



Examination of the Effect of Memorable Travel Experiences on the Memorability of Trips and Intentions to Revisit a Destination

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Abstract

In this paper a model examining the effect of memorable travel experiences on the memorability and tourists' intentions to revisit a destination is developed and tested. A sample of 500 international tourists entering Uganda through Entebbe international airport is used. A two-step approach of structural equation modeling is applied.

The results obtained indicate that hedonism, novelty, refreshment, and local culture were key determinants of memorable experiences within the sample of the international tourists. The factors of involvement, meaningfulness and knowledge were not significant determinants of memorable travel experience. Secondly, memorable travel experience had a direct and positive significant effect on memorability and intention to revisit a destination. However, the relationship between memorable travel experiences and intention to revisit a destination was negative and non-significant when memorability of tourism experiences was introduced as mediator indicating incomplete mediation.

Based on the results, it is suggested that destination managers should strive to develop new products that are unique within a destination in order to elicit memorable experiences. Incorporating activities that facilitate social interaction between tourists and local community within the different tourism attraction areas would be critical in enhancing memorable travel experience and therefore improving the odds of intention to revisit a destination.

Key words: *Memorable travel experiences, memorability, revisit intentions, Uganda*

Introduction

Various scholars in hospitality, tourism, and marketing have studied behavioral intentions particularly to predict consumer behavior (Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001; Claviez, 2013; Frochot & Batat, 2013; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Kim, 2010; Kim, Ritchie, & Tung, 2010; Konstantinos, Dimitriadis, & Markata, 2002; Petrick, 2004). Some studies have found out that memories of past experiences influence the individual's ability to decide whether to revisit a given destination ((Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005; Hudson & Ritchie, 2009; Lehto, O'Leary, & Morrison, 2004; Zaltman, 2003). Despite memories of past experiences having the critical role in marketing tourism destinations, there is still a dearth of research that have considered how memorable travel experiences can influence the memorability of such experiences and intention to revisit the same destination.

The concept of memorability is associated with memory which is the faculty of the mind by which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968). Memory is vital in the formation of experiences. Eysenck (2012) argues that without memory, it is not possible to remember past events, learn or develop language, relationships, nor personal identity. Anscombe (1981) argues that memory is made up of diverse set of cognitive capacities by which human beings retain information and reconstruct past experiences. Memorability in this study is therefore used to mean the easiness with which tourists can recollect and vividly remember different travel experiences from the destination they have recently visited (Manthiou, Lee, Tang, & Chiang, 2014).

Memorable travel experiences are formed as a result of sensory processing that allows information from the outside world to be sensed through sensory receptors in the form of chemical and physical stimuli and attended to with various levels of focus and intent by individuals. It is within the working memory that the encoding and retrieval of processed experiences takes place. The working memory also retrieves information from previously stored material which is central to memorable travel experiences formation. Within the information and experience formation, the long-term memory serves the function of storing data through various categorical models or systems (Baddely, 2007).

Eysenck (2012) argues that memory is not a perfect processor, and is affected by many factors. The manner in which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved can all be corrupted depending on the stimuli intensity. The amount of attention given new stimuli can diminish the amount information that becomes encoded for storage (Eysenck, 2012). Finally, the retrieval of information from long-term memory can be disrupted because of decay within long-term memory (Eysenck, 2012). Normal functioning, decay over time, and brain damage all affect the accuracy and capacity of memory which in this case would be the ability to remember the travel experiences.

The operationalization of memorable travel experiences in this article is based on Kim (2010). The author used a measurement scale with dimensions of hedonism, novelty, refreshment, local culture, meaningfulness, involvement and education. Though these variables were used to define and measure memorable travel/tourism experience, the measurement scale for each variable and the overall reliability and validity have not been tested. A study using a different study setting would add value to the understanding of the application of memorable travel experience in tourism and hospitality industry. Moreover, previous studies such as Mathisen (2012) and Tung and Ritchie, (2011), have used a sample of college students who had

completed their holiday from different destinations. Testing the validity and reliability of the memorable travel experience using a different study context from a sample of international tourists visiting a developing economy such as Uganda would augment theory development in this relatively new study area.

This study attempt to use a sample of international tourists who have had actual travel experiences within a destination visited adds a different perspective towards in the advancement of memorable travel experience theory. A new understanding of the relationship between memorable travel experiences, memorability of trips and future revisit intentions is established in this study.

In summary, main objectives of this study is to examine the effects of memorable travel experiences (i.e., hedonism, novelty, refreshment, and local culture) on memorability and behavioral intentions by using the individual’s overall tourism experience in Uganda-a developing economy in an African context.

2. Literature review

2.1. Nature of tourism experiences

Studies of memorable tourism experiences so far have been based on Pine and Gilmore (1999) study that argues for experience based economy within service based organizations. Subsequently, Ooi (2005) argued that experiences are influenced by individual interests and backgrounds which make it imperative for managers in tourism industry to have knowledge about what makes visitors experiences memorable. The subjective interpretation of a single tourism product differently calls for an in-depth understanding of how experiences are formed and remembered. Uriely (2005) further argued that the individual’s moods and personal feelings during the visit may influence the ability to remember travel experiences.

Kim, Ritchie, and McCormic (2010) show that the most remembered aspects of experiences are linked with hedonism, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement, and novelty. These seven components were obtained from an empirical study that was aimed at developing a scale to measure memorable travel experience. According to Kim et al. (2010), exploratory study generated 16 variables reflected by 58 items identified from literature.

Through the content analysis of 62 responses from an open ended question that required listing five words that best described respondents previous memorable travel experiences, the authors obtained 62 words. The words that had similar contextual meanings were categorized to create the seven reflective variables of MTE. **Table 1** provides a summary of definitions and literature sources for the identified seven memorable tourism experience components.

Table 1: *Summary of definitions and literature sources for the identified seven memorable tourism experience components*

Novelty	The quality of being new and fresh and interesting or a new or unusual experience or	Bello and Etzel (1985); Prayag
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	occurrence. Novelty can also be defined in terms a trip characterized by new, unfamiliar experiences that differ from prior life experiences.	and Ryan (2011); Lee and Crompton (1992); Hirschman (1980)
Involvement	Tourist's ability to participate in producing tourism products and its delivery when right combination of an acceptable physical plant, good service, hospitality, and freedom of choice is available with a sense of emotional engagement	Smith (1994)
Meaningfulness	A state of being that accrues to an individual through tourism activities that convey a sense of significance to him/her.	Wilson and Harris (2006)
Hedonism	"An introspective attitude to life based on taking pleasure yourself and pleasuring others, without harming yourself or anyone else". The psychology behind <i>hedonism</i> is based on the doctrine holding that behavior is motivated by the desire for pleasure and the avoidance of pain.	Savery (1934, p. 2); Kim (2010); Hirschman, and Holbrook (1982).
Refreshment	The means of restoring strength or vigor, mental or physical' A feeling associated with being rejuvenated associated with recreation that create energy for the body, revive the spirit and soul which are all related to general well-being of an individual.	McKay (2008)
Local culture	All social interaction that take place between the tourists and indigenous people found at the destination that reveal their way of living. Tourists want experience and are interested to know more about the differences between the religion, art, music, food, and lifestyles of people living in the country visited	Ap and Wong (2001), Lau and McKercher (2004)
Knowledge	Learning new skills related to the destination such as language, art, cuisine etc.	Otto and Ritchie (1995)

Source: Tukamushaba K.E. (2013)

However, despite the importance of experiences as having a direct influence on businesses ability to generate revenue as argued by Pine and Gilmore (1999), the link between memorable travel experience and memorability of the trip has to-date not been explored and this study fills this knowledge gap.

2.2 The link between novelty and memorable travel experiences

The study of memorable tourism experiences is embedded in memorability studies, which have shown that memorability is influenced by feelings, cognitive evaluations, and unique events. For example, Brewer, Zhao, Desmond, Glover and Gabrieli (1988) established that affective thoughts which are a result of feelings towards or attachment to a destination are an important part of memory and that events that evoke emotions are clearly remembered. Similarly, Robinson (1976) argues that cognitive evaluations which in the case of travel experience develop as a result of belief and knowledge about a destination attributes, such as meaningfulness and challenge, enhance individuals' recollection of memorable experiences.

Gardner (1983) suggested that products and services with unique features influence customer attitudes and memorability exhibited by the level of vividness and recollection capacity of experiences associated with consuming such product or service. Lynch and Srull (1982) confirmed that salient features about a product or service are unavoidably and continually remembered when a need to recall information exists. These findings create a basis for studies aimed at establishing which component of memorable travel experience can influence trip memorability of a destination visited.

The knowledge from such studies is critical for the tourism and hospitality industry in as far as tourism product/ service development is concerned. Wirtz, Kruger, Scollon, and Diener (2003) found that although people can only vaguely recall such travel experiences as where they went and when they returned home, they can remember both the positive and negative emotional aspects of the trip. This study therefore posits that;

H1: Novelty positively influences memorable travel experience.

2.3 The link between involvement and memorable travel experience

The realization of tourism activities as being part of experience economy has largely influenced the way it is generally provided and consumed (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Tourists have gradually gained more power and control over how a tourism product or service is provided. The co-creation of tourism experience is taken as a basis for value creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Smith (1994) opines that tourist's ability to participate in producing tourism products and its delivery requires the right combination of an acceptable physical plant, good service, hospitality, and freedom of choice is available with a sense of emotional engagement.

This paper argues that tourism activities that enlist tourist involvement will likely to be remembered compared to those in which a tourist is a spectator. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H2: Tourist's involvement in activities provided within the destination positively influences their memorable travel experience.

2.4 The link between meaningfulness and memorable travel experience

According to Wilson and Harris (2006), meaningfulness refers to a state of being that accrues to an individual through tourism activities that convey a sense of significance to him/her. Hinged on the possible benefits associated with physical travel, activities that would increase the sense of self-worth would be remembered more. Furthermore, it was established that women were able to transfer the meaning and benefits obtained from their travel experiences to their everyday lives and contexts. This finding leads to postulate that tourism activities on which meaning can be attached are easily remembered. It is hypothesized that;

H3: Activities within a destination that elicit meaningfulness to a visitor positively influence memorable travel experience.

2.5 The link between hedonism and memorable travel experience

Embedded in the concept of existential authenticity (Wang, 1999), travel experiences are influenced by many factors such as individual differences in feelings about a tourism product rather than in displayed objects within the destination in order to attract the attention of tourists toward the destination. Wikens (2002) argues that subjectivity in constructing tourism experiences that exist even when tourists are visiting the same destination influences how products/ services can be packaged in order to create memorable experiences. For example, exploration of local culture by allowing visitors to interact with local communities and seeking of hedonic experiences such as romantic encounters within the destination visited are based on how each thinks about the host community.

Behaviors that reflect tourists' key travel motivations such as experiencing something new (novelty); pursuit of pleasure (hedonism), have the capacity to influence their memorable travel experiences. In summary, Larsen (2007) asserted that experiences are generally psychological and originate from the individual. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H4: Activities that fulfill the hedonic needs of visitors positively influence the formation memorable travel experiences.

2.6 The link between refreshment and memorable travel experience

Walker, Skowronki, and Thompson (2003) argued that people are more likely to remember positive autobiographical events than negative ones because negative feelings associated with events fade faster than positive feelings. Individuals' coping mechanisms also minimize the effect of negative events and thus contribute to the development of pleasant memories (Taylor, 1991).

H5: The refreshment experiences at the destination visited directly and positively influences memorability of that destination.

2.7 The link between Local culture and memorable travel experience.

According to Ap and Wong (2001), Lau and McKercher (2004), local culture includes all social interaction that take place between the tourists and indigenous people found at the destination that reveal their way of living. Tourists want experience and are interested to know more about the differences between the religion, art, music, food, and lifestyles of people living in the country visited. It is the striking differences or similarities in cultures that are likely to be remembered by both the host communities and the tourists. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H6: The tourist experience of local culture directly and positively influences memorable travel experiences.

2.8 The link between knowledge and memorable travel experience

Knowledge according to Otto and Ritchie (1995) involves learning new skills related to the destination such as language, art, cuisine etc. It is postulated in this study that, when tourists acquire new knowledge related to different aspects within the destination being visited, they are likely to remember such learning touch points and therefore enhance memorable travel experience. It is therefore hypothesized that;

H7: The knowledge acquired about a destination during the visit positively influences memorable travel experience.

2.9 The link between memorable travel experience and memorability

Brewer (1988) argues that affective thoughts in human beings are an important part of memory. It is therefore postulated that events experienced during travel that evoke emotions are likely to be remembered. Furthermore, Robinson (1976) found that cognitive evaluations like meaningfulness and challenge enhanced individual's recollection of an event. This was further supported by Lynch and Srull (1982) who affirms that when some facts about a product or service are salient, they are likely to be continually and unavoidably remembered when there is need to recall information. Wirtz, Kruger, Scollon, and Diener (2003) found in their study that even though people could not vividly recall their experiences like where they went and when they returned home, they were able to remember both positive and negative emotion aspects of the trip.

Walker, Skowronki and Thompson (2003) argue that in general, people are more likely to remember positive autobiographical events than negative ones and negative feelings associated with events fade faster than positive feelings. Research has further shown that individual's coping mechanisms are able to minimize the impact of negative events thus contributing to the development of pleasant memories (Taylor, 1991). Additionally, Kim, Ritchie, and McCormic (2010) show that the most remembered aspects of experiences are linked with hedonism, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement, and novelty which are all reflective indicators of memorable travel experience. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H8 There is a positive link between memorable travel experience and memorability of a tourism destination.

2.10 Memorability and future tourist revisit intentions

There is a substantial body of knowledge with the conclusion that customer satisfaction and its antecedents such as perception of product value and quality has a positive relationship with behavioral intentions (Bigné et al., 2001; McCleary, Weaver, & Hsu, 2006; Oh, 1999; Oh & Parks, 1997). However, this assertion has come under scrutiny with evidence from marketing, tourism and hospitality literature on whether indeed

satisfied customers translate into actual behavior as claimed. For example, Dolnicar, Coltman and Sharma (2015) found that there is no significant relationship between satisfaction and intentions to return for visitors to various tourism destinations.

The same conclusion was arrived at by a study conducted by Sharma, Yetton and Crawford (2009) where it was established that the correlation between satisfaction and behavioral intentions was due to common method bias. The failure of satisfaction with the product/service to predict behavioral intention requires new conceptualization. The introduction of new possible explanations that would help best explain behavioral intentions is warranted and this study proposes the use of memorable travel experience to explain intention to revisit a destination.

There is recognition in literature that memorable travel experiences have the ability to predict intention to revisit a destination that provided unique experiences (Wirtz et al., 2003). However, no study has been conducted with the aim of establishing the relationship between memorable travel experience and how memorability of these travel experience influence behavioral intentions in terms of future revisit intentions and this study aims to fill.

This study tests whether relationships exist between the components of memorable travel experiences and memorability of travel experience and how these influence tourist intentions to revisit a destination using hedonism, novelty, local culture, and refreshment that were found to be key reflective indicators of MTE in the case visitors to Uganda. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H9: The memorability of travel experiences has a positive influence on tourist intentions to revisit a destination.

H10: Memorability will mediate the relationship between memorable travel experiences and revisit intentions.

In conclusion this study conceptualizes that the relationship between memorable tourism experiences and intention to revisit a destination is shaped by seven factors of hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement and knowledge. These factors were examined by Kim et. al. (2010) study aimed at developing a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences and found that all the factors had an average variance above .50 with a good model fit $\chi^2(df=221) = 330.47$, $p < .001$, CFI = .97, NNFI = .97; IFI = .97 and RMSEA = .05. This study also aims and establishing whether the scale can be applied using different study setting and therefore confirm its reliability and validity.

3. Methodology

This study primarily aimed to examine and empirically test the hypothesized relationships between different aspects of travel experience influence memorable travel experience and this influences memorability of the destination and finally how memorability can influence tourist intentions to revisit a destination.

A sample of 650 respondents consisting of international visitors was targeted. However, out the 650 survey questionnaires issued, only 500 were returned were usable for data analysis representing 77% response rate. Only willing participants who had just completed their visit to Uganda and were leaving through Entebbe International Airport were given the questionnaire. Hsu, Killion, Brown, Gross, and Huang (2008) argued that convenient sampling is ideal when data are collected in locations where targeted respondents are easily found and at a time when they are willing to participate. Therefore, the researcher approached every potential respondent who was willing to participate in the survey. To minimize common method bias during data collection, different days of the week and different times of the day were used during the peak months of January, February, March and April, 2012.

3.1. Questionnaire design and development

Several scholars have emphasized the need to develop a reliable, valid, and robust measurement scale (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, 1995; Hung & Petrick, 2010). For example, Churchill (1979) provided a clear procedure for selecting a set of questions to measure a given variable thus enhancing reliability and validity. This procedure involves; specifying the domain of constructs through a literature review; generating a sample of items; collecting data; purifying the measurement scale; assessing reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient; assessing validity; and developing norms that involve the use of appropriate software for data analysis to establish the means and other statistics that summarize the distribution of scores. (p. 66)

Hung and Petrick (2010) posited that a measurement scale should include all items designed to reflect the meaning of the constructs examined and must be valid and reliable. Nunnally (1970) defined validity as the extent to which measurement scales measure the constructs examined, and Anaeshensel (2002) described reliability as the repeatability of a result with the same measurement scale. Therefore, to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement scale comprehensive procedures for developing measures of each latent variable included in the conceptual model as recommended by Churchill (1979) were adopted.

Content validity for the initial list of items was generated through a literature review (Kim, Ritchie & McCormick, 2010; Kim, 2010; Sheen, Kemp, & Rubin, 2001). The initial questionnaire was distributed to seven academic experts in hospitality, tourism, and marketing at Hong Kong Polytechnic University selected based on their expertise in scale development and knowledge about the study variables of memorable travel experiences and consumer behavior.

Additionally, four tourism industry experts' from Uganda that included a marketing manager from the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities; a marketing officer from the Uganda Tourism Board- a government body that promotes Uganda as a tourism destination; a marketing officer from Uganda Wildlife Authority- a government body in charge of all protected areas, such as national parks and reserves which form

key tourism attractions; and the chairperson of the Uganda Tourist Association- a professional association that unites all tour operators in Uganda. This procedure of subjecting the initial scale to a review by the panel of experts that included both academic and industry practitioners helped in ensuring content validity of the questionnaire (Devellis, 2003).

The experts were requested to rate the appropriateness of the items in measuring each construct and to make suggestions on each scale item in terms of wording and representativeness. Agreement among the experts on different items to include under each construct was the guiding principle for selecting the final items, which were further tested for reliability and construct validity during the pilot study.

After the item screening for face validity, a pilot study for pre-testing the generated instrument was conducted to ensure its validity. Pilot tests were conducted using a sample of 47 respondents who represented a section of participants that were used in the final study. The validity of the measurement instrument was also assessed using convergent and discriminant indicators. Convergent validity was assessed with the average variance extracted (AVE), which should exceed .5 for each latent variable (Bagozzi, Yi, & Philips, 1991). Convergent validity at the item level was established by having factor loadings that exceed .50.

Conversely, discriminant validity examines the disagreement among scales used to measure concepts not expected to be related. Discriminant validity was assessed by checking all the inter-correlations between pairs of factors in a given construct (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006; Wartson & Clark, 1995). Discriminant validity is problematic when the correlation between two factors is greater than .85 (Kline, 2005).

3.2. Measurement of study variables

The memorable travel experiences (MTE) scale was adapted from Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2010) and Kim (2010). Kim et al. (2010) reported composite reliability for the 24-item scale covering the antecedents of MTE ranging from .81 to .90 (p. 18). However, since the study context and setting were different, the reliability and validity tests for this scale were re-examined. In addition, some items were reworded in consideration of the characteristics of Uganda and its tourism activities that are largely nature based and limited visitor involvement. Rewording of some items was also based on the suggestions from the four industry experts.

The slight changes in in item rewording necessitated the establishment of the reliability and validity of the MTE scale to establish whether there was a difference in the results obtained by Kim et al. (2010) original scale. The scale was anchored on a seven-point Likert-type scale, in which 1 represented “*I have not experienced it at all*” and 7 represented “*I have experienced it very much.*”. There were no suggestions to add or remove the any items by all experts before final data analysis.

Memorability was measured using two reflective latent variables. These were recollection and vividness with eight items based on a seven-point Likert-type response format where *1 = strongly disagree* and *7 = strongly agree* (Sheen, Kemp, & Rubin, 2001). Future tourist intentions to revisit a destination was measured using two items obtained from Bigné, Sánchez and Sánchez (2001) covering likelihood to recommend Uganda as a

tourist destination and likelihood to revisit Uganda. (1 = “definitely will not recommend/revisit and 7 = “definitely will recommend/ revisit”). A seven-point Likert scale was chosen for this study because it allows for a wide range of responses which enhances variability on each study attribute (Reisinger & Turner, 2000).

The demographic characteristics of visitors (age, income, occupation, gender, and household income), and their trip characteristics (frequency of visit, length of stay, and origin) were also included in the research instrument.

3.3. Data analysis

The hypothesized relationships were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM was chosen because it enables conducting both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This enabled the evaluation of how well the proposed conceptual model explained or how the collected data fitted the model (Hoyle, 1989a; Bollen, 1989b; Hoyle, 1995; Yoon, Gursoy, & Chen, 2001). Additionally, SEM provides a means for examining the validity of measurement scales and has the ability to measure or identify the causal relationships among sets of unobserved or latent variables while describing the amount of unexplained variance (Davies, Goode, Mazanec, & Moutinho, 1999; Turner & Reisinger, 2001).

Data were first analyzed by conducting exploratory factor analysis using maximum likelihood extraction method and direct Oblimin rotation methods in order to establish the measure of sampling adequacy-Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), and examination of whether the relationship between variables is strong enough to undergo factor analysis using Bartlett’s test of sphericity(Budaev, 2010). Accordingly, a KMO measure greater than .8 is considered to be meritorious, and a value greater than .9 indicates that sampling adequacy is superior (Kaiser, 1974). Similarly, Bartlett’s test of sphericity should return the overall significance of all correlations within the correlation matrix of $p < 0.05$.

After the two tests were conducted, three items were deleted from the original memorable travel experiences scale. One item- *“Participating in tourism activities that I have been interested in”* was deleted because of having high cross-loading (factor loading $> .4$) on more than one factor. The other two were semantically the same and thus confused respondents: *“Did something meaningful during this travel experience?”* and *“Did something important during this travel experience were.”*

After effecting the adjustment, the final MTE scale that was used for final confirmatory factor analysis remained with twenty-one items. The exploratory factor analysis using the same procedures as in pilot study returned overall alpha coefficient (α) =.944; KMO = .819; χ^2 (210) = 798.43, $p < .00$, confirming both reliability and validity of the scale. However, a different factor structure was obtained reflecting six factors of hedonism, novelty, refreshment, involvement, local culture and meaningfulness and knowledge factor became negligible. This could have been due to a difference in the study setting and rewording of some items and some items becoming irrelevant in the Ugandan context. The retained factors explained 76.4% of the observed variance.

3.4. Confirmatory factor analysis

The two-step approach proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) that involves the estimation of the measurement model followed by structural model estimation was followed. There are a number of goodness of fit statistics that have been developed to enable researchers ascertain the model fit. The superior model test is chi-square value and which should have non-significant probability value (Kline, 2011). However, obtaining a non-significant value for the chi-square is not easy because it is influenced by a larger sample. To mitigate this, a number of alternative model fit indices have been developed. This paper used Bentler's (1992) comparative fit index (CFI), and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) which should be greater or equal to .90 (Kline, 2011), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) which should have a threshold acceptable level of $\leq .080$ (Hu & Bentler, 1998). Analysis of moment structures (AMOS) version 19 was used. Maximum likelihood method of model estimation was used (Arbuckle & Wothke, 1999; Byrne, 2007; Blunch, 2008) because it is "theory oriented and emphasizes the transition from exploratory to confirmatory analysis" (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988, p. 412).

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The respondents' socio-demographic characteristics presented are profiling purposes only. The results are based on a sample of 500 respondents. Gender distribution was generally equal with males accounting for (50.2 %) of the respondents. Most of the respondents were single (48%) and married (45.6%). The majority of the respondents were youth in the age bracket of 20–29 accounting for (32%), followed by 50 and above with (24.8%).

Respondents who traveled to Uganda for a holiday constituted the majority 226(45.2%), followed by visits to friends and relatives (130, 26%), volunteer work (122, 24.4%), and other purposes (22, 4.4%; mainly religious missions). Lastly, the respondents came from 59 countries, which represented six regions of the world. The majority came from Europe with (55.2%), followed by North America (28.2%), Asia-Pacific and Middle East (7.4%), Africa (4.8%), Australia (3.6%), and South America (0.8%).

4.3. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics of the scale items were established before the CFA (**Table 2**). The data were normally distributed because the skewness values were all below 2 and the kurtosis values well below 7; values greater than 2 for skewness and 7 for kurtosis indicate questionable normality (Hair et al., 2006, 2010; Kline, 2011; West, Finch, & Curran, 1995).

For the overall model, the item measuring how likely the visitors were willing to revisit Uganda had the highest mean ($M=6.18$; $SD=.781$) under intention to revisit variable, and the least was "learning new skills to survive" under the refreshment factor of memorable travel experiences with ($M=4.47$ $SD=1.562$). Overall,

involvement and meaningfulness were irrelevant for the tourists in this study based on confirmatory factor analysis results.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics for the items used to estimate the both the measurement and structural models (N=500)*

Item code and description	Std.	
	Mean	Deviation
Intrr: How likely are you likely to revisit Uganda	6.18	.781
Hd3: Really enjoyed this tourism experience	5.98	.989
Lc3: Local people friendliness in the areas i visited	5.96	1.145
Rec: How likely are you willing to recommend to your family and friends to visit Uganda	5.95	1.095
Hd4:Had an exciting experience	5.88	1.096
Lc1: The local people made good impression on me	5.75	1.203
Nv4: Experienced something new	5.75	1.344
Lc2: Experiencing the local culture in the areas I visited	5.59	1.293
Nv3: It was a unique experience	5.48	1.455
Hd2: Indulged in different activities during this travel experience	5.44	1.262
Vv1: I see Uganda in my mind	5.40	1.275
Hd1:Thrilled while engaging in this travel experience	5.32	1.333
Vv3: I feel the emotions of visiting Uganda now	5.19	1.361
Rc4: I hear Uganda sights and sounds in my mind	5.13	1.373
Nv2: It was quite different from my previous experiences	5.12	1.681
Inv1: Enjoying tourism activities that i really wanted to do	5.05	1.564
Ref3: Refreshing experience	4.98	1.446
Nv1: It was once-in-a-life experience	4.97	1.894
Ref4: Revitalized through this travel experience	4.79	1.489

Ref2: Enjoying sense of freedom	4.66	1.616
Ref1: It was a liberating experience	4.44	1.562

4.4 Reliability, validity, measurement, and structural models

Table 3 presents the measures for the internal consistency of the multi-item scales with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α). For example, hedonism had Cronbach's alpha coefficient of (.771), novelty (.826), refreshment (.850), local culture (.783), memorability (.813), and behavioral intentions (.714). All the alpha coefficients were above the cut-off point of .7 (Nunnally, 1978), indicating an acceptable level of reliability for each latent variable.

Convergent validity was measured by ascertaining the average variance extracted (AVE) which should be equal or greater than .5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Accordingly, based on the results obtained as in Table 3, all AVE values for each variable was equal or greater than .05, showing that convergent validity was achieved. Furthermore, the confirmatory factor analysis results from the measurement model supported the convergent validity because the estimated loadings for all items were significant at $p < .001$ (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Moreover, the AVE for each construct was greater than the squared correlation coefficients for the corresponding inter-constructs, and the square roots of the AVEs were all greater than the individual correlation values between all the latent variables, confirming discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 3. *Correlations (squared correlations), reliability, AVE, mean and standard*

Constructs	FTRIN					
	HEDON	NOVEL	REFRES	LOCCUL	MEMO	T
Hedonism (HEDON)	0.707					
Novelty (NOVEL)	0.542(.294)	0.755				
Refreshment(REFRES)	0.451 (.203)	0.342(.117)	0.768			
Local culture (LOCCUL)	0.445(.198)	0.289(.084)	0.338(.114)	0.748		
Memorability (MEMO)	0.426(.182)	0.354(.125)	0.411(.169)	0.452(.204)	0.742	
Future tourist revisit intentions(FTRINT)	0.543(.295)	0.366(.13)	0.359(.129)	0.510 (.260)	0.467(.218)	0.707
Alpha coefficient (α)	.771	.826	.850	.783	.813	.714
AVE	.50	.57	.59	.56	.55	.50

Mean	5.70	5.30	4.70	5.80	5.30	6.00
Std. Dev.	.931	1.302	1.270	1.010	1.040	0.81

Note: All correlations significant at .01 level (2-tailed); HEDON- Hedonism, NOVEL- Novelty, REFRES- Refreshment; LOCCUL- Local culture; MEMO- Memorability; FTRINT-Future tourist revisit intentions; AVE-Average variance extracted and figures appearing in the diagonals are the square root values for the respective AVE values for each latent variable

Table 4: *Factor Loadings for the measurement model*

Variables			β	B	S.E.	t-value	P
HEDON	<---	MTEXP	0.854	1	NA	NA	NA
NOVEL	<---	MTEXP	0.596	1.133	0.141	8.062	***
REFRES	<---	MTEXP	0.607	1.031	0.124	8.348	***
LOCCUL	<---	MTEXP	0.728	0.955	0.11	8.709	***
Hd1	<---	HEDON	0.563	1	NA	NA	
Hd2	<---	HEDON	0.591	0.994	0.081	12.261	***
Hd3	<---	HEDON	0.830	1.093	0.088	12.379	***
Hd4	<---	HEDON	0.812	1.186	0.097	12.28	***
Nv1	<---	NOVEL	0.643	1	NA	NA	NA
Nv2	<---	NOVEL	0.780	1.076	0.076	14.174	***
Nv3	<---	NOVEL	0.876	1.047	0.07	15.042	***
Nv4	<---	NOVEL	0.699	0.771	0.059	13.062	***
Ref1	<---	REFRES	0.697	1	NA	NA	NA
Ref2	<---	REFRES	0.774	1.147	0.076	15.173	***
Ref3	<---	REFRES	0.789	1.048	0.068	15.418	***
Ref4	<---	REFRES	0.800	1.094	0.07	15.575	***
Lc2	<---	LOCCUL	0.651	1	NA	NA	NA
Lc1	<---	LOCCUL	0.796	1.138	0.084	13.611	***
Lc3	<---	LOCCUL	0.792	1.078	0.079	13.586	***
Vv1	<---	MEM	0.887	1	NA	NA	NA

Rc4	<---	MEM	0.825	1.001	0.049	20.577	***
Vv3	<---	MEM	0.616	0.741	0.051	14.48	***
Rc3	<---	MEM	0.589	0.626	0.046	13.703	***
Rec	<---	INTTRET	0.685	1	NA	NA	NA
Inttr	<---	INTTRET	0.754	0.786	0.063	12.544	***

Note. MEM-Memorability; HEDON-Hedonism; REFRESH-Refreshment; LOCCUL-Local culture; INTTRET-Intention to revisit; MTEXP- Memorable travel experience

4.5. Measurement model

The results from the confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model had acceptable range goodness-of-fit indices as described in section 3.4 with $\chi^2 (181) = 546.882$, $p < .001$; SRMR=.063; TLI=.912, CFI=.924, RMSEA=.064, 90 (.058-.070) indicating that the model was acceptable for further analysis that involved the estimation of structural equation model.

4.6 Structural model

Consistent with the results of the CFA of the measurement model in step one, convergent validity was achieved because all factor loadings were above .50 (Table 5) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and internal consistency according to a composite reliability test was above .70 (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 5: Results from the confirmatory factor analysis of the structural model

Factors	β	B	S.E	t-value	CR
Hedonism ($\alpha = .771$)					.795
Hd1 Thrilled while engaging in this travel experience.	0.569	1.004	0.081	12.361	
Hd2 Indulged in different activities during this travel experience	0.598	1	NA	NA	
Hd3 Really enjoyed this tourism experience	0.805	1.054	0.081	13.037	
Hd4 Had an exciting experience	0.833	1.209	0.091	13.225	
Novelty ($\alpha = .826$)					.799
Nv1 It was once-in-a-life experience	0.650	1	NA	NA	
Nv4 Experienced something new	0.705	0.769	0.058	13.27	
Nv2 It was quite different from my previous experiences	0.780	1.065	0.074	14.331	
Nv3 It was a unique experience	0.868	1.026	0.067	15.207	
Refreshment ($\alpha = .850$)					.800
Ref1 It was a liberating experience	0.703	1	NA	NA	

Ref2 Enjoying sense of freedom	0.779	1.145	0.074	15.405	
Ref4 Revitalized through this travel experience	0.795	1.078	0.069	15.669	
Ref3 Refreshing experience	0.786	1.034	0.067	15.518	
Local culture ($\alpha = .783$)					.749
Lc2 Experiencing the local culture in the areas i visited	0.652	1	NA	NA	
Lc1 The local people made good impression on me	0.789	1.126	0.083	13.485	
Lc3 Local people friendliness in the areas i visited	0.800	1.087	0.08	13.551	
Memorability ($\alpha = .813$)					.796
Vv1 I see Uganda in my mind	0.863	1	NA	NA	
Rc4 I hear Uganda sights and sounds in my mind	0.812	1.013	0.05	20.207	
Vv3 I feel the emotions of visiting Uganda now	0.619	0.765	0.053	14.42	
Rc3 I remember all events experienced	0.608	0.664	0.047	14.117	
Tourist intentions to revisit ($\alpha = .700$)					.617
Rec How likely are you willing to recommend to your family and friends to visit Uganda	0.703	1	NA	NA	
Intrr How likely are you likely to revisit Uganda	0.638	1.256	0.11	11.447	

Note: All factor loadings are significant at $p < .000$. Parameter fixed at 1.0 for the maximum-likelihood estimation. Thus, t-values were not obtained (NA) for those fixed at 1 for model identification purposes. β - Standardized factor loading, B- Unstandardized factor loading, S.E- standard error, ρ_c -composite reliability and α - Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The estimated measurement model was transformed into a structural model to test the hypotheses.). The structural-model fit indices were $\chi^2 (182) = 675.927$, $p < .001$; SRMR=.082 TLI=.882, CFI=.898, RMSEA=.074, CI 90 (.068-.080), showing a weak model fit and there was a need for modification of the model in order to achieve a better model fit necessary for hypothesis testing. However, with this model, memorable travel experience predicted 49% of the observed variance of memorability while memorability explained 39% of the observed variance in the intention, to revisit a destination which represents modest R^2 values.

After the original model failed to achieve the acceptable model fit, a new hypothesis was introduced to establish the direct link between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit a destination. This turned memorability to play a mediating role between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit a destination. This modification of the original model resulted into a better model fit with $\chi^2 (182) = 546.882$, $p < .001$; SRMR=.063 TLI=.912, CFI=.924, RMSEA=.064, CI 90 (.058-.070). The acceptable model fit enabled hypotheses testing. The modified model is as shown in Figure 1.

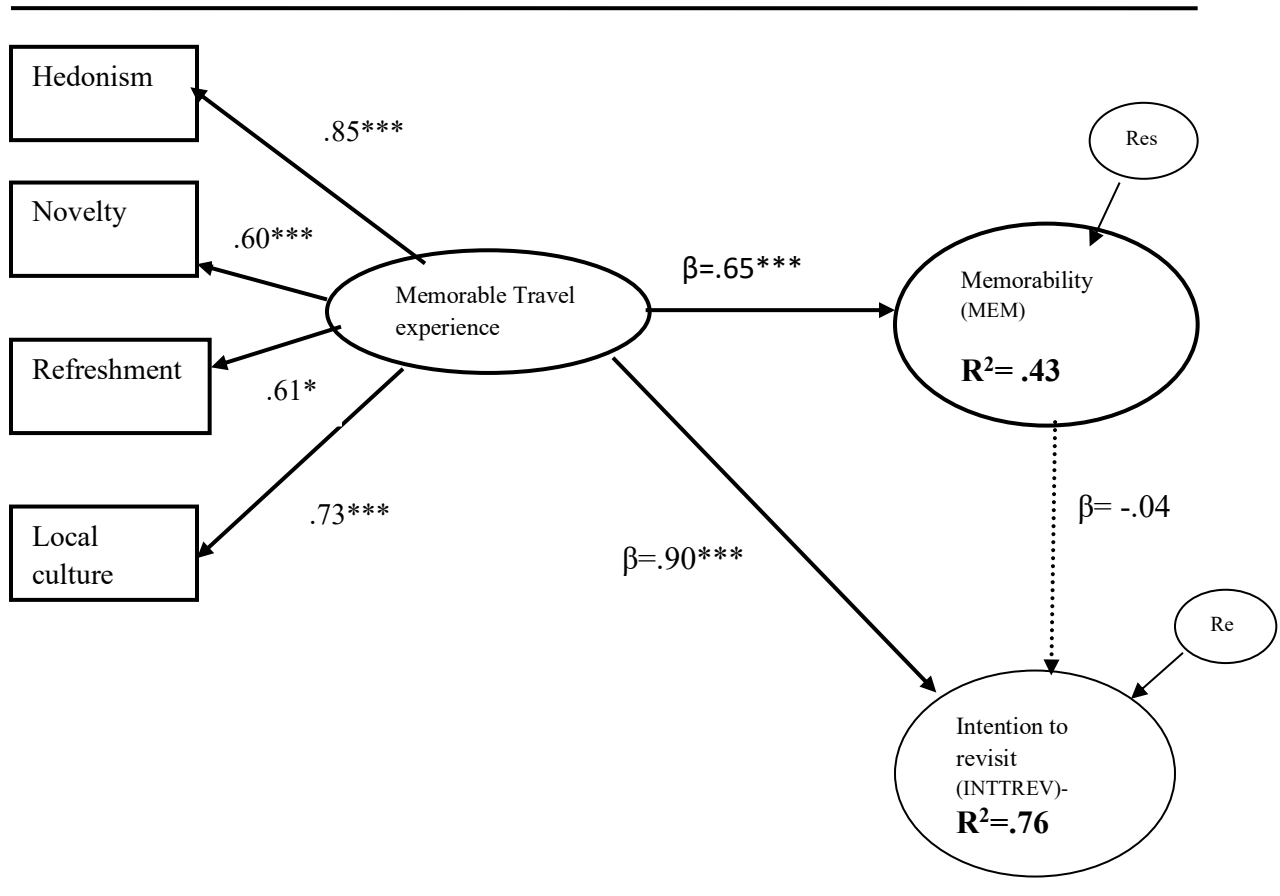


Figure 1- Final modified structural model used for hypotheses testing

Note: $^{***} p < .001$; $\chi^2 (182) = 546.882$, $p < .001$; SRMR=.063 TLI=.912, CFI=.924, RMSEA=.064, CI 90 (.058-.070)

4.8. Hypothesis testing

The original conceptualization had a total of nine hypotheses to test. However, based on the data that was used to test these hypotheses, three were dropped because the variables in question had very low factor loadings and when introduced into both the measurement model and structural models, poor fit was obtained. Therefore, H1; H3; H7 were not tested. Hypothesis 4 related to hedonism and memorable travel experience was not tested because it was used for model identification of the modified structural model. However, results that hedonism had $\beta = .854$. Table 6 shows that with respect to testing the relationships between novelty and memorable travel experience (H1) refreshment and memorable travel experience (H5); memorable travel experience and memorability (H8); memorability and intentions to revisit a destination (H9) and to establish the mediating effect of memorability between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit a destination (H10).

The study findings indicate that there was no effect between involvement and memorable travel experience (H2), meaningfulness and memorable travel experience (H3), and knowledge and memorable travel experience (H7). Based on this finding, these hypotheses were dropped much earlier in the model modification process. Subsequently, novelty, refreshment, and local culture were found to positively influence memorable travel experience.

In summary, H1, that sought to establish whether novelty was associated with memorable travel experience was supported with ($\beta=.596$, $t = 8.062$). Also H5 aimed at establishing the link between refreshment and memorable travel experience was supported ($\beta=.607$, $t = 8.348$). Moreover, H6 aimed to establish the link between local culture and memorable travel experience was also supported ($\beta=.728$, $t =8.709$). Other hypotheses tested included H8 which was aimed to establish whether there was a link between memorable travel experience and memorability was supported ($\beta=.655$, $t =9.139$); H9 which aimed to establish the effect of memorability on intention to revisit was not supported ($\beta= -.0381$, $t = -523$, $p>.05$).

Testing for the mediation effect of memorability on memorable travel experience and revisit intentions.

The last hypothesis (H10) was aimed at establishing the mediating role of memorability on memorable travel experience and intention to revisit a destination. To determine the indirect effect of memorability between memorable travel experiences and revisit intention, Holmbeck (2002) redundancy method was employed supplemented by the Sobel test (Sobel 1982). To begin with, Memorable travel experience was regressed on intention to revisit a destination and results showed that there was a strong positive significant association ($\beta=.851$, $SE = .101$, $t = 9.119$, $P<.001$). The model fit for this structural model was good with $\chi^2 (113) = 417.522$, $p<.001$; $SRMR=.061$ $TLI=.905$, $CFI=.921$, $RMSEA=.073$, $CI 90 (.066-.081)$. Finally, memorable travel experience was simultaneously regressed on memorability and intention to revisit. The results indicate that the relationship between MTE and INTTREV remained strong and positive with ($\beta=.898$, $t=7.779$, $p < .0001$) while regression value between memorability and intention to revisit was very weak and negative ($\beta= -.0381$, $t = -523$, $p>.05$). According to Hayes (2009) approach for statistical mediation analysis, results indicate that there was incomplete mediation because the direct effect between memorable travel experience and revisit intention remained high and significant after memorability was introduced as a mediating variable.

The total effect of memorable travel experience (MTEXP) on revisit intention (INTTREV) was obtained by summing the direct effect ($\beta =.90$) and the indirect effect which is the product of path coefficients for memorable travel experience in a model predicting memorability ($\alpha =.65$) and memorability in a model predicting intention to revisit ($\alpha = -.04$). The result is $-.026$. The total effect in this case is $(.90 - .026)$ translating into $\beta= .874$. This means that memorable travel experience accounts for variance observed in intention to revisit not accounted by memorability and the combined effect memorable travel experiences that are easily remembered through recollection and vividly has a stronger effect on intention to revisit (Hung, Lee & Huang, 2016)

Results further show that memorable travel experience explained 43% of the observed variance in memorability while both memorable travel experience and memorability explained 76% of the observed variance in the intention to revisit a destination. The increased value of explained variance from 39% before introducing the direct link between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit provides further evidence to this finding. The R^2 values of .43 for memorability and .76 for intention to revisit respectively are

high and significant. This finding has both theoretical and practical implications destination management and in particular tourism/travel experience management. Table 6 shows the summary of the results obtained from hypothesis testing.

Table 6: *Hypothesis testing*

Hypotheses			Standard beta (β)	Standard Error.	t-Statistics	Decision
H1:NOVEL	<---	MTEXP	0.596	0.141	8.062***	Supported
H4:HEDON	<---	MTEXP	0.854	NA	NA	NA*
H5: REFRES	<---	MTEXP	0.607	0.124	8.348***	Supported
H6:LOCCUL	<---	MTEXP	0.728	0.11	8.709***	Supported
H8:MEM	<---	MTEXP	0.655	0.126	9.139***	Supported
H9:INTTRET	<---	MEM	-0.038	0.049	-0.523	Not supported
H10:INTTRET	<---	MTEXP	0.898	0.135	7.779***	Supported

NA*-Hedonism and memorable travel experience used to identify the structural model; MEM-Memorability; HEDON-Hedonism; REFRESH-Refreshment; LOCCUL-Local culture; INTTRET-Intention to revisit; MTEXP- Memorable travel experience.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

This study was undertaken to establish the effects of the memorable tourism experience on memorability and intentions intention to revisit a destination. The original conceptualized model, sought to establish which variables were best antecedents of memorable travel experience and whether there was significant effect of memorable travel experiences on memorability and whether memorability could explain intention to revisit a destination. Out of the original measures of memorable travel experience (novelty-H1, involvement-H2, meaningfulness-H3, hedonism-H4, refreshment-H5, local culture-H6, and knowledge-H7) (Kim, Ritchie & McCormic, 2010; Kim, 2010), only four were retained (novelty, hedonism, refreshment, and local culture) which covered hypotheses H1, H4, H5 and H6 respectively. However, H4 associated with hedonism was used to identify the model using structural equation modeling procedures as explained in section 4.5.

The other main objectives were to establish the link between memorable travel experience and memorability(H8), to establish the direct link between memorability and intention to revisit a tourism destination (H9) and lastly to establish the link between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit a tourism destination(H10).

As results indicated H1, H5, H6, H8 were supported while H9 was rejected which means that memorability fully mediated the effect of memorable travel experience and intention to revisit. Test for the mediation effect of memorability on memorable travel experiences and revisit intentions indicated an incomplete mediation because the direct effect of memorable travel experience on revisit intention was significant. This result is in disagreement with Hung, Lee and Huang (2016) finding that found full mediation of memorability between

creative experiences and intention to revisit. This means that in the case of Uganda, travel experiences are critical in influencing revisit intentions alone. However, the significant results obtained between memorable travel experience and memorability support the findings in literature that unique travel experiences can influence memorability by allowing tourists to recollect and vividly remember such experiences (Ali, Ryu & Hussain, 2016). Whereas there was no direct effect of memorability on intention to revisit, we argue based on the combined effect of memorable travel experience and memorability to be high and significant ($\beta = .874$) which means that in reality experiences that are memorable are important in nurturing revisit intention to a given destination.

The conceptual issues arising from the tests of mediation are centered on the descriptive information provided by the regression coefficients. Based on the mediation tests, the difference between c ($\beta = .851$) in a model testing the direct link between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit and $c' + ab'$ ($\beta = .874$) is the c discrepancy ($.851 - .874 = .023$) and shows its distribution (Gelfand, Mensinger & Tenhaveve, 2009). Based on the coefficient values obtained, the consistency of the data with the hypothesized relations can be judged (Bollen, 1990, Hayduk, 1987)

In the current study, the data was not found to be consistent with the conditions for mediation between memorable travel experience, memorability and intention to revisit. In particular, the relationship between memorability was found to be weaker and negative and non-significant than was originally hypothesized ($\beta = -.0381$, $t = -5.23$, $p > .05$).

The proportion mediated proposed by Sobel (1982) was used to summarize the results of the mediation analysis with a single value represented by $(ab' / [c' + ab']) = .0297$ which is about 3% that is attributed to memorability in its mediating role in explaining intention to revisit. This result can be attributed to the temporal order of the variables in the specified causal model that was mainly aimed to establish link between memorable travel experience, memorability and intention to revisit (Tukamushaba, Xiao, & Ladkin, 2016). Under the temporal order paradigm, the effects cannot temporally precede causes. In this study, it was hypothesized that Memorable travel experience influences memorability and in turn memorability influences intention to revisit (Ali, Ryu & Hussain, 2016; Kim & Jang, 2016; Manthiou, Lee, Tang & Chiang, 2014). The non-significant results between memorability and intention to revisit means memorability is necessary in the relationship between memorable travel experience and intention to revisit but does not necessarily cause intention to revisit. The temporal intermediacy of memorability is necessary but not sufficient condition for causal intermediacy (Gelfand, Mensinger & Tenhave, 2009).

Gelfand, Mensinger and Tenhave (2009) argue that in practice, it is not always possible to know the order in which measured events occur and therefore temporal order and, correspondingly a causal order other than that originally hypothesized may be plausible. In this study, it is plausible to argue that, memorability plays an insignificant role in influencing decisions associated with intention to revisit a destination. However, memorable travel experiences associated with hedonism, novelty, refreshment and local culture singularly have the ability to influence intention to revisit a given destination. These findings have important implications for destination managers who are responsible for developing tourism products and services. Designing tourism products that elicit memorable experiences such as creative activities associated with cooking and gastronomy courses, traditional crafts and handcrafts, painting, drawing and sculpture would enhance memorability of

such events and collectively influence intention to revisit a given tourism destination (Liu, Lu & Hsu, 2010; Mather, 2009).).

Furthermore, the findings indicate that designing tourism products and services that facilitate tourist relaxation to achieve refreshment provide new experiences which are core to the formation of memorable travel experiences to visitors (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Enabling tourists to interact with local communities and experience the local culture also helps in creating positive memory in terms of vividness and recollection and such memory is vital in influencing intentions to revisit (Ooi, 2005; Uriely, 2005).

The study context of a developing economy has provided new insights in understanding how memorable travel experiences are formed and how they are related to the attributes such as attractions, culture and other aspects of a tourism destination. This study therefore fills the research gap identified in literature and recommendations for future research such as using a sample from “different population” and “a focus on different leisure activities” (Kim, 2010, p.793).

5.1. Limitations of the research

The data collection setting of the airport did not allow conducting in-depth interviews that would enable obtain additional data to augment quantitative data and therefore, possible plausible explanations for the observed results were missed. Future research could add value to this research by conducting qualitative studies using in-depth interviews to obtain rich data to complement the quantitative method adopted.

The study is based on literature that have assumed positive travel experiences and yet negative travel experiences could also have an effect on memorability of travel experiences and therefore affecting future tourist intention to visit a given destination. Future studies could explore travel experience related to negative travel experiences and establish their effects of future tourist intention to visit. To minimize model complexity, the relationship between memorable travel experience antecedents that are not necessarily linked to memorability of a destination with future tourist intention to visit was not explored. Future studies could establish the direct link between the memorable travel antecedents and future tourist intentions to revisit a destination. This would enable robust understanding of the importance each of the variables identified to pave for additional explanations in the observed changes if any.

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