

## Visitor Information Centres' Contribution Towards Creating Memorable Visitor Experiences

Kholadi Tlabela\*

*Division Tourism Management, Department of Marketing Management, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, Email, [Khuli.tlabela@gmail.com](mailto:Khuli.tlabela@gmail.com)*

Anneli Douglas

*Division Tourism Management, Department of Marketing Management, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, Email, [Anneli.Dougla@up.ac.za](mailto:Anneli.Dougla@up.ac.za)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2132-9123>*

*\*Corresponding Author*

**How to cite this article:** Tlabela, K. & Douglas, A. (2022). Visitor Information Centres' Contribution Towards Creating Memorable Visitor Experiences. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 11(SE 2):1787-1803. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.325>

### Abstract

Information exchange is a process through which information, experience and skills are exchanged among stakeholders. While studies acknowledge the role of VICs in enhancing memorable visitor experiences, it remains unclear how the experiences that visitors have at VICs contributes to the dimensions of Kim, Ritchie & McCormick's (2012) Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge). The purpose of the paper is to ascertain whether the experiences that visitors have at VICs contribute to their memorable experiences at visited areas. The paper also intends to determine the factors in the VIC experience that are statistically significant predictors of visitors' experience of the dimensions of MTE. A total of 152 self-completed, structured questionnaires were collected from visitors to government-owned VICs in South Africa. The results show that the experience that visitors have at VICs contributes to the dimensions of MTE at visited areas. More specifically, visitors' experience of VIC information quality, information resources, ICTs, staff knowledge and customer service contributed to the MTE at visited areas. The results are important in enabling VICs to create an environment that contributes to memorable visitor experiences at visited areas. They will help VIC managers to fulfill their enhancement and information provision function by delivering experiences in VICs that contribute to memorable experience at visited areas and in turn encourage visitors' intention to revisit these areas.

**Keywords:** Visitor Information Centres (VIC); visitor; visitor experience; memorable tourism experience (MTE)

### Introduction

Visitor Information Centres (VICs) are considered important elements of modern tourism. They play an important role in many destinations because they are used to promote local tourism products (Rubtsov et al., 2019). They are often the first place that tourists visit in order to find tourism information (Araña et al., 2016; Rubtsov et al., 2019). Through information from VICs, visitors get an opportunity to learn about things which they might not have been aware of prior to travelling to their destination or en route to it. As first point of contact, VICs set the stage for creating memorable visitor experiences by providing information on a variety of novel experiences in the visited areas (Tavares et al., 2018). They play a facilitator role, enabling an ideal environment that affords visitors an opportunity to have memorable experiences at visited areas (Chandralal et al., 2015)

Experiences are central to visitors' travel choices. They portray visitors' search for authentic experiences in contrast to unauthentic everyday life experiences of their usual environment (Taylor et al., 2017). Moreover, visitors' experiences are not only affected by

tangible products and experienced services, but also by how unforgettable and memorable they are (Cornelisse, 2018). Unique, personal, and memorable experiences that add value during travel represent what visitors aim to obtain (Taylor et al., 2017). Memorable experiences have therefore become an important personal source of information that visitors use in making travel decisions (Mahdzar, 2018; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017). Offering memorable experiences is central to tourism as it involves creating lasting memories that visitors will recall and reminisce about (Andrades & Dimanche, 2014). Memorable Tourist Experiences (MTEs) therefore refer to positive tourism experiences that are remembered and recalled after the event or activity has occurred (Kim, 2018). In this paper, the term ‘memorable visitors experience’ is used to include both tourist and visitor experiences as the concept of ‘visitor’ embraces both same-day visitors and overnight visitors, often referred to as ‘tourists’. The terms MTE’ is used interchangeable with memorable visitor experience.

Several studies acknowledge the role of VICs on memorable visitor experiences. Mistilis and D’Ambra (2008) mention that visitor experience at VICs was determined by the perceived quality of their information resources. This experience involves visitors’ overall satisfaction with the VIC as an information service. Wong and McKercher (2011) highlight the role that VICs play in enhancing memorable visitor experiences. Chandralal et al. (2015) show that VICs play a facilitator role by enabling an ideal environment to enhance memorable visitor experiences. Tavares et al. (2018) on the other hand mention that VICs often set the stage for visitors’ memorable experiences in seeking novelty and diverse experiences in the visited areas. Chang et al. (2019) assessed the effect of brochure information dissemination and staff service encounter on overall VIC experience. Although these studies examined VIC experience and memorable visitor experiences, they did not consider how the experiences that visitors have at VICs contribute to the various dimensions of memorable tourism experiences (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge). Therefore, the overall purpose of the paper is to ascertain whether the experiences that visitors have at VICs contribute to their memorable experiences at visited areas. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: first, a literature review on the concept of memorable tourism experiences is provided, then the dimensions of MTE are highlighted and lastly VIC experience and memorable visitor experiences are discussed. Second, the materials and methods used are explained. Finally, the paper provides a discussion of the results and ends by drawing conclusions and providing managerial recommendations and directions for future research.

## **Literature review**

### ***Memorable tourism experience (MTE)***

In today’s world, society has undergone a profound shift as people have started to give importance to buying experience-oriented goods and services rather than pure consumption (Kutlu & Ayyildiz, 2021). These shifts led to the introduction of the experience economy, which Pine and Gilmore (1999, 2013) conceptualised as a transformation from the production of commodities and goods and the provision of services to the consumption of experiences. In this experience economy, satisfaction and quality alone are no longer considered adequate descriptions of destination performance and of the experience that visitors seek (Kim, 2018; Manthiou et al., 2016). Instead, experiences are central to visitors’ choices, making memory an important personal source of information that visitors use in making decisions (Mahdzar, 2018) to visit a destination or to influence their future behavioural intentions (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017). In contrast to unauthentic everyday life experiences, experiences represent the search and consumption of experience-oriented tourism products and services (Taylor et al., 2017). The fundamental outcome of experiences is pleasure and having the memory of the experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, 2013; Sørensen & Jensen, 2015). Adding

services that are distinct and beyond visitors' expectations seems to facilitate the creation of memorable experiences (Manthiou et al., 2016).

Memorable experiences are considered the most important experiences because they are exceptionally vivid and long-lasting (Kim, 2018; Kim & Fesenmaier, 2017; Kim et al., 2019; Kim & Park, 2017). Offering memorable experiences is central to tourism as it involves creating lasting memories that visitors will recall and reminisce about (Andrades & Dimanche, 2014). Tourism is therefore an experience-intensive industry in which consumers are willing to pay for experiences they enjoy (Barnes et al., 2016). There is no universal definition of or agreement on what 'tourism experiences' are and what factors determine their formation (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). This lack of agreement stems from the complex nature of what is considered a tourism experience, as the term varies across visitors and tourism destinations (Neuhofer et al., 2014). The subjective nature of a tourism experience, its formation, the different elements involved, and its impact on visitors add to this complexity (Taylor et al., 2017). However tourism experiences are memorable events that engage each individual in a personal way (Pine & Gilmore, 2013); that take place before, during, and after tourist activities; that are unique to each individual; and that are internally produced (Taylor et al., 2017). Moreover, tourism experiences are affected by how unforgettable and memorable they are (Cornelisse, 2018).

Providing visitors with memorable experiences is central to destination competitiveness (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016), because what makes a tourism destination truly competitive is its ability to provide visitors with satisfying memorable experiences (Kim, 2018; Kim et al., 2019). Satisfying memorable experience is the antecedent of attracting visitors and of ultimately providing competitive advantage over competing destinations (Kim, 2014). Therefore, in order to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage in tourism, it is important for destination practitioners, marketers to add value to visitors' travel by delivering products and services that perform better than those of other destinations and that are tailored to deliver MTEs (Chandralal et al., 2015; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017; Sthapit & Jiménez-Barreto, 2018).

MTEs are those experiences that are selectively constructed from tourist experiences and can be recollected after a trip, defined by Kim et al. (2012). They embody both tourism experience and the degree of the memorability of the experience, both of which are important in the search for authentic experiences (Cornelisse, 2018). However, not all tourism experiences are memorable, because they are subjective and unique experiences that cannot be replicated (Kim et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2017). To understand MTEs better, several researchers (Chandralal et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2017) identified and discussed the dimensions of MTEs. These are discussed in the next section.

### ***Dimensions of MTE***

Several researchers have identified dimensions that are crucial to MTEs. In their seminal work on the experience economy, Pine and Gilmore (1999) identified four major realms of staged experience: aesthetics, entertainment, education, and escapism. Taylor et al. (2017) identified a range of factors that are influential in determining visitors' experiences, such as their level of involvement, expectations prior to the visit, and the setting where the experience takes place, including its attributes and the events or activities (Taylor et al., 2017). In this way, visitors are seen not as merely passive recipients of experiences, but as actively involved co-producers of their personal experiences.

Considering that an MTE is positively remembered and recalled after the event has occurred, Assaf and Josiassen (2012) identified the destination attributes of MTEs as having the following ten dimensions: local culture, variety of activities, hospitality, infrastructure, environment management, accessibility, quality of service, physiography, place attachment, and; superstructure. Chandralal et al. (2015) identified the following experiential dimensions:

local people; life and culture; personally significant experiences; shared experiences; perceived novelty; perceived serendipity; professional guides and tour operator services; and affective emotions. Kim et al. (2012) argued that only the components of the tourism experience that strongly affect visitors and lead to memorability should be taken into consideration when conceptualising an MTE. These authors therefore proposed 16 experiential constructs as components of a MTE: hedonism, relaxation, stimulation, refreshment, adverse feelings, social interaction (local culture), happiness, meaningfulness, knowledge, challenge, assessment of value, assessment of service, unexpected happenings, involvement (personal relevance), novelty, and participation. With visitors’ interests and needs becoming increasingly sophisticated, Kim et al. (2012) refined the measurement process used in the initial constructs and developed a scale to measure MTEs. The scale has seven dimensions – hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge – as well as 24 indicators that are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Memorable tourism experience dimensions

Dimensions	Description	Indicators
Hedonism	Pleasurable emotions and feelings of happiness and excitement.	Thrilled about having a new experience Indulged in the activities Really enjoyed this tourism experience Exciting
Novelty	Desire to experience something new and different from the usual environment.	Once-in-a-lifetime experience Unique Different from previous experiences Experienced something new
Local culture	Interaction and engagement with local culture and people.	Good impressions about the local people Closely experienced the local culture Local people in a destination were friendly
Refreshment	The state of being refreshed, relaxed, and renewed.	Liberating Enjoyed sense of freedom Refreshing Revitalised
Meaningfulness	A sense of great value, significance, or fulfilment, physically, emotionally, or spiritually.	I did something meaningful I did something important I learned about myself
Involvement	Active participation in tourism activities.	I visited a place where I really wanted to go I enjoyed activities that I really wanted to do I was interested in the main activities of this tourism experience
Knowledge	The need to gain new insights, skills, understanding, and knowledge.	Exploratory Knowledge New culture

Source: Kim et al. (2012)

Having considered that memorable experiences represent what visitors aim to obtain during travel and that VICS are first place that visitors visit in order to find travel and local area information, it is essential to look at how the VIC experience contributes to memorable visitor experiences. In this regard, destination marketers such as VICs should aim to add value to visitors’ travel by playing a facilitator role in enabling an ideal environment that enhances opportunities for visitors to have memorable experiences even though they are not directly involved in delivering experiential products for visitors (Chandralal et al., 2015).

### ***VIC experience and memorable visitor experiences***

VICs are an external information source used by visitors to search for tourism information. They are often the gateways to the locales and first place to find information on tourism products (Chang et al., 2019; Draper, 2018). While they serve multiple functions including promotion, enhancement and information provision; control and filtering; substitution; and

community integration (Pearce, 2004), their main function is to disseminate information, through different information sources including traditional and online, on a wide variety of travel-related areas, such as accommodation, restaurants, attractions, events, travel routes, safety, road conditions, water, and petrol services (Araña et al., 2016). In response to the changing needs of visitors brought by technological advancements, VICs are encouraged to avoid becoming relics of the past and have more of an online presence (Lyu & Hwang, 2015).

VIC experience refers to the overall satisfaction of visitors with the VIC as an information source (Mistilis & D'Ambra, 2008). According to Chang et al. (2019), the services of VICs mainly involve consultation with staff and the provision of information. When visiting VICs, visitors are mostly interested in service items, such as friendliness, professional service staff consultation, and the provision of brochures with local area information. Hence, quality of staff service encounter and quality of brochure information dissemination have significant effects on overall VIC experience. Although recent trends in ICT make visitors less dependent on personal interaction (Antunes et al., 2018; Khatri, 2019), VIC studies report high levels of visitor satisfaction that is enhanced by interaction with friendly and knowledgeable staff (Draper, 2018) as well as the provision of quality, accurate, and relevant information, facilities, and services (Araña et al., 2016).

In the high-contact service of VICs, encounter with staff is important to enable customer evaluation of the quality of the service they receive. Wong and McKercher (2011) found that visitors who had a positive experience at VICs felt that staff possessed high levels of customer service. They displayed positive service attitude and ethics, were courteous, were genuinely interested in addressing visitors' requests, and provided information that was relevant to the needs of the visitors. They also did not have pre-conceived ideas about visitors' needs. This shows that the ability of VIC staff to do their jobs effectively and provide positive experiences at VICs do not depend only on product knowledge and the kind of information they disseminate but also on the quality of customer care and service they provide. The dimensions of reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy in service are therefore important as they may affect visitors' overall experience (Chang et al., 2019; Wong & McKercher, 2011).

In their research on VICs in Sydney, Mistilis and D'Ambra (2008) found that visitor experiences were affected by the quality of the information provided by staff as well as by information brochures. Information quality relates to how good the information contained in a system is and how it is provided to users so that they can understand it easily. It has a positive influence on customer satisfaction and is determined by experience quality and customer perceived value (Tam & Oliveira, 2017). Mistilis and D'Ambra (2008) mention that visitors' overall experience is determined by their perceived quality of information resources such as VIC information brochures and staff. They showed that the perceived quality of information can be explained by three dimensions: comprehensibility, credibility, and usefulness. Chang et al. (2019) also confirmed these dimensions as determinants of VIC information dissemination quality. They also emphasised that brochure information should be clear in meaning, easy to understand, and easy to read. Having considered that memorable visitor experiences represent what visitors aim to obtain during travel and that visitors' experiences at VIC has an influence on their experiences at visited areas, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H1: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to dimensions of MTE at visited areas:*

- *H1a: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to hedonism at visited areas.*
- *H1b: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to novelty at visited areas.*
- *H1c: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to local culture at visited areas.*
- *H1d: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to refreshment at visited areas.*

- *H1e: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to meaningfulness at visited areas.*
- *H1f: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to involvement at visited areas.*
- *H1g: Visitors' experience at VICs contributes to knowledge gained at visited areas.*

## Methods

This study adopted a quantitative research design to collect data by using a survey which was conducted in 2017. The sample for the survey consisted of visitors who had visited the 18 participating VICs in the 12 months prior to the study being undertaken. However, in the absence of a pre-existing visitor list or a visitor sampling frame, it was impossible to draw a representative sample of visitors or to determine a visitor sample size in advance. Thus a non-probability convenience sampling strategy was employed to involve visitors across the 18 VICs who were willing and available to participate in the study. Moreover, as this was an exploratory study, no claims were made about being able to generalise the findings to other VICs and visitors.

An online link was created in Qualtrics to invite visitors to complete the survey. A total of 34 usable questionnaires were collected online. Owing to a low response rate, ethical clearance was sought to use traditional access methods to complement the online survey. VIC staff were requested to distribute paper-based questionnaires to encourage visitors to complete the survey. This approach yielded 118 usable questionnaires, which resulted in participation of 152 visitors. The traditional access methods were useful in addressing some of the limitations associated with Internet-mediated access, such as excluding those without Internet access.

The questionnaire was developed to assess visitors' experience at VICs, their experience of the dimensions of MTE (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge) at visited areas and their demographic characteristics. Therefore, the questionnaire consisted of three parts. First, the respondents' demographic characteristics were measured including gender, age, population group, educational qualification and employment status. Then, their level of agreement or disagreement with experience at VICs was measured with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. VIC experience items were adapted from previous studies (Chandralal et al., 2015; Mistilis & D'Ambra, 2008; Tavares et al., 2018; Wong & McKercher, 2011). It included five dimensions namely, information provision, information quality, information resources, ICTs, staff knowledge and customer service. Using Kim et al.'s (2012) MTE scale, the last section focused on measuring the level of agreement or disagreement with dimensions of MTE (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge) in which 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Data analysis included a number of techniques. First, the socio demographic profile of respondents is supplied. Second, because scales were developed from the literature, they were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Principal axis factoring and promax rotation were used to determine the dimensionality (the underlying data structure of the observed data) of each of the factors. Third, a multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the factors in the visitors' experience at VICs that contribute to the dimensions of MTE.

## Results and discussion

### *Sample description*

Almost a third (63.3%) of the respondents were females and 36.7% were males. Their ages ranged between 18 and 75 years, with more than two-thirds (87.3%) being between 29 and 58 years. The population groups of respondents revealed nearly equal percentages for Whites (41.4%) and Blacks (40.1%). Coloureds and Indians accounted for 7.2% and 4.6% respectively. The other 6.8% were mostly international visitors who possibly could not classify themselves

according to the South African classification of population groups. The education levels indicated that the modal category was a Bachelor’s degree (30.9%), followed by those with a diploma (24.3%), Grade 12 (20.4%), and a postgraduate qualification (20.4%). The employment status show that the majority were employed (56.6%) followed by those who were self-employed (11.8%).

Table 2: Demographic characteristics

Individual characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender (n = 150)</b>		
Female	95	63.3%
Male	55	36.7%
<b>Age (n = 150)</b>		
29–38	47	31.3%
39–48	39	26.0%
19–28	23	15.3%
49–58	22	14.7%
59–68	11	7.3%
>69	5	3.3%
<18	3	2.0%
<b>Population group (n = 152)</b>		
White	63	41.4%
Black	61	40.1%
Coloured	11	7.2%
Indian	7	4.6%
Other	10	6.6%
<b>Highest level of education (n = 152)</b>		
Bachelor’s degree	47	30.9%
Diploma/Certificate after Grade 12	37	24.3%
Grade 12/Standard 10/Matric	31	20.4%
Postgraduate degree (e.g., Honours, Master’s, PhD)	31	20.4%
Some high school education	5	3.3%
Other	1	0.7%
<b>Employment status (n = 152)</b>		
Employed	86	56.6%
Self-employed	18	11.8%
Unemployed	12	7.9%
Full-time pupil/learner at school	12	7.9%
Pensioner	12	7.9%
Full-time student at college/university	10	6.6%
Other	2	1.3%

### **Frequency analysis: Visitor experience at VICs**

The majority of the visitors expressed positive experiences with information provision at VICs, with 90.7% agreeing that VICs provided them with specific information about local area tourist facilities and, for 89.5%, with general information about the local area. In addition, 58.1% of the visitors agreed that the information at the VICs they visited was easily accessible. With regard to information quality, an overwhelming majority of the visitors agreed that the information provided at VICs was clear in meaning (93.5%), easy to read (93.4%), and easy to comprehend (91.5%). The responses about information resources were diverse, with 88.8% of the visitors agreeing that the content of printed brochures/pamphlets in VICs is relevant. On the other hand, 62.9% of visitors expressed disagreement on the availability of audio-visual presentations and visitor notice boards to provide destination information (56.7%). The responses with regard to ICTs show that 46.7% of the visitors reported that the VICs had computers they could use to search for local information. While 48.1% agreed that the Internet was available to search for local information, 44.1% disagreed with the statement that it was reliable. Visitors also disagreed that the VICs had free Wi-Fi (57.9%). Two-thirds (66.6%) of



visitors also disagreed that the VICs had electronic touch screens. These responses might point to the limited availability and use of online information sources in the VICs that participated in this study, or their unavailability when visitors visited these VICs.

In rating the VIC staff's knowledge, the visitors indicated that they were competent (94.7%) and had knowledge of local attractions (92.1%). The visitors agreed that the staff provided them with specific and in-depth knowledge of the local areas (86.8%), and that their knowledge would help them to visit diverse tourism facilities in the area (87.5%) and to make decisions about things to do in the areas (87.5%). Customer service was rated positively, with an overwhelming majority of the visitors agreeing that their interaction with staff was face-to-face (94.7%); that they were satisfied with their experiences at VICs (93.0%); that customer service in VICs was excellent (92.0%); that staff paid attention to their queries (91.4%); and that staff understood their information needs (90.2%).

Table 3: Visitor Experience at VICs

Attribute	Sample	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
<b>Information provision</b>				
The VIC provided me with general information about the local area	n = 152	6.6%	3.9%	89.5%
The VIC provided me with specific information about the local area tourist facilities	n = 152	4.7%	4.7%	90.7%
Information in this VIC is easily accessible	n = 152	3.9%	7.9%	58.1%
<b>Information quality</b>				
Information provided in this VIC is clear in meaning	n = 152	2.0%	4.6%	93.5%
Information provided in this VIC is easy to comprehend	n = 152	3.3%	5.3%	91.5%
Information provided in this VIC is easy to read	n = 152	2.0%	4.6%	93.4%
<b>Information resources</b>				
The content of printed brochures/pamphlets in this VIC is relevant	n = 152	5.9%	5.3%	88.8%
Audio-visual presentations (video/film/movie) are available to provide destination information	n = 148	62.9%	15.5%	21.6%
A visitor notice board is available to provide destination information	n = 148	56.7%	15.5%	27.7%
<b>Information and communication technologies</b>				
The VIC has computers that I could use to search for local information	n = 152	44.1%	9.2%	46.7%
Internet is available to search for local information (e.g. 3G and 4G signals)	n = 152	37.5%	14.5%	48.1%
The internet in this VIC is reliable	n = 152	44.1%	21.7%	34.2%
There is free Wi-Fi in this VIC	n = 152	57.9%	10.5%	31.6%
Electronic touch screens are available to provide information about the local area	n = 148	68.2%	12.2%	19.6%
<b>Staff knowledge</b>				
Staff provided me with specific and in-depth knowledge of the local area	n = 152	4.6%	8.6%	86.8%
Staff in this VIC have knowledge about local attractions	n = 152	0%	7.2%	92.1%
Staff in this VIC are competent	n = 152	0.7%	4.6%	94.7%
VIC staff provided me with knowledge to make decisions about things to do in this area	n = 152	5.9%	7.2%	86.6%
Staff's knowledge of the local area will help me to visit diverse tourism facilities in the local area	n = 152	4.6%	7.9%	87.5%
<b>Customer service</b>				
Customer service in this VIC is excellent	n = 152	2.0%	5.9%	92.0%
Staff understood my information needs	n = 152	3.9%	5.9%	90.2%
Staff paid attention to my queries	n = 152	2.6%	5.9%	91.4%
My interaction with staff was face-to-face	n = 152	1.3%	3.9%	94.7%
I am satisfied with my experience at the VIC	n = 152	1.3%	5.3%	93.0%

### **Memorable Visitor Experience at visited areas**

Table 4 shows that the majority of the visitors expressed positive responses to hedonism, with 89.0% of visitors agreeing that they enjoyed every moment, experienced high levels of excitement (74.6%), and experienced something new (73.2%). Also, 76.3% of respondents agreed that they participated in special activities in the visited areas. With regard to novelty, 79.7% agreed that they had a new experience and 64.6% had a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Furthermore, 76.8% agreed that they had a unique experience, and 65.6% had a different experience from their previous ones. Responses with regard to local culture show that, 84.4% agreed that they met friendly people, 79.8% met local people who might be willing to share information about the place they visited, and 64.8% had close encounters with the local culture. Furthermore, 78.2% agreed that they met local people who might be willing to help them, and 66.1% had a good impression of local people. In rating refreshment, 82.1% agreed that they felt revitalised, while 68.7% felt a sense of freedom. Meaningfulness was rated positively, with an overwhelming majority of the respondents agreeing that they had a meaningful experience (91.0%). Of the respondents, 73.2% agreed that they accomplished their goals, while 65.7% discovered new things about themselves. Responses with regard to involvement show that, 88.0% agreed that they got involved in activities of great interest to them, while 72.4% participated in the activities that they really wanted to do. An almost equal number of responses were provided for the visitors' experience with regard to knowledge, with 86.8% agreeing that they explored new things and 86.6% gaining knowledge. Furthermore, 75.4% agreed that they had learnt about new cultures.

Table 4: Memorable visitor experience

Indicators	Sample	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
<b>Hedonism</b>				
Experienced something new	n = 134	20.9%	6.0%	73.2%
Participated in special activities	n = 135	14.8%	8.9%	76.3%
Enjoyed every moment	n = 134	4.5%	6.0%	89.0%
Experienced high levels of excitement	n = 134	15.7%	9.7%	74.6%
<b>Novelty</b>				
Had a once-in-a-lifetime experience	n = 133	27.0%	8.3%	64.6%
Had a unique experience	n = 134	14.9%	8.2%	76.8%
Had a totally different experience from previous ones	n = 134	23.2%	11.2%	65.6%
Had a new experience	n = 133	12.0%	8.3%	79.7%
<b>Local culture</b>				
Had good impressions about the local people	n = 133	10.5%	23.3%	66.1%
Had close encounters with the local culture	n = 134	13.4%	21.6%	64.8%
Met friendly local people	n = 134	3.7%	11.9%	84.4%
Met local people who might be willing to help me	n = 133	3.8%	18.0%	78.2%
Met local people who might be willing to share information about the place	n = 134	3.7%	23.3%	79.8%
<b>Refreshment</b>				
Felt a sense of freedom	n = 134	14.2%	17.2%	68.7%
Felt revitalised	n = 134	3.7%	14.2%	82.1%
<b>Meaningfulness</b>				
Had meaningful experience	n = 133	3.1%	6.0%	91.0%
Accomplished my goal	n = 134	18.7%	8.2%	73.2%
Discovered new things about myself	n = 134	19.4%	14.9%	65.7%
<b>Involvement</b>				
Participated in activities which I really wanted to do	n = 134	19.4%	8.2%	72.4%
Got involved in activities of great interest to me	n = 134	8.9%	3.0%	88.0%
<b>Knowledge</b>				
Explored new things	n = 134	7.4%	6.0%	86.8%
Gained new knowledge	n = 134	9.7%	3.7%	86.6%
Learnt new cultures	n = 134	14.2%	10.4%	75.4%

### *Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)*

Table 5 shows the EFA that was conducted on items of each of the 2 constructs, using principal axis factoring and promax rotation, to determine their dimensionality.



Table 5: VIC experience and memorable visitor experience

Construct and related factors	Mean	% variance explained	Factor items	Factor item loading	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Visitor experience at VICs</b>					
Experience of information provision in VICs	4.2646	54.207	General local area information	0.930	0.719
			Specific local area information	0.788	
			Accessible information	0.375	
Experience of VIC information quality	4.2390	65.083	Clear information	0.663	0.836
			Easy to comprehend information	0.955	
			Easy to read information	0.776	
Experience of VIC information resources	2.3547	52.282	Relevant brochures	0.828	0.870
			Availability of audio-visual presentations	0.930	
			Availability of visitor notice boards		
Experience of ICTs in VICs	2.6638	60.139	Availability of computers	0.696	0.880
			Availability of Internet)	0.818	
			Reliable Internet	0.867	
			Availability of free Wi-Fi	0.753	
			Availability of electronic touch screens	0.731	
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	4.2176	51.836	In-depth knowledge of local area	0.586	0.829
			Knowledge of local attractions	0.764	
			Competent staff	0.756	
			Knowledge to help with decision-making	0.782	
			Knowledge to encourage visits to diverse tourism facilities	0.693	
Experience of VIC customer service	4.3374	64.732	Excellent customer service	0.815	0.899
			Understanding of visitor information needs	0.879	
			Attention to visitor queries	0.842	
			Face-to-face interaction with staff	0.664	
			Satisfaction with experience at VIC	0.806	
<b>Memorable visitor experiences</b>					
Hedonism	3.8977	63.831	Experienced something new	0.720	0.805
			Participated in special activities	0.660	
			Enjoyed every moment	0.671	
			Experienced high levels of excitement	0.828	
Novelty	3.7322	73.168	Had a once-in-a-lifetime experience	0.836	0.873
			Had a unique experience	0.893	
			Had a totally different experience from previous ones	0.717	
			Had a new experience	0.758	
Local culture	3.9251	73.524	Had a good impression about the local people	0.793	0.898
			Had close encounters with the local culture	0.739	
			Met friendly local people	0.774	
			Met local people who might be willing to help me	0.890	
			Met local people who might be willing to share information about the place	0.854	
Refreshment	3.8694	77.372	Felt a sense of freedom	0.739	0.690
			Felt revitalised	0.739	
Meaningfulness	3.8562	68.387	Had meaningful experience	0.604	0.755
			Accomplished my goal	0.820	
			Discovered new things about myself		
Involvement	3.8731	85.181	Participated in activities which I really wanted to do	0.838	0.806
			Got involved in activities of great interest to me	0.838	
Knowledge	3.9751	77.715	Explored new things	0.654	0.854
			Gained new knowledge	0.847	
			Learned new cultures	0.955	

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was above the recommended threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 1998) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) for the items in all 2 constructs, indicating that a factor analysis was appropriate



for each of the constructs. The total percentage variance explained for the 2 constructs varied between 51.836% and 85.181%. The factors identified for each of the 2 constructs were based on the eigenvalue criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Field, 2013). A total of 13 factors were extracted from the EFA of the 2 constructs.

To measure the internal consistency (reliability) of the factors the Cronbach’s alpha of each factor was determined. Although a good reliability score (alpha) is considered to exceed a threshold of 0.7, a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.5 is generally accepted in exploratory studies (George & Mallery, 2003). None of the Cronbach’s alpha values were lower than 0.5, hence, all 13 factors were considered reliable. The alpha coefficients ranged between 0.690 and 0.955. Table 4 also shows that the mean scores for the factors ranged between 2.3547 and 4.3914. The lowest mean score of 2.3547 (SD=1.2728) was for the factor: experience of VIC information resources, indicating that visitors tended to disagree on their experience of VIC information resources. The highest mean score of 4.3374 (SD=0.6054) was for the factor: experience of VIC customer service, indicating that visitors tended to agree on their experience of VIC customer service. A multiple linear regression analysis was used to measure the effect of the independent variables (Visitor experience at VIC factors) on the dependent variable (MTE dimensions). Table 6 provides an overview of the multiple linear regression analysis. However, the main aim of the analysis was not prediction, but to determine which predictors have a statistically significant relationship with memorable visitor experiences.

Table 6: Prediction of hedonism

Construct	Standardized Coefficients	Sig
	B	
<b>Hedonism</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	0.028	0.775
Experience of VIC information quality	0.239	0.022**
Experience of VIC information resources	0.132	0.100*
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.155	0.058*
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.208	0.029**
Experience of VIC customer service	-0.049	0.627
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.216</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>7.920 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Novelty</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.033	0.732
Experience of VIC information quality	0.275	0.007***
Experience of VIC information resources	0.155	0.047**
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.048	0.546
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.186	0.045**
Experience of VIC customer service	0.116	0.241
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.261</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>9.872 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Local culture</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.039	0.677
Experience of VIC information quality	0.188	0.057*
Experience of VIC information resources	0.202	0.008***
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.098	0.203
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.157	0.081*
Experience of VIC customer service	0.210	0.030**
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.299</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>11.749 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Refreshment</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.056	0.581
Experience of VIC information quality	0.027	0.800
Experience of VIC information resources	0.148	0.074**
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.174	0.039**
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.182	0.063**
Experience of VIC customer service	0.157	0.133



<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.170</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>6.144 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Meaningfulness</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.082	0.418
Experience of VIC information quality	0.222	0.038**
Experience of VIC information resources	0.145	0.079*
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.146	0.082*
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.147	0.131
Experience of VIC customer service	0.070	0.499
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.176</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>6.368 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Involvement</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.011	0.917
Experience of VIC information quality	0.232	0.031**
Experience of VIC information resources	0.103	0.213
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.122	0.149
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.247	0.012**
Experience of VIC customer service	-0.082	0.435
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.164</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>5.926 (&lt;0.001)</b>	
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Experience of information provision in VICs	-0.091	0.357
Experience of VIC information quality	0.244	0.019**
Experience of VIC information resources	0.183	0.023**
Experience of ICTs in VICs	0.160	0.049**
Experience of VIC staff knowledge	0.225	0.018**
Experience of VIC customer service	-0.012	0.906
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.223</b>	
<b>F (p value)</b>	<b>8.222 (&lt;0.001)</b>	

Results of standardised betas are presented. Statistical significance is indicated with \*( $p < 0.10$ ), \*\* ( $p < 0.05$ ), \*\*\* ( $p < 0.01$ ).

No multicollinearity was detected (All VIF values were below 10).

The adjusted  $R^2$  values ranged between 0.164 and 0.299, indicating weak explanation of the variation in the dependent variable.

The F test for regression is statistically significant for all models (The beta coefficient do differ significantly from zero – p values all < 0.001).

The standardised beta values and associated significance indicate independent variables that were statistically significant.

From Table 6, it is evident that a number of factors are statistically significant predictors of memorable visitor experiences at visited areas. The results reveal that:

- Visitor's experience of VIC information quality, information resources, ICTs and staff knowledge contributed to their experience of hedonism at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information quality, information resources and staff knowledge contributed to their experience of novelty at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information resources, staff knowledge and customer service contributed to their experience of local culture at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information resources, ICTs and staff knowledge contributed to their experience of refreshment at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information quality, information resources and ICTs contributed to their experience of meaningfulness at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information quality and staff knowledge contributed to their experience of involvement at visited areas.
- Visitor's experience of VIC information quality, information resources, ICTs and staff knowledge contributed to their experience of knowledge gained at visited areas.

## Discussion

The purpose of the paper was to ascertain whether the experiences that visitors have at VICs contribute to their memorable experiences at visited areas. The results show that visitors agreed that information provision, information quality, information resources, ICTs, staff knowledge

and customer care were part of their experiences at VICs. While the Internet was perceived to be available to search for local information at VICs, it was seen not to be reliable. On the other hand, visitors expressed disagreements about their experiences of information resources and ICTs at VICs. These disagreements were prevalent on the availability of information sources such as audio-visual presentations, visitor notice boards, electronic touch screens, and free Wi-Fi. This might be an indication of the limited availability and use of these sources at the VICs that participated in the study, or their unavailability when the visitors visited these VICs.

Using Kim et al.'s (2012) MTE scale, the results showed that visitors agreed that the dimensions of MTEs (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge) were part of their experiences at visited destinations. While several studies (Chandralal et al., 2015; Tavares et al., 2018) acknowledged the role of VICs on memorable visitor experiences, they have not investigated how visitors' experience of VICs' contribute to memorable experiences at visited areas. Moreover, earlier studies did not identify factors that are statistically significant predictors of memorable visitor experiences at visited areas. Our results show that visitor's experience at VICs predicted memorable experiences at visited areas. Moreover, the multiple regression analysis showed that the more visitors agreed that information quality, information resources, ICTs, staff knowledge and customer service were part of their experiences at VICs, the more memorable experiences they had at visited areas. In particular, the results show that visitors' experience of the quality of VIC information contributed to their experience of hedonism, novelty, meaningfulness, involvement and knowledge gained in visited areas. Earlier research (Mistilis & D'Ambra, 2008; Wong & McKercher, 2011) also found quality of information to be important in enhancing memorable visitor experiences during travel. Interestingly, while the main function of VICs is to provide tourism-related information (Draper, 2018), our results show that it is not only the provision of information but the quality of the information provided at VICs that is a statistically predictor of memorable visitor experience at visited. These results corroborate what Chang et al. (2019) found that brochure information dissemination quality did not have a greater effect on overall VIC experience.

With regard to information resources, the results show that the experience of these resources predicted hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness and knowledge. Similar results were reported for the prediction of ICT experience on memorable visitor experiences. The results show that visitors' experience of ICTs in VICs contributed to experiences of hedonism, refreshment, meaningfulness and knowledge at visited areas. This is despite the results of the frequency analysis pointing to the limited availability and use of online information sources in the VICs that participated in this study. A plausible explanation for these results could be that these memorable experiences were reported by visitors who used information resources such as printed brochures and the Internet which were available at VICs they visited. These findings corroborate those of Chang et al. (2019) that the quality of brochure information dissemination has significant effects on overall VIC experience. The limited availability of online information resources on the other hand confirm the findings of Chikati et al. (2020) that the adoption and use of ICTs in Gauteng VICs is still limited. However, Chikati et al. (2020) found a widespread adoption and use of traditional ICTs such as email and websites, which are not interactive. This shows that VICs still lag behind in adopting electronic and online information sources, as many still rely on traditional information sources such as brochures and face-to-face communication.

Although Khatri (2019), show that recent technological advancements make visitors less dependent on personal interaction, VIC studies show that staff knowledge, competence, and skills are critical factors that influence their effectiveness in delivering memorable visitor experiences (Draper, 2018; Chang et al., 2019). A deeper understanding of local tourism

products could help them to enhance visitors' experiences (Wong & McKercher, 2011). Our results corroborate these findings, showing that staff knowledge contributed to visitors' experience of hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, involvement and knowledge. However, according to Wong and McKercher (2011), the delivery of memorable visitor experience does not depend only on product knowledge, but on customer service that staff provide. Hence, staff service plays a significant role in enhancing visitor experiences by providing a high level of customer service (Chang et al., 2019). The results of our study confirm earlier findings that visitors' experience of customer service at VICs contributed to their experience of local culture. The results on staff knowledge and customer service presents staff with opportunities to collaborate with surrounding communities in order to co-produce local knowledge and expose visitors to authentic local culture and products that are likely to contribute to their experience of not only the areas they have visited, but also of the broader region (Draper, 2018). Moreover, exposing visitors to local culture can enhance their connection with surrounding communities (Yu et al., 2019).

## Conclusion

The paper makes a theoretical contribution to the research gaps identified in the role that VICs play in contributing to MTEs. While several studies (Chandralal et al., 2015; Tavares et al., 2018; Wong & McKercher, 2011) acknowledge the role of VICs on memorable visitor experiences, our results show that visitors' experience at VIC contribute to the experience of the dimensions of MTE (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge) at visited areas. The paper therefore contributes to the VIC literature by highlighting the role that VICs play in contributing to memorable visitor experience and also identifies VIC experience of information quality, information resources, ICTs, staff knowledge and customer service as significant contributors of visitors' experience of MTE at areas they visited.

Managerial implications are also made for VIC staff to provide positive experiences at VICs as these contribute to visitors' experience of the dimensions of MTE at visited. With the increasing need to buy experience-oriented goods and services rather than pure consumption (Kutlu & Ayyildiz, 2021), delivering memorable visitor experience is important to meeting the ever-changing needs of visitors. As first point of contact and the main platforms from which visitors obtain information about a destination's tourism products (Draper, 2018), offering visitors positive experiences of VIC's information provision, information quality, information resources, staff knowledge and customer service will contribute to their experience of the dimensions of MTE at visited areas. The results are important in enabling VICs to create an environment that contributes to memorable visitor experiences at visited areas (Chandralal et al., 2015). These memorable experiences may also influence visitors' behavioural intentions (Tavares et al., 2018; Yu et al., 2019) or lead to frequent and higher word-of-mouth and revisit intentions (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017; Yu et al., 2019). To do this, staff should work with various community structures and different stakeholders to source local knowledge that could be passed on to visitors to provide them with authentic and memorable experiences in visited areas.

A major limitation in this paper is that limited availability of modern ICTs in most VICs provided a narrow understanding of their effect on MTEs in visited areas. These sources now serve as important tools to disseminate and search for information and help visitors share experiences throughout their travel. With information provision as one of the main responsibilities of VICs, it is important to invest in these sources and to disseminate information that will help visitors make informed travel decisions and enhance their experiences. This is the direction that this paper proposes for future research. The lack of a

sampling frame due to the diffuse nature of the visitor population affected the response rate for the online survey. Furthermore, the lack of a visitor sampling frame did not enable representivity and generalisation of findings to other VIC visitors. Future research is therefore recommended on a bigger sample of VIC visitors. In addition, future research should be conducted in other types of VICs such as those which are privately owned, as the information resources and the visitor population in these facilities may be different and therefore offer visitors a different experience. Despite these limitations, the findings will help VIC managers fulfill their enhancement and information provision function by delivering experiences that contribute to memorable experience at visited areas and in turn encourage visitors' intention to revisit these areas.

## References

- Andrades, L. & Dimanche, F. (2014). Co-creation of Experience Value: A Tourist Behaviour Approach. In Chen, M. & Uysal, J. (Eds.). *Creating Experience Value in Tourism*. London: CABI Publishing.
- Antunes, N.M.B., Ramos, C.M.Q. & Sousa, C.M.R. (2018). Who are the Tourists Sharing Content on Social Media? Behaviour and Characteristics. *Journal of Spatial and Organizational Dynamics*, (3), 237-257.
- Araña, J.E., León, C.J., Carballo, M.M. & Gil, S.M. (2016). Designing Tourist Information Offices: The Role of the Human Factor. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55 (6), 764–773.
- Assaf A.G. & Josiassen, A. (2012). Identifying and Ranking the Determinants of Tourism Performance: A Global Investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51 (4), 388–399.
- Ballantyne, R., Hughes, K. & Ritchie, B.W. (2009). Meeting the Needs of Tourists: The Role and Function of Australian Visitor Information Centers. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 26 (8), 778-794.
- Barnes, S. J., Mattson, J. & Sorensen, F. (2016). Remembered Experiences and Revisit Intentions: A Longitudinal Study of Safari Park Visitors. *Tourism Management*, 57, 286-294.
- Cetin, G. & Bilgihan, A. (2016) Components of Cultural Tourists' Experiences in Destinations. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 19 (2), 137-154.
- Chandralal, L., Rindfleish, J. & Valenzuela, F. (2015). An Application of Travel Blog Narratives to Explore Memorable Tourism Experiences. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 20 (6), 680-693.
- Chang, H.J., Hung, F.H.S. & Chung, Y.W. (2019). Information Dissemination of Brochures and Service Encounter of Staff at Visitor Information Centres. *International Journal of Information and Management Sciences*, 30 (4), 341-359.
- Chikati, S., Queiros, D. & van Zyl, C. (2020). Current State of Adoption of Technology in Visitor Information Centres in Gauteng, South Africa. In *Culture, People and Technology: The Driving Forces for Tourism Cities Proceedings of 8th ITSA Biennial Conference 2020* (pp. 457-473). UK: The British Library.
- Cornelisse, M. (2018). Understanding Memorable Tourism Experiences: A Case Study. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 8 (2), 93-99.
- D'Ambra, J. & Mistilis, N. (2010). Assessing the E-capability of Visitor Information Centers. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49 (2), 206–215.
- Deery, M., Jago, L., Mistilis, N., D'Ambra, J., Richards, F. & Carson, D. (2007). *Visitor Information Centres: Best Practice in Information Dissemination*. Australia: Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre. Available at <http://crctourism.com.au> [Retrieved April 29 2015].

- Draper, J. (2016). An Exploratory Study of the Differences in Prior Travel Experience and Tourist Information Sources. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 16 (2), 133-143.
- Draper, J. (2018). Applying Importance-Performance Analysis to Services of a Visitor Information Centre. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 18 (1), 84-95.
- Fallon, L.D. & Kriwoken, L.K. (2003). Community Involvement in Tourism Infrastructure: The Case of the Strahan Visitor Centre, Tasmania. *Tourism Management*, 24 (3), 289-308.
- Hair, J.F., Jr., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L. & Black, W.C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. 5th edn. New Jersey. Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, United States.
- Hwang, Y. H. and Li, Z. (2008). Travellers' Use of Information Obtained at Tourist Information Centres: Comparison between Information Seekers and Convenience Stoppers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 13 (1), 1-17.
- Khatri, I. (2019). Information Technology in Tourism and Hospitality Industry: A Review of Ten Years' Publications. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Education*, 9, 74-87.
- Kim, J-H. (2014). The Antecedent of Memorable Tourism Experiences: The Development of a Scale to Measure the Destination Attributes Associated with Memorable Experiences. *Tourism Management*, 44, 34-45.
- Kim, J-H. (2018). The Impact of Memorable Tourism Experience on Loyal Behaviours: The Mediating Effect of Destination Image Satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 58, 857-870.
- Kim, J-H. & Fesenmaier, D.R. (2017). Sharing Tourism Experiences: The Post-Trip Experience. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56 (1), 28-40.
- Kim, H., Joun, H.J., Choe, Y. & Schroeder, A. (2019). How can a Destination Better Manage its Offering to Visitors? Observing Visitor Experiences via Online Reviews. *Sustainability*, 11, 1-19.
- Kim, W. & Park, J. (2017). Examining Structural Relationships between Work Engagement, Organizational Procedural Justice, knowledge Sharing, and Innovative Work Behaviour for Sustainable Organizations. *Sustainability*, 9, 1-16.
- Kim, J-H., Ritchie, J.R.B. & McCormick, B. (2012.) Development of a Scale to Measure Memorable Tourism Experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(1), 12-25.
- Kutlu, D., Ayyildiz, H. (2021). The Role of the Destination Image in Creating Memorable Tourism Experience. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 23 (12), 199-216.
- Lyu, C., Yang, J., Zhang, F., Teo, T. S. H., Mu, T. (2020). How do Knowledge Characteristics Affect Firm's Knowledge Sharing Intention in Inter-Firm Cooperation? An Empirical Study. *Journal of Business Research*, 115, 48-60.
- Lyu, S.O & Hwang, J. (2015). Are the Days of Tourist Information Gone? Effects of the Ubiquitous Information Environment. *Tourism Management*, 48, 54-63.
- Mahdzar, M. (2018). Tourist Perception on Memorable Tourism Experience towards their Revisit Intentions to Islamic Tourism Destination in Shah Alam, Selangor. *Journal of Emerging Economies and Islamic Research*, 7 (1), 37-44.
- Manthiou, A., Kang, J., Chiang, L. & Tang, L. (2016). Investigating the Effects of Memorable Experiences: An Extended Model of Script Theory. *Journal of Travel and Tourism*, 33, 362-379.
- Maruyama, N.U; Keith, S.J. & Woosnam, K. (2019). Incorporating Emotion into Social Exchange: Considering Distinct Groups' Attitudes towards Ethnic Neighbourhood Tourism in Osaka, Japan. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2019.1593992.

- Minghetti, V. & Celotto, E. (2014). Measuring Quality of Information Services: Combining Mystery Shopping and Customer Satisfaction Research to Assess the Performance of Tourist Offices. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53 (5), 565-580.
- Mistilis, N & D'Ambra, J. (2008). The Visitor Experience and Perception of Information Quality at the Sydney Visitor Information Centre. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 24 (10), 35-46.
- Neuhofer-Rainoldi, B.E. (2014). *An Exploration of the Technology Enhanced Tourist Experience*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Bournemouth University: England.
- Pearce, P. (2004). The Functions and Planning of Visitor Centres in Regional Tourism. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 15 (1), 8-17.
- Pine, J.B. & Gilmore, J.H. (1999). *The Experience Economy*. Harvard, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.
- Pine, J.B. & Gilmore, J.H. (2013). Experience Economy: Past, Present and Future. In Sundbo, J. & Sørensen, F. (Eds.). *Handbook on the Experience Economy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Ritchie, J.R.B., Tung, V.W.S. & Ritchie, R.J.B. (2011). Tourism Experience Management Research: Emergence, Evolution and Future Directions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 23 (4), 419-438.
- Rubtsov, V. A., Zyrianov, A. I., Zyrianova, I. S. & Danilevich, V. V. (2019). Application of Canadian Experience for Supply Chain Strategy and Territorial Organization of Tourist Information Centres in the Regions of Russia. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 8 (5), 891-896.
- Sørensen, F. & Jensen, J.F. (2015). Value Creation and Knowledge Development in Tourism Experience Encounters. *Tourism Management*, 46, 336-346.
- Sthapit, E. & Coudounaris, D.N. (2017). Memorable Tourism Experiences: Antecedents and Outcomes. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 1-23.
- Sthapit, E & Jiménez-Barreto, J. (2018). Memorable Tourism Experiences: Antecedents and Outcomes. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 18 (1), 72-94.
- Tam, C. and Oliveira, T. (2017). Understanding Mobile Banking Individual Performance: The DeLone & McLean Model and the Moderating Effects of Individual Culture. *Internet Research*, 27 (3), 538-562.
- Tavares, J., Neves, O. F. & Sawant, M. (2018). The Importance of Information in the Destination on the Levels of Tourist Satisfaction. *International Journal of Tourism Policy*, 8 (2), 1-27.
- Tung, V.W.S. & Ritchie, J.R.B. (2011). Exploring the Essence of Memorable Tourism Experiences. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38 (4), 1367-1386.
- Taylor, P., Frost, W. & Laing, J. (2017). Meeting the Challenge of Managing Visitor Experiences at Tourism Attractions. In: Albrecht, J.N (Ed.). *Visitor Management in Tourism Destinations* (pp 22-32). CABI Publishing.
- Wong, C.U.I. & McKercher, B. (2011). Tourist Information Centre: Staff as Knowledge Brokers. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38 (2), 481-498.
- Yu, C-P., Chang, W.C. & Ramanpong, J. (2019). Assessing Visitors' Memorable Tourism Experiences in Forest Recreation Destination: A Case Study in Xitou Nature Education Area. *Forests*, 10, 636, 1-15.
- Zhang, H., Wu, Y. & Buhalis, D. (2017). A Model of Perceived Image, Memorable Tourism Experiences and Revisit Intention. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 326-336.