Eudaimonic experiences feature aspects of personal meaningfulness and self-growth (Waterman, 1993). However, in pushing for the importance of eudaimonia in tourism, researchers have begun devaluing or even disregarding the continued role of hedonic experiences. For instance, Knobloch, Robertson, and Aitken (2017) argued “Notions of eudaimonia suggest that tourism research should place less emphasis on hedonic enjoyment in favor of the broader concepts of well-being and quality of life” (p. 659). Yet, at least as it regards to memory, it has been shown that experiencing eudaimonia during a travel experience is one of the weakest predictors of memorability (Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018; Zhong, Busser, & Baloglu, 2017). It seems then

that both hedonia and eudaimonia each have separate but important implications for travelers – hedonia fosters improved memory, and eudaimonia facilitates self-growth and transcendent experiences. Further research is needed to explore this preliminary discovery and to engage in discourse regarding what outcomes matter most for travel experiences.

#### ***4.5.2.5 No Rehearsal Advantage for Shared Tourism Moments***

The results revealed that documented Tourism Moments that were subsequently shared on social media did not positively impact how well participants remembered the experience. This finding is surprising in part due to the established role of rehearsal in memory research (Baddeley, 1986; Craik & Watkins, 1973). The reasoning is that taking the time to share a picture of a Tourism Moment that just unfolded should act as a means to rehearse and cognitively digest that experience a bit more, in turn, improving the memorability of that experience later. Accordingly, the benefit of memory rehearsal either does not seem to apply to travel experiences as it does in lab settings with non-experiential stimuli (e.g., Cowan & AuBuchon, 2008), or the act of sharing a Tourism Moment online is not a sufficient enough of a rehearsal act. The sharing of one's best travel moments is and will continue to be a highly prevalent act, nonetheless. This is concerning as not only does sharing on social media not improve memory of these shared experiences, it is also likely that sharing a documented Tourism Moment further disengages the traveler from their present experience. Evidence has shown that many people post pictures or videos of an experience that either just occurred or is still unfolding (Choe, Kim, & Fesenmaier, 2016; Vacationing the Social Media Way, 2018). This represents an inherent disengagement that may negatively impact the memory of travel experiences. Rather than using that post-experience time to reflect and settle into what occurred, travelers are mindlessly flipping through filters and brainstorming which clever captions to use. While the present study does not provide evidence, those precious minutes after the conclusion of a Tourism Moment are crucial for memory-making. As an alternative to sharing on social media, there is more support that engaging others face-to-face to discuss what just occurred is more productive to ensure a strong memory (Van House, 2009). For travelers, this most likely are those friends and family members in their travel party. Yet as the present research demonstrates, this engagement via online may not be as fruitful.

## 4.6 Implications

### 4.6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study found that those who document their Tourism Moments are less engaged with the experience and perceive themselves as dedicating less visual attention to what is occurring during the experience. This finding has two implications for theory. In one regard, this finding contributes to research in psychology on media-multitasking. Specifically, this area of research has long questioned whether the detrimental effects of media-multitasking surface beyond just non-leisure contexts such as school and the workplace (Circella, Mokhtarian, & Poff, 2012; Ralph, Smith, Seli, & Smilek, 2019). The present findings address this gap by showcasing that the mere act of documenting acts as a cognitive drain that severely disconnects people from even the most enjoyable moments in travel. Within the tourism literature, discourse surrounding the impacts of documentation have been historically divided with researchers viewing documentation as either an inhibitor (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2016) or enhancer (Dinhopl & Gretzel, 2016b) to how travelers consume travel experiences. The present study contributes to this research area by supporting the view of the documenting-traveler as a passive consumer of experience and is one of the few research efforts that provides empirical evidence for the distracting impact of documentation.

This study's findings also contribute to cognitive psychology research which focuses on the impact of documentation on memory. There exists contradictory findings on how the picture-taking or video-taking of an experience may affect how that very experience is later remembered. Research has found documenting to have both impairing (Barasch, Diehl, and Zauberman, 2014; Henkel, 2014; Soares & Storm, 2018; Zauberman, Diehl, & Barasch, 2013) and enhancing (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017; Henkel, 2014) effects on memory. This study's findings contribute to this line of research in two regards. First, this study supports the view of documentation as helping improve the memorability of any given experience. This alone is quite interesting as just the act of taking a picture or video seems to have a functional purpose in improving memory. Secondly, this previous line of research has exclusively focused on the accuracy in memory alone as the metric for memorability. In this study, five different aspects of memory were assessed, with recall being a distinct and significant aspect of memory not previously found. That is, no prior study has found that the act of

documenting improves the odds of recollecting an experience freely and without a cue. Together, the present findings project a clearer view of documenting as a significant catalyst for engraining experiences into memory.

In addition, this study has implications for the continual scholarly interest in technology-facilitated cognitive offloading. In this research area, a much-debated issue regards whether the act of documenting inherently implies an offloading effect of memories. The idea of offloading in this context reflects how the responsibility to remember an experience is transferred from a person's own biological memory system to the digital storage of a camera (Risko & Gilbert, 2016). Put simply, a traveler who documents is relying almost exclusively on the camera to remember for them what happened in any given experience. However, this exemplifies only one position as others believe there to be no offloading effect with documentation, and in fact, argue that documenting promotes the organic memory engraining process (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017). The present findings provide further evidence in understanding this unanswered topic. The results showcased that participants reported lower confidence in the accuracy of the memory for the Tourism Moment in which they documented. In principle, this indicates they can only say with certainty that the documented experience occurred but cannot defiantly articulate how the experience occurred. This is one of the first studies to forward evidence showcasing the existence of a cognitive offloading effect in play. As a result, this study aligns with the work by Fawns (2013) in cautioning about the many indirect and long-term consequences of offloading the memory of experiences via a camera. Naturally as well, future research is needed to further unpack the extent to which cognitive offloading via documenting can have negative repercussions for tourism experiences.

#### **4.6.2 Practical Implications**

Documentation will continue to be an integral and prevalent aspect of travel. However, this study identified a potential pitfall facing travelers today. That is, the decision of whether or not to document is not exactly a harmless choice to make. Choose to document and travelers improve their memorability of the experience while sacrificing their sense of immersion during the experience – effects are opposite for choosing to only observe a travel experience. Travelers then face a crossroads of sort where they have to make a significant tradeoff that negatively impacts either their consumption experience or memory recollection experience. So what role do

destinations have in helping travelers navigate through this dilemma? In reality, it will be difficult for destinations to dictate travelers' decisions to document or not. Yet, there may be possible solutions that may indirectly help mitigate the negative consequences for each respective decision. For the disengaging effects of documentation, this requires a strategy that improves travelers' engagement with their experience despite the inherently distracting nature of documenting. Specifically, this study found a decrease in attention dedicated and level of engagement felt during documented Tourism Moments. If travelers are walking away feeling like they missed out on the experience, then destinations must think creatively on how to combat this sense of loss. For travelers who choose to not document and only observe their Tourism Moments, the results suggest their memory for these experiences will not be as strong. This then pits destinations to help these travelers better remember what they did not document during the experience. One suggestion would be to collect geographical information from travelers' movements around their destination. With this data in hand, destinations could send travelers a digital album of professional photographs for all of the popular sights and attractions they visited during their stay. In essence, this allows these non-documenting travelers to have vivid memory cues to recollect the travel experiences they were highly engaged with.

An offloading effect is believed to be in play when travelers document their travel experience. As discussed earlier, this reflects a mindset in which travelers subconsciously relinquish any part in remembering what occurs during an experience over to their cameras. While this may seem insignificant on the surface, research shows that travelers then have to almost exclusively rely on that picture or video to recollect and relive the memory again. Otherwise, and as this study showcased, travelers have little confidence in recollecting the experience again correctly. Destinations must then function to combat the negative implications of this offloading phenomenon. Put simply, they must give travelers who document ownership over their most precious travel memories. Otherwise, some researchers have cautioned about the long-term consequences to our organic cognitive abilities of continual offloading through the use of technology (Risko & Gilbert, 2016). Understood within the context of travel, the consistent reliance on cameras to remember their travel experiences may lead to a future in which travelers lose the capability to organically internalize travel experiences into their memory. Or alternatively, with an outsourced memory, it may get to a point where travelers will need to absolutely have in possession a photograph or video to recollect the memory of even their best



experiences. With the ever-expanding digital image storage capacities, people may struggle even more to locate the deeply cherished travel memories lost within the hoard of other photographs and videos (Fawns, 2013). Destinations must aid with this challenge, for if their past visitors cannot recollect even their most precious Tourism Moments, then they lose the opportunity to re-inspire a repeat visit or create destination ambassadors.

This study confirms the importance of hedonic experiences for improving memory. Enjoyment was seen to be a significantly powerful predictor of how well a traveler remembered their Tourism Moment. Recently, many researchers have argued for a diminishing role that hedonism plays in tourism, instead advocating for destinations to place greater emphasis on eudaimonic experience (Matteucci & Filep, 2017). The present findings showcase that it is not that one is better than the other, but rather, that each type of experience offers its own unique outcomes. Hedonism facilitates a stronger memory whereas eudaimonia facilitates better self-growth. Destinations must then determine which type of experience they should get behind. It basically boils down to whether they should ensure their travelers have stronger memories of their travel experiences or that their travelers walk away from their trips with more meaningful and self-fulfilling experiences. Of course, the easy answer is to focus on site management that offers a range of both hedonic and eudaimonic experiences within the destination experience. Thus, the strategy should really be on ensuring the destination experience is well-rounded in both regards.

#### **4.7 Limitations and Future Research**

There are a few notable limitations to this study that must be highlighted. First, and perhaps the most blatant is the lack of generalizability for the results due to the narrow demographic profile. Due to the nature of the recruitment at university/college campuses, the sample consisted of mostly participants between the ages of 18 to 25. Accordingly, it is difficult to know if the study's findings translate to an older population, especially considering that memory efficacy is drastically affected by age. However, the homogeneous profile of the sample helps reduce the random error associated with a widely diverse sample. Another cause for concern pertains to use of a virtual reality environment to simulate a tourism experience. Given the experiment design, it was determined that a virtual reality experience offered the most suitable method in which to complete the study. However, some may question whether the degree of simulation fidelity in the

virtual environment was realistic enough to proxy a ‘real’ tourism experience. This concern is someone alleviated as sense of presence, an established metric to measure immersion in virtual environments (Carlin, Hoffman, & Weghorst, 1997), was rated as moderately high by participants. Equally important, when asked how realistic they perceived the virtual travel experience to be, participants also gave this a high rating. The use of virtual reality environments has been in use for many years across several fields (Cipresso, et al., 2013; Cowan & Ketron, 2019; Mallot, Gillner, van Veen, & Bühlhoff, 1998; Schultheis, Rebimbas, Mourant, & Millis, 2007), and its implementation in the tourism research is growing as well (Yung & Khoo-Lattimore, 2019). Another possible limitation to highlight is the length of time between when the participants conducted the experiment and when their memory of the Tourism Moment was measured. Participants completed the memory survey anytime between 40 and 48 hours after they went through the experiment, and thus, some may question whether this is enough time elapsed to appropriately measure memory of an experience. In referencing the expansive memory research in cognitive psychology, there exists a great range in the measurement of a post-experiment memory. Most common however, self-report memory measurements are conducted within minutes after the exposure to stimuli (Barasch, Diehl, Silverman, & Zauberman, 2017) suggesting the roughly two-day timeframe used in this study is more than sufficient. In addition, it is important to reiterate that memory is highly malleable, and so its measurement as a dependent variable is always to be taken with care. It is malleable in the sense that every time a memory is recollected, it’s episodic details may be altered – thus, the degree to which each participant’s recollection was altered could have obviously varied. Finally, some may question whether the results are dependent on the nature of the experience utilized. The scenario presented participants with an urban, big-city destination experience, with a range of different scenes. However, there were a total of four scenes used as stimuli for the Tourism Moments participants. These scenes depicted experiences ranging from a waterfall experience, a visit to landmark, riding on a ferry, and being on a downtown hotel balcony. While these four scenes were counterbalanced from participant to participant and all reflected leisure-oriented experiences, some may wonder if the effects of documentation could be found across other types of travel experiences.

There is potential for a few prospective research endeavors that follow the present findings. One natural progression to this present research is to adopt the same experimental design using real travel experiences with real travelers and real smartphones to document. As vivid and realistic as the virtual reality experience is, the actual embodied experience of documenting a real experience is irreplaceable. Doing so would help verify the present findings. In addition, as the current study only utilized videography as the only form of documentation, it would be interesting to examine how the impacts to memory change when photography is the focus of documentation. Perhaps one of the biggest areas to address regards whether the nature of the experience changes how documentation impacts both the consumption experience and memory. As noted prior, different ‘types’ of Tourism Moment experiences were utilized in the experience, however the exact types of experience these were meant to depict were not conclusive and objective. Thus, it would be beneficial to compare relatively definitive types of experiences against each other in terms of the effect of documentation. For instance, does documenting a nature experience (e.g., sunset) have the same effect on memory as documenting a cultural experience (e.g., parade). Or, does it matter whether the experience is static in nature (e.g., physical landmark) or fleeting (e.g., seeing a wild animal appear)? There is much room for future research to examine the extent to which documenting can be impactful on both how travelers consume and remember their travel experiences.

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## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The study of tourism experiences has been a long-sought pursuit by researchers over the years, with conceptual developments made throughout. With so much effort dedicated to this topic, we've established a well-rounded and thorough examination of what it means to go through a tourism experience. Yet, too often focus has centered on understanding the tourism experience as encompassing the entirety of a traveler's trip. Certainly, different aspects of the tourism experience have been investigated as researchers choose sub-topics within the general tourism experience framework (e.g., food tourism, wellness, restorative). Across the wide gamut of tourism experience topics there has generally been a disregard to recognize the importance of micro-experiences that occur at a much narrow temporal window. So, this study adopted a simple goal of understanding the role that temporally short but significant moments have within the grand scheme of the tourism experience.

The first study sought to begin with developing a conceptualization of what is referred to as a 'Tourism Moment'. While the idea of a 'Tourism Moment' experience had long been implicitly discussed within the tourism literature, this study forwarded an empirically derived definition and description of the phenomenon in question. This brought to the surface an experience that travelers have long encountered but has not been appropriately identified or understood. Four variations in the types of Tourism Moment experiences possible were also identified. At large, participants expressed how Tourism Moments are anticipated, sought after, and consciously savored when they arise during a trip – showcasing Tourism Moments to be an absolute intricate experience that must be fulfilled. A paradox was revealed regarding Tourism Moments as memories. Tourism Moments are seen to offer a highly vivid reliving experience from memory yet rarely come to be recalled in the first place. As such, although Tourism Moments may offer the only way to relive a past trip, this opportunity is often never realized. Finally, while it was not an initial focus of the study's objectives, a salient pattern arose in the interviews regarding how travelers choose to consume their Tourism Moments. It was very clear that many travelers have predetermined beliefs on how they will take in any Tourism Moment they encounter – one group of travelers will always certainly document the experience while the second group of travelers will ensure to only observe or participate in the experience without

documenting. The first study made great headway in spotlighting the existence of a seemingly prevalent yet under researched experience while also identifying its immense value to travelers. With a confirmation for the existence of Tourism Moments, the second study focused on exploring further what affects the memorability of these special experiences. Specifically, study 1 revealed a clear demarcation showcasing how travelers either document or just observe these Tourism Moments. Accordingly, the purpose of study 2 was to examine the impact that documenting a temporally short experience (such as a Tourism Moment) has on how a traveler consumes and remembers the experience. The results proved that those who document a Tourism Moment are more disconnected with the experience than those who just observe it unfold. Yet, despite this compromised consumption experience, travelers have a greater chance of freely recalling a Tourism Moment when they document it. A caveat exists however as these travelers will have less confidence in the accuracy of their documented Tourism Moment memory. In addition, it was found that the hedonic experience of a Tourism Moment is more beneficial for remembering the event than the cognitive experience (e.g., attention, engagement).

In reconciling the findings from both studies of this dissertation, a clear picture emerges regarding the role of Tourism Moments across the three stages of travel as showcased in figure 14. In the pre-trip stage, people get the itch to travel because of the possibility of experiencing Tourism Moments. In a way, traveling becomes a means to an end – a means in which to encounter the distinct experience of a Tourism Moment not possible in everyday life. Once on site and exploring the destination, travelers feel an underlying sense that the destination could produce a Tourism Moment at any given time and place. Yet even with this implicit anticipation, Tourism Moments always have a way of emerging suddenly and catching the traveler off-guard. And it is precisely because of the unexpected nature of their emergence that allows for some of the most organic and carefree experience on the trip. Tourism Moments also can manifest in one of four types of Tourism Moments, each representing a slightly different experience. Due to this variety, Tourism Moments also function to break up the flow of continuity that bogs down even some of the most enjoyable trips. Ultimately however, the fate of any given Tourism Moment is determined by how a traveler chooses to consume and experience the moment. With a sudden emergence, and only seconds to minutes to experience, travelers act instinctively to either document or just observe the Tourism Moment. The subsequent consequence of this seemingly innocent decision proves significant for how travelers come to experience and remember the

Tourism Moment. As it unfolds, documenting the Tourism Moment cognitively disconnects the traveler from the experience. In contrast, not documenting and only observing or participating in the experience makes the traveler more mindfully in tune to what occurs. Post trip, the impacts of how travelers choose to consume their Tourism Moments are also felt. Those travelers who documented their Tourism Moments (as opposed to those who observed/participated) are more likely to recall the moment freely from memory, however, have less faith in the accuracy of this memory. This effect proves to be important as Tourism Moments are rarely recalled from memory in general. If successfully recalled however, Tourism Moments are some of the most vivid memories from a past trip – i.e., they produce a mental simulation that transports the person back into that experience anew. Beyond the nature of consumption, two additional factors determine the memorability of Tourism Moments. First, Tourism Moments which are high in enjoyment have the best chance of being memorable later on. In other words, hedonic-rich Tourism Moments may not suffer as much from the low recall-rate of other Tourism Moments. Secondly, travelers who maintain physical mementos around their homes create vivid memory cues which increase the likelihood of recalling the Tourism Moment and trip again. Finally, the memorability of Tourism Moments, in terms of the recall rate and reliving vividness, proves critical for re-inspiring the desire to travel again.

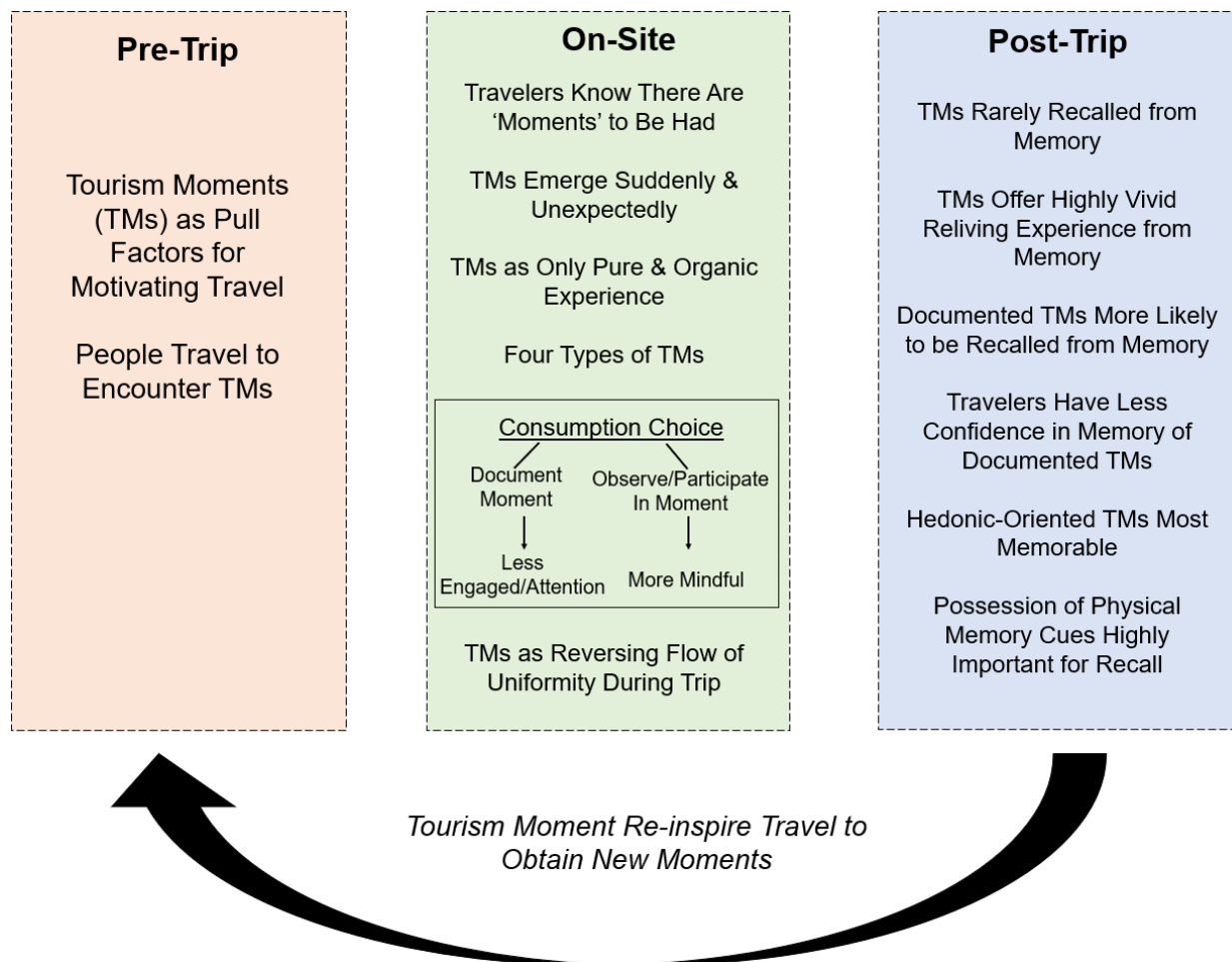


Figure 14. Overview of Dissertation Findings

## APPENDIX A. STUDY 1



***\*\*Seeking Interview Participants\*\****

**Can you still remember certain special moments from a past vacation?**

**If so...please share your stories with us!**

**We are researchers from Purdue University conducting interviews to learn about tourists' most memorable and cherished moments during vacations.**

**The interview may last between 60 to 90 minutes.**

**In appreciation for your time, you will receive \$15.**

To qualify for this interview, you must have gone on a vacation/trip during year 2018.

If interested\*, contact Joel Anaya at [ganaya@purdue.edu](mailto:ganaya@purdue.edu) or scan QR



\*Your participation and responses will be kept confidential

Figure A.1 Flyer for Interview Recruitment

## **Interview Guide**

### **A) Introduction**

*First of all, thank you for agreeing to be a part of this study.*

*I first want to give you an outline of how the interview will go before we get started...*

*1) First, I will provide a bit of background regarding my motivation for conducting this study.*

*2) Thereafter, I will ask you to identify a previous trip which occurred within the last year, and ask you to describe it to me.*

*3) Then, I will provide you with a definition and description of what I call a **Tourism Moment**, as well as share a few examples.*

*4) Thereafter, I will ask you to think of and describe one of the best moments that you yourself experienced from a recent vacation.*

*5) Following this, I will then be asking you a series of questions to learn more about your Tourism Moment*

*6) To conclude the interview, I will ask you to complete a survey which includes a number of questions intended on measuring the memory of your moment, and other experiences from this vacation.*

### **B) Rapport Building: My Motivation for Study**

*I was initially interested in this topic because I noticed a very common practice with smartphones and how we record our experiences.*

*I noticed that most people, whenever something really interesting is happening before them, they always want to pull out their phones to take a picture or video of what is happening, rather than simply watching it unfold.*

*I first noticed this with sporting events. Like whenever a really special thing is about to happen, such as the final buzzer-beater shot at a basketball game, the majority of the crowd has their phone in front of their face ready to record this upcoming moment, rather than simply watching it unfold.*

*But these types of 'recordable' moments don't just happen with sports, I realized these moments, while rare, happen in our daily lives. Certain things just sort of spring up in real life, and create an urge to record them.*

*I then realized I was interested in what these moments are all about.*

*In particular, I recognized that these moments are most likely to occur during vacations/trips due to being in an interesting place and being more receptive to experience.*

*So I sought to learn anything about these moment-like experience, so I reviewed tourism research to see if others have picked up on this.*

*In addition, I read online travel blogs to see if people seem to experience such moments during their trips/vacations.*

*What I recognized was that most travelers experience a few very special and unique moments during their vacations. Often, these moments come to be the only experiences that are remembered from a vacation.*

*So that is what the goal of our study is ... to learn about people's best travel-related moments.*

### **C) Describing Their Overall Trip**

*Alright, to start off the interview I was hoping you can first identify a trip which occurred last year.*

*A leisure trip is defined as a trip made outside of one's typical place of residence for the purpose of entertainment, relaxation, recreation, sightseeing, etc.*

*So given this definition of a leisure trip, I will give you some time to first identify this trip.*

**\*\*ONCE TRIP IDENTIFIED\*\***

Alright, well my first question is in regard to this trip you just mentioned. So can you take a few minutes to describe the OVERALL trip to me?

Probe if Needed:

1. Where did this trip take place?
2. Have you been to this place before?
3. What was the purpose of the trip?
4. What were you most looking forward to in the trip at destination XYZ?
5. Who was in your travel party?
6. How long was the trip?
7. In regards to this specific trip to destination XYZ, how would you describe how you feel overall about the trip?
  - a. **Further probe:**
    - i. Why do you believe it was satisfying/unsatisfying and enjoyable/unjoyable?
  - b. *Probe if Needed*
    - i. How do you know it was or was not a successful trip?

### **D) Defining/Describing a Tourism Moment**

*Okay, thanks for giving me that overall summary and explanation of your trip. It sounded like it was fun!*

*Now I would like to go deeper into your trip, and try to explore and identify the most interesting moment of your trip.*

*First, I will provide a brief explanation and description for what I consider to be a Tourism Moment.*

*We define a Tourism Moment as a very interesting or unique experience that emerges suddenly in a vacation, and only lasts a matter of a few seconds to a few minutes.*

*So it comes down to two characteristics: 1) interesting/special/unique, etc. experience; 2) lasts few seconds to minutes*

*These are experiences that occur in moments where there is a sudden spike in something interesting happening. While these types of moments can happen in everyday life (for instance, seeing a guy twirl a pizza sign during a red light), they are more likely to happen during vacations. Here are a few examples of actual Tourism Moments shared by actual travelers online:*

- Whale Watching (fleeting)
  - *For one tourist, their moment occurred when they were on a boat tour in the ocean. Towards the end of their tour, as they were heading back to shore, a big whale suddenly emerged from the water and did a series of several jumps for a couple of minutes.*
- Great Wall of China (sightseeing)
  - *For another tourist, their moment came when they first laid their eyes on the Great Wall of China. They described the pure amazement they experienced during the first initial few minutes they spent standing and just looking at the sight before them.*
- Bar Reflection (private)
  - *One tourist simply described a moment of reflection in which after a busy day of flying they were in a bar at their final destination in Maui and suddenly realized where they were (private).*

*Okay, now do you have any questions or need further clarification on a Tourism Moment?*

### **E) Describing THEIR Moment**

*Now, considering this description and the examples given, I would like you to think back to the trip you just shared with me. From this trip, please identify one experience that you think is a*



*Tourism Moment that happened to you. It does not have to be similar to any of the examples shared, simply consider the following question: **What is one of the most interesting, unique, or special moments which occurred to you?** I'll give you a few minutes to think of this. Once you have done so, please describe it to me with as much detail as you can.*

#### Probes/Elaboration

- If they are having trouble thinking of one, then follow up with:
  - o Is there a particular experience that you often remember most often from the trip?
  - o What do you consider to be the most interesting 'highlight' from the trip?
  - o Is there anything that happened that you shared with others during or after the trip?

#### Confirming TM CEM

- If somewhat sure of CEM, then ask:
  - o Alright, in reference to this Tourism Moment you just shared, I would just like to confirm that the moment occurred during the activity XYZ? Is this correct?
- If not sure of CEM, then ask:
  - Self Instructions
    - Ask relevant questions to try to identify what their CEM is for their overall moment
      - o Probing Questions:
        - What was your overall purpose for XYZ?
        - What was your overall objective for being at XYZ?
        - What activity would you associate the Tourism Moment with? In other words, what were you doing when the moment happened?
- Self-Instructions:
  - o Write down what the TM CEM is

#### **F) The Moment – Learning More About The Experience**

*Alright, now I would like to ask you further questions about your Tourism Moment itself. What happened? How it happened? Basically, I am interested in learning as much as I can about what you experienced. Let's get started.*

.....  
*\*\*IF sightseeing or private moment, spend time figuring out beginning and ending 'boundaries' of their moment. So explicitly tell participant that I am trying to first confirm what would be considered the starting and end point to their moment*

#### **Trigger**

*First, I'm interested in learning about what lead to the moment in the first place.*

- a. Can you describe to me what were you doing the seconds to minutes right before the moment occurred?
- b. How would you describe your mood *before* the moment occurred?
- c. Probe if Needed:
  - i. Was your mood more negative or positive? Or neither?
- d. Further Probe:**
  - i. Why were you in this mood?
- e. Based on what was happening right before moment occurred, was there any reason to suspect that something unique was going to occur?
  - i. Further Probe:**
    - 1. Why or why not?
  - ii. Probe if Needed:
    - 1. Did you anticipate something interesting was about to happen before it did?
- f. Imagine your Tourism Moment was filmed and you are later trying to show it to a friend on TV. At one point would you consider the starting point of the Tourism Moment to press play? Why?

### ***Phenomenon***

*Next I would like to learn more about how your actual Tourism Moment unfolded as it happened. So I will ask you a series of questions about your behavior, emotions/thoughts, and other details about what occurred.*

### **Opinion/Value**

- a. What do you think ultimately made the moment special or unique for you?
  - a. Probe if Needed:
    - i. How did you know the experience was special?
- b. Prior to your trip, what kind of experiences did you expect you would have at destination XYZ?
  - a. Probe if Needed:
    - i. Did you have any specific experiences you expected to have? Why?
  - b. Further Probe:**
    - i. Before the trip occurred, could you have predicted this moment occurring?
      - 1. Further Probe:
        - a. If so, why?
- c. Given what you know a Tourism Moment to be, take a minute to try to think about your overall trip, and determine whether you experienced many Tourism Moments, or just a few?

- Behavioral and Cognitive Consumption
    - a. If I had been watching you as the moment unfolded, what would I have seen you doing during it?
      - a. Probe if Needed:
        - i. Were you very mobile and active OR fairly still and stationary?
    - b. If others were present, what were they doing during the moment?
    - c. Some people describe the idea of ‘being in the moment’, or in other words dedicating complete attention and being completely locked in to only the current experience before you. On the other end, some people become distracted with something else, and fail to be fully present in the moment happening before them
      - a. Considering this, how would you describe your attention with what you experienced during your Tourism Moment?
        - i. Further Probe:**
          - 1. **\*\*IF THEY REPORTED HIGH ATTENTION\*\*:**
            - a. How does it feel to be fully in the moment?
        - ii. Probe if Needed:
          - 1. Was there anything else pulling you away from taking in the moment at hand?
- Feelings/Thoughts
  - a. How would you describe your emotions *during* the moment?
    - a. Probe if Needed:
      - i. If you could sum up your feelings into one specific emotion, what would it be?
    - b. Further Probe:**
      - i. Why do you think you were experiencing [Insert Emotion]?
  - b. Do you remember the thoughts that were going through your head *during* the moment? And if so, what was going through your mind?
    - a. Probe if Needed:
      - i. For instance, some people say they can remember specific sentences or words that went through their mind during a moment. Was this the case with you?
- Other Experiential Details
  - a. Do you believe the moment went by quickly or slowly? (fleetingness)
    - i. Further Probe:**
      - 1. *For quickly:* How did it feel like to experience something so special/interesting so quickly?
        - a. Probe:
          - i. Was there any sense of urgency or felt tension due to quickness of moment?

- ii. A little bit confused
    - 2. *For slowly*: How did it feel like to experience something so special/interesting so slowly?
  - b. How did you know that the moment was over?
    - i. Probe If Needed:
      - 1. What would you consider the end point to your moment?
    - ii. **Further Probe**:
      - 1. At the time it occurred, how obvious was it to you that the moment had ended?
        - a. Probe if Needed:
          - i. What indicated that the moment was over?
- Moment-Specific Questions
  - o *Sightseeing*
    - *I know you spoke about this a little bit already, but what would you ultimately believe is the reason you found the sight so captivating and interesting?*
    - *I would like to confirm something regarding your Tourism Moment. You said you had experienced the emotions of [XYZ]. Did you experience these emotions intensely only for the first few seconds/minutes of seeing the sight, or was it for the entire time you were at the place where you could see the sight?*
      - Probe if Needed:
        - o How long did you experience these emotions?
      - **Further Probe**
        - o So just to confirm, the emotions you experienced because of seeing the sight...
          - Were intense only for the first few seconds/minutes of first seeing the sight
          - Were pretty intense throughout the ENTIRE time you were able to view the sight
    - Was there anything which spoiled or lessened your experience of the moment at the time?
      - **Probe Further**:
        - o What would have spoiled or lessened your experience of the moment had it happened?
        - o OR
        - o What would have gotten in the way of you taking in the moment?
    - So your moment was really about being captivated by this amazing/interesting visual scene. I'm sure you experienced similar moments in the past as well in which you are captivated by some really interesting sight. Generally speaking, I'm interested in learning about what is your typical FIRST reaction when you come upon such interesting

sights: 1) Do nothing, and just admire it freely; 2) Talk about it with others who are present; 3) Document it with video/picture; 4) or something else.

- **Further Probe:**

- Why do you typically do this?

- *Fleeting Participatory*

- If you could relive it again, and change something about the moment, what would it be?
- Did you take a video or pictures of the experience during the moment?

- **Probe Further:**

- If so, do you believe you experienced the moment any differently than those who did not take a picture/video during the moment?

- *Fleeting*

- Did you take a video or pictures of the experience during the moment?

- **Probe Further:**

- If so, do you believe you experienced the moment any differently than those who did not take a picture/video during the moment?

- Did you know DURING the moment that it was going to be over quickly?

- **Probe Further:**

- If so, how did you know?

- Given the moment went by fairly quickly, did you feel any sense of urgency with trying to make the most out of the moment before it ended?

- **Probe Further:**

- If so, why?
- If so, what did it feel like to have this urgency to want to enjoy the moment as best as you can?

- Looking back now, how well or poorly did you do at making the most out of this short moment?

- **Probe if Needed:**

- Do you feel as though you maximized your enjoyment of the moment?

- Was there anything which spoiled or lessened your experience of the moment at the time?

- **Probe Further:**

- What would have spoiled or lessened your experience of the moment had it happened?
- OR
- What would have gotten in the way of you taking in the moment?

- *Private*
  - Some have described the moment as intensely dream-like, while other moments seem to be much less like this, what did the experience feel like to you?
- Environmental Context
  - a. Can you describe to me the physical environment where the moment took place?
  - b. Who else was present during the moment?
- Post-Moment
  - a. How would you describe what occurred after the moment?
  - b. How would you describe your mood after the moment was over?

### **Consequences for Overall Trip**

- a. How would you feel about the trip if the moment had not occurred?
  - a. **Probe Further:**
    - i. Why? OR Why not?
  - b. Probe if Needed:
    - i. Do you believe experiencing the moment adds any value to the trip?

### **Storytelling and Recollection (Memory)**

- a. Have you talked about this moment with others before?
  - a. **Probe Further:**
    - i. How often?
    - ii. Was it during the trip? After the trip? Both?
    - iii.
- b. How often after the trip was over have you thought about the moment since?
  - a. Probe:
    - i. Have you ever remembered this moment randomly out of the blue?

### **G) Identifying Tourism Moment #2**

*Alright thank you for sharing those details about your Tourism Moment from a recent vacation. Now I would like to see if you have experienced a Tourism Moment from a much older vacation.*

*So can you take a bit of time to try to remember a trip that you took which occurred more than 5 years ago – so that would be any trip which occurred any time before January 2014.*

NOVEMBER 13

13 DAYS

\*\*\*AFTER THIS OLD TRIP IS IDENTIFIED\*\*\*

*Alright can you tell me a little bit about what you remember from this trip. So as you did earlier, just try to describe to me your experience with as much detail as you can.*

\*\*\*\*AFTER THE OLD TRIP IS DESCRIBED\*\*\*\*

*Alright, now again as we did earlier, what would you consider to be a Tourism Moment you experienced from this trip? In other words, **What is the most interesting, unique, or special moment which occurred to you?** I'll give you a few minutes to think of this. Once you have done so, please describe it to me with as much detail as you can.*

Confirming TM CEM

- If somewhat sure of CEM, then ask:
  - o Alright, in reference to this Tourism Moment you just shared, I would just like to confirm that the moment occurred during the activity XYZ? Is this correct?
- If not sure of CEM, then ask:
  - o Alright, I would like to clarify a little bit more about the moment you just shared.
    - What activity would you associate the Tourism Moment with? In other words, what were you doing when the moment happened?
- Self-Instructions:
  - o Write down what the TM CEM is

## **H) Measuring Memory of Moments**

*Okay, we are almost finished with the interview. Now for the last thing is I would like you to take a quick survey which will ask you questions intended on understanding your memory for both of the Tourism Moments you shared, as well as any other experiences from your trip.*

Self-Instructions:

- Insert the Tourism Moment and CEM names into the survey questions for both Tourism Moments
- Give them computer to fill out survey

- Stress to participant to answer the questions as honestly as possible, and that there are no right or wrong answers.

### **I) Closing**

*Okay, well that survey concludes the interview. I thank you for your time and patience over the course of this interview. Do you have any questions for me about this study? (Answer question)*

*Alright, after I have completed a few additional interviews, I will be conducting a qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts to answer the study's research questions. Would it be okay if I send you a report of the interview transcript, in addition to my takeaways to confirm that I have accurately and appropriately interpreted what you have shared today? (IF YES, COLLECT EMAIL).*

*Great, well thank you again for your participation.*

### **OPTIONAL SECTION**

The appendix titles have a 'Major Heading' style applied. These will allow for an un-indented appearance in the table of contents. Tables and figures that appear within this section DO NOT need to appear in the list of figures or tables. Though, you may label your appendix figures/tables as Figure/Table A.1, Figure/Table A.2, etc. If you have multiple appendices please change the label letter with each new appendix (example: Figure A.1, Figure B.1, Figure C.1, etc.).

The Graduate School is fairly flexible with the appendix format. We just ask that text, figures, and tables fit within all margin requirements.



**PURDUE**  
HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES  
HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

APPROVED UNTIL  
APR 30 2019  
EASTERN  
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

**WANT TO TRY A  
VIRTUAL REALITY VACATION?**

**\*Persons under the age of 18 are not eligible for this study.**



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Q4

In this survey, you will be asked to think back on the virtual vacation to Seattle that you just went through.

---

Q38 The following questions will ask you about your **waterfall experience**.

As you are answering the questions, please do so from the perspective of imagining that you were actually there at the waterfall during a vacation to Seattle.

Concentrate on trying to remember what the waterfall experience was like, as if it happened in real life.

---

Page Break



Q9

Please rate the following statements regarding how **enjoyable** you found the *waterfall experience*.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
This experience gave me pleasure (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience gave me a sense of enjoyment (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience made me feel good (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience made me feel uncomfortable (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience was fun (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Page Break

End of Block: Intro

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Start of Block: Engagement w/Video #1



Q33 Please rate the following statements regarding how engaged you were with the *waterfall experience*.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I felt like I was really a part of the waterfall experience (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really got into the waterfall experience (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was totally absorbed in where I was at during the waterfall experience (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please select 'Somewhat Disagree' for this statement (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During the waterfall experience, my mind was on other things at the same time (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Engagement w/Video #1

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Start of Block: Attention w/Video #1





Q54 Please rate the following statements regarding how much **visual** attention you dedicated to the *waterfall experience*.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I watched the waterfall experience before me entirely through my own eyes (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My visual attention was on other things besides the waterfall experience before me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I focused 100% of my visual attention only on the waterfall experience before me (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Given how much visual attention I dedicated to the waterfall experience, I am confident I will remember the visual details of this experience in the future (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Attention w/Video #1

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Start of Block: Enjoyment

Q39 Now, the following questions will ask you about your **ferry experience**.

As you are answering the questions, please do so from the perspective of imagining that you were actually there on that ferry during a vacation to Seattle.

Concentrate on trying to remember what the ferry experience was like, as if it happened in real life.

-----  
\_\_\_\_\_



Q10

Please rate the following statements regarding how **enjoyable** you found the *ferry experience*.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
This experience gave me pleasure (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience gave me a sense of enjoyment (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience made me feel good (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience made me feel uncomfortable (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience was fun (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Enjoyment

Start of Block: Engagement w/ Video #2



Q34 Please rate the following statements regarding how engaged you were with the *ferry* experience.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I felt like I was really a part of the ferry experience (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really got into the ferry experience (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was totally absorbed in where I was at during the ferry experience (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During the ferry experience, my mind was on other things at the same time (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Engagement w/ Video #2

Start of Block: Attention w/Video #2



Q52 Please rate the following statements regarding how much **visual** attention you dedicated to the *ferry experience*.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
I watched the ferry experience before me entirely through my own eyes (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My visual attention was on other things besides the ferry experience before me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I focused 100% of my visual attention only on the ferry experience before me (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Given how much visual attention I dedicated to the ferry experience, I am confident I will remember the visual details of this experience in the future (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q44

Think about the vacations that you may take in the future....during the best or most interesting moments that may happen on these vacations, how likely are you to take a picture or video of these moments on your phone, instead of just watching them?

	1 (Not Likely at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (About half the time) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Likely) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





Q41 In the past, how often have you visited the Snoqualmie Falls (as shown in the virtual vacation to Seattle)?

- ☐ Never (1)
  - ☐ Not Often (2)
  - ☐ Somewhat Often (3)
  - ☐ Often (4)
  - ☐ Very Often (5)
- 



Q46 When was the last time you visited Snoqualmie Falls?

- ☐ 1-6 Months Ago (1)
  - ☐ 7-12 Months Ago (2)
  - ☐ More than 1 Year Ago (3)
  - ☐ More than 2 Years Ago (4)
  - ☐ 3-5 Years Ago (5)
  - ☐ More Than 6 Years Ago (6)
  - ☐ Not sure (7)
-



Q42 In the past, how often have you been on a ferry in Seattle?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Not Often (2)
- ☐ Somewhat Often (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ Very Often (5)



Q44 When was the last time you were on a ferry in Seattle?

- ☐ 1-6 Months Ago (1)
- ☐ 7-12 Months Ago (2)
- ☐ More than 1 Year Ago (3)
- ☐ More than 2 Years Ago (4)
- ☐ 3-5 Years Ago (5)
- ☐ More Than 6 Years Ago (6)
- ☐ Not sure (7)

End of Block: Control Variables

---

Start of Block: Manipulation Checks

Q36 Please rate the following statements regarding the entire *virtual reality* world that you experienced *inside* the virtual reality headset.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
In the virtual reality world, I had a sense of 'being there' (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Somehow I felt that the virtual world surrounded me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I did not feel present in the virtual world (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was not aware of the real world outside of the virtual world (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please select 'Somewhat Disagree' on this statement (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was completely captivated by the virtual reality world (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q37 How real did the virtual reality world seem to you?

	1 (Not Real at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Completely Real) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q35 The virtual world seemed more realistic than the real world.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break



Q39 How realistic was the Seattle vacation scenario that you read?

	Highly Unrealistic (1)	Unrealistic (2)	Somewhat Unrealistic (3)	Neither Realistic nor Unrealistic (4)	Somewhat Realistic (5)	Realistic (6)	Highly Realistic (7)
(1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q41 How easy was it for you to understand what happened in the Seattle vacation scenario?

	Very Difficult (1)	Difficult (2)	Somewhat Difficult (3)	Neither Easy nor Difficult (4)	Somewhat Easy (5)	Easy (6)	Very Easy (7)
(3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q45 In the next two questions, you will be asked about your experience regarding the moment in the vacation scenario when you had a phone in front of you video recording the ferry experience.



Q43 Compared to real life, how realistic did it feel video recording the ferry experience on the virtual phone?

	Highly Unrealistic (1)	Unrealistic (2)	Somewhat Unrealistic (3)	Neither Realistic nor Unrealistic (4)	Somewhat Realistic (5)	Realistic (6)	Highly Realistic (7)
(1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q46

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement:

During the ferry experience, I concentrated on the phone screen as I normally do when I actually video record an experience with my phone in real life.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
(1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q57 Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
After the virtual vacation was over, I had an opportunity to think back on the waterfall and ferry experiences. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After the virtual vacation was over, I spent some time imagining how enjoyable the waterfall and ferry experiences were. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After the virtual vacation was over, I felt joy at the thought of experiencing the waterfall and ferry experiences. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q46 What gender do you most identify with?

- ☐ Male (1)
  - ☐ Female (2)
  - ☐ Non-binary/Third gender (3)
  - ☐ Prefer to self-describe as: (4)
- 

☐ Prefer not to say (5)



Q48 What is your age?

- ☐ 18-24 years old (1)
- ☐ 25-34 years old (2)
- ☐ 35-44 years old (3)
- ☐ 45-54 years old (4)
- ☐ 55-64 years old (5)
- ☐ 65-74 years old (6)
- ☐ 75 years or older (7)





Q50 What is your highest level of education?

- ☐ High school graduate, diploma, or the equivalent (eg. GED) (1)
- ☐ Some college credit, no degree earned (2)
- ☐ Trade/technical/vocational training (3)
- ☐ Associate degree (4)
- ☐ Bachelor's degree (5)
- ☐ Master's degree (6)
- ☐ Professional degree (7)
- ☐ Doctorate degree (8)



Q52 Which of the following options best describes your annual household income before tax?

- ☐ Less than \$10,000 (1)
- ☐ \$10,000-\$19,999 (2)
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$29,999 (3)
- ☐ \$30,000 - \$39,999 (4)
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$49,999 (5)
- ☐ \$50,000 - \$59,999 (6)
- ☐ \$60,000 - \$69,999 (7)
- ☐ \$70,000 - \$79,999 (8)
- ☐ \$80,000 - \$89,999 (9)
- ☐ \$90,000 or more (10)



Q54 Please specify your ethnicity/race.

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino (2)
- ☐ Black or African American (3)
- ☐ Native American or American Indian (4)
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (6)

End of Block: Demographics

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### **Questionnaire #2: Memory Experience**

## **Diss - Memory (Video 3 or 4) - NO PIC VERSION**

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Start of Block: Block 5

Q52 Please enter below the identification number given to you by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_

Page Break

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## RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Understanding the Experience of Tourism Moments Dr. Xinran Lehto  
School of Hospitality and Tourism Management  
Purdue University

### Key Information

Please take time to review this information carefully. This is a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary which means that you may choose not to participate at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may ask questions to the researchers about this study whenever you would like. If you decide to take part in this study by completing this survey, this represents your acknowledgement that you have given consent to taking part in the study, so be sure you understand what you will do and any possible risks or benefits.

The purpose of this research study is to compare different types of travel experiences that occur on a vacation.

You are being asked complete this questionnaire in order to determine to if there are any differences in the experiences you encountered during your virtual vacation to Seattle (experiment).

Up to 200 participants may complete this questionnaire.

**What will I do if I choose to be in this study?** You will be asked to answer a series of questions pertaining to the virtual vacation experiment you experienced.

**How long will I be in the study?** This survey will take between 7 to 10 minutes to complete.

**What are the possible risks or discomforts?** Your completion of this questionnaire presents a minimum level of risk – such that the risk is no greater than what you would encounter in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological exams or tests.

Another potential risk is breach of confidentiality. However, that are a number of safeguards in place to prevent this risk (see section on confidentiality below).

**Are there any potential benefits?** There are no direct benefits to you individually for your

participation in this questionnaire. With that said, the findings of this research – based on your involvement in this study – may allow researchers to determine the effects of different types of travel experiences.

**Will I receive payment or other incentive?**

You will receive your choice of either a \$5 Amazon or Starbucks e-giftcard upon the completion of this survey. You will be sent this e-giftcard via text or email.

**Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?** The project's research records may be reviewed by departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

In addition to this institutional review, the researchers will conduct a number of precautions to ensure that your participation in this study remains confidential.

Your responses will be kept confidential. In any sort of report of the study, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. The surveys will be filed securely; only the researchers for this study will have access to the records.

All data stored pertaining to both studies will be discarded by the projected end date of the research (8/15/2020).

**What are my rights if I take part in this study?**

Your participation in this questionnaire is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate or, if you agree to participate, you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Who can I contact if I have any questions about the study?**

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Joel Anaya via email at [ganaya@purdue.edu](mailto:ganaya@purdue.edu) or Dr. Xinran Lehto at [xinran@purdue.edu](mailto:xinran@purdue.edu).

If you have any questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email [irb@purdue.edu](mailto:irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection - Purdue University  
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032  
155 S. Grant St.,  
West Lafayette, IN. 47907-2114

### **Documentation** of Informed Consent

Completion and return of the survey implies that you have read the information in this form and consent to take part in this research. Please keep this form for your records or future reference.

End of Block: Block 5

---

Start of Block: Free Recall



### Free Recall

During the virtual vacation that you experienced in the virtual reality headset, you were shown both videos and still images of Seattle scenery.

For example, the fish toss and gum wall scenes were both still images of Seattle scenery. Do not refer to these types of images for the following question.

Also, do not reference the 'warm-up' virtual experience you did before the actual virtual vacation when answering the next question.

Can you remember any of the **videos** (NOT pictures) that you watched during your **virtual vacation** to Seattle?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)



Q5 How many of the videos can you remember?

☐ One (1)

☐ Two (2)

---

Page Break

Q40 Please provide a brief description of the one video that you remember?

☐ Video #1 (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 Please provide a brief description for each of the two videos that you remember?

☐ Video #1 (1) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Video #2 (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Q8 Below please select how easy it was for you to remember the memory of the experience for any of the videos you described above.



EaseofRecall How easy was it for you to remember the memory of the experience that you described as **Video #1** above?

	1 (Extremely Difficult) (1)	2 (Moderately Difficult) (2)	3 (Slightly Difficult) (3)	4 (Neither Easy nor Difficult) (4)	5 (Slightly Easy) (5)	6 (Moderately Easy) (6)	7 (Extremely Easy) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





Q53 How easy was it for you to remember the memory of the experience that you described as **Video #2** above?

	1 (Extremely Difficult) (1)	2 (Moderately Difficult) (2)	3 (Slightly Difficult) (3)	4 (Neither Easy nor Difficult) (4)	5 (Slightly Easy) (5)	6 (Moderately Easy) (6)	7 (Extremely Easy) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Free Recall

Start of Block: Recognition - IF YES FOR FREE RECALL

Q49 In the next few pages, you will be given a number of possible experiences that you may have encountered during your virtual vacation to Seattle.

For each experience given, you will be asked to determine if it is actually an experience that you encountered during your virtual vacation to Seattle, or if it is a new experience that you *never* encountered on that virtual vacation to Seattle.

Page Break



Q14 Did you visit the Seattle Aquarium during your virtual vacation to Seattle?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

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Page Break



Q17 Did you look outside on your hotel balcony during your virtual vacation to Seattle?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

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Q20 Did you visit the top of the Space Needle during your virtual vacation to Seattle?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

---

Page Break



Q22 Did you visit the Fremont Troll during your virtual vacation to Seattle?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

End of Block: Recognition - IF YES FOR FREE RECALL

Start of Block: Autobiographical Memory & Vividness

Q30 Please think about the memory of the **hotel balcony experience** while answering the questions below. Read each item carefully and select the rating that most closely reflects how you feel.



AMR1\_1 As I remember the **hotel balcony experience**, I feel as though I am reliving the original experience as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR2\_1 As I remember the **hotel balcony experience**, I can hear it in my mind as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR3\_1 As I remember the **hotel balcony experience**, I can see it in my mind as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR4\_1 As you remember the **hotel balcony experience**, how intensely can you feel the emotions now that you felt then?

	1 (Not Intense at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Intense) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q64 As you remember the **hotel balcony experience**, are you paying attention to this question (please select 'Yes' below)?

	1 (Not Intense at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (No) (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (Yes) (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Intense) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR5\_1 How clear is your memory for the physical setting where the **hotel balcony experience** took place?

	1 (Not Clear at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Clearly) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR6\_1 How vivid is your general memory for this **hotel balcony experience**?

	1 (Not at all Vivid) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Extremely Vivid) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break





AMB1\_1 Sometimes people know something happened to them without being able to actually remember exactly how it occurred.

With this in mind, to what extent do you agree with the following statement about the **hotel balcony experience**.

As I think about the memory of this hotel balcony experience, I just know it happened, and can't actually remember it.

	1 (Strongly Disagree) (1)	2 (Disagree) (2)	3 (Somewhat Disagree) (3)	4 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) (4)	5 (Somewhat Agree) (5)	6 (Agree) (6)	7 (Strongly Agree) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB2\_1 I could be persuaded that my memory of the **hotel balcony experience** is wrong.

	1 (Strongly Disagree) (1)	2 (Disagree) (2)	3 (Somewhat Disagree) (3)	4 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) (4)	5 (Somewhat Agree) (5)	6 (Agree) (6)	7 (Strongly Agree) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB3\_1 Do you believe this **hotel balcony experience** in your memory really occurred in the way you remember it and that you have not imagined or made up anything?

	1 (100% Imaginary) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (100% Real) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB4\_1 Would you be confident enough in your memory of the **hotel balcony experience** to testify in a court of law?

	1 (Not Confident at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Somewhat Unconfident) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Somewhat Confident) (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Confident) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q34 Now, please think about the memory of the **troll experience** while answering the questions below. Read each item carefully and select the rating that most closely reflects how you feel.

These questions pertain to the **troll experience**, and NOT the hotel balcony experience.



AMR1\_2 As I remember the **troll experience**, I feel as though I am reliving the original experience as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR2\_2 As I remember the **troll experience**, I can hear it in my mind as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR3\_2 As I remember the **troll experience**, I can see it in my mind as if it were happening right now

	1 (Not at all) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Vaguely) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Sharply) (5)	6 (6)	7 (As clearly as if it were happening right now) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR4\_2 As you remember the **troll experience**, how intensely can you feel the emotions now that you felt then?

	1 (Not Intense at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Intense) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR5\_2 How clear is your memory for the physical setting where the **troll experience** took place?

	1 (Not Clear at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Clearly) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMR6\_2 How vivid is your general memory for this **troll experience**?

	1 (Not at all Vivid) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Extremely Vivid) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break



AMB1\_2 Sometimes people know something happened to them without being able to actually remember exactly how it occurred.

With this in mind, to what extent do you agree with the following statement about the **troll experience**.

As I think about the memory of this troll experience, I just know it happened, and can't actually remember it.

	1 (Strongly Disagree) (1)	2 (Disagree) (2)	3 (Somewhat Disagree) (3)	4 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) (4)	5 (Somewhat Agree) (5)	6 (Agree) (6)	7 (Strongly Agree) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB2\_2 I could be persuaded that my memory of the **troll experience** is wrong.

	1 (Strongly Disagree) (1)	2 (Disagree) (2)	3 (Somewhat Disagree) (3)	4 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) (4)	5 (Somewhat Agree) (5)	6 (Agree) (6)	7 (Strongly Agree) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB3\_2 Do you believe this **troll experience** in your memory really occurred in the way you remember it and that you have not imagined or made up anything?

	1 (100% Imaginary) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Neutral) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (100% Real) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



AMB4\_2 Would you be confident enough in your memory of the **troll experience** to testify in a court of law?

	1 (Not Confident at All) (1)	2 (2)	3 (Somewhat Unconfident) (3)	4 (4)	5 (Somewhat Confident) (5)	6 (6)	7 (Very Confident) (7)
1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Autobiographical Memory & Vividness

Start of Block: Memory Accuracy

Q41

Please answer the following questions regarding the **hotel balcony experience**.

Page Break



ACC1 Regarding the hotel balcony experience...

Of the following, what ***best*** describes how busy the car and pedestrian traffic below was at the time?

- ☐ Not busy at all (1)
- ☐ Somewhat busy (2)
- ☐ Very busy (3)
- ☐ The street/sidewalk were not visible from the balcony (4)

---

Page Break





ACC3

Regarding the hotel balcony experience...

From the hotel balcony view, what general direction was the Puget Sound (i.e. body of water) located?

- ☐ Way off to the right of the balcony (1)
- ☐ Straight ahead of the balcony (2)
- ☐ Way off to the left of the balcony (3)
- ☐ The Puget Sound was not visible from the balcony (4)

---

Page Break



ACC2

Regarding the hotel balcony experience...

Of the following options, which *best* describes the exterior of the building directly opposite of the balcony?

- ☐ All glass windows (1)
- ☐ Red bricks (2)
- ☐ Windows and balconies (3)
- ☐ There was not a building directly opposite of the balcony (4)

---

Page Break

Q45

Now, please answer the following questions regarding the **troll experience.**

---



ACC1

Regarding the troll experience...

What is the troll holding in one of his hands?

☐ Bicycle (1)

☐ Car (2)

☐ Tree (3)

☐ Boat (4)

---

Page Break

Q60 Regarding the troll experience...

Of the following, which **best** describes the troll's face?

- ☐ One black eye showing, and goatee (1)
- ☐ One white eye showing, and goatee (2)
- ☐ Two black eyes showing and no goatee (3)
- ☐ Two white eyes showing and no goatee (4)

---

Page Break



ACC3 Regarding the troll experience...

Of the following, which **best** describes the surface that you were standing on during the experience?

- ☐ Grass (1)
- ☐ Gravel (2)
- ☐ Concrete (3)
- ☐ Dirt (4)

---

Page Break

Q54 Did you discuss your virtual vacation to Seattle with anyone since the experiment occurred?

- ☐ Yes (1)
  - ☐ No (2)
  - ☐ Not Sure (3)
-

Q62 The following questions assess how well you remember information. There are no right or wrong answers. Please select the rating that best reflects your judgement about your memory ability.

Think carefully about your responses, and try to be as realistic and truthful as possible when you answer them.





Q64 How often do these situations present a problem for you?

	1 (Always) (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (Sometimes) (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (Never) (7)
Forgetting people's names (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forgetting appointments/meetings (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forgetting where you put things (e.g. keys) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forgetting specific details from past personal events (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forgetting things people tell you (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please select the number '5' rating here (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Going to the store and forgetting what you wanted to buy (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beginning to do something and forgetting what you were doing (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Losing the thread of thought in conversation (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q56

Thank you, you have now completed the survey.

Once the researcher confirms this completed survey, you will receive payment immediately (see below).

---

Q58 For this payment, you have the option of selecting between either a 5\$ Amazon e-giftcard, a \$5 Starbucks e-giftcard, or a \$5 payment via Venmo.

If Amazon giftcard is selected, you will need to provide either your phone number or email. If Starbucks giftcard is selected, you will need to provide your email. If Venmo payment is selected, you will need to provide your Venmo username.

You will receive a confirmation via text once the payment has been sent to you.

---

Q60

Which of the three payment options do you prefer?

- ☐ \$5 Amazon e-giftcard (1)
  - ☐ \$5 Starbucks e-giftcard (2)
  - ☐ \$5 Venmo payment (3)
- 

Page Break

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Q62 You have selected the \$5 Amazon e-giftcard.

To receive this, please provide either your phone number or email address below.

---

Q66 You have selected to receive a \$5 payment via Venmo.

To receive this, please provide your Venmo username below.

---

Q64 You have selected the \$5 Starbucks e-giftcard.

To receive this, please provide your email address below.

---

Q63

Please continue to the next page to complete and submit the survey.

End of Block: Block 6