



Savoring tourism: Exploring basic processes

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the basic processes underpinning savoring tourism experiences. Specifically, we investigated the content of tourism experiences associated with savoring processes and the interrelationships between each savoring process. Thanksgiving, Basking, Marveling, and Luxuriating, which are all established savoring processes, were examined, and the potential new process of Knowing (knowledge gain) was also considered. The quantitative content analyses identified several key contents of positive tourism that stimulated savoring processes from emotional and experiential perspectives. Moreover, using a rating scale format, our study suggested the co-existence of the savoring processes and their interrelationships, including Knowing. The results increase the field's understanding of tourists' post-travel reflections and connect savoring to research on positive tourism.

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Introduction

An ongoing challenge for tourism scholars has been documenting the enduring value of holiday travel. The concept of “savoring” in positive psychology offers promise for this pursuit. Savoring occurs when individuals “attend to, appreciate, and enhance the positive experiences in one's life” (Bryant & Veroff, 2007, p. xi). It helps enhance people's positive emotions and strengthens their values, providing a sense of fulfillment. Savoring positive past events and present episodes enables individuals to enhance their current happiness and well-being (Bryant, Smart, & King, 2005; Bryant & Veroff, 2007; Speer, Bhanji, & Delgado, 2014).

These studies suggest that savoring after a holiday can be an effective approach for prolonging and enhancing the benefits of time spent on holidays. Indeed, Bryant and Veroff (2007) have argued that savoring the past (reminiscence) prolongs the benefits of short-lived experiences. Research has identified numerous positive benefits of tourists' holiday experiences (e.g., Chen & Petrick, 2013; de Bloom, Geurts, & Kompier, 2013), yet those effects are usually short-lived and fade out quickly (de Bloom et al., 2009; Kühnel & Sonnentag, 2011). Investigating ways to sustain the psychological effects of tourism can lead to maximizing tourist benefits and providing valuable tourism experiences. In this vein, focusing on savoring processes through reminiscence (past-focused savoring) is crucial because it can shed light on the possible role of savoring in prolonging tourism benefits over time. Therefore, the current study investigated the basic process of savoring past tourism experiences.

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There are several issues to be explored with regard to savoring in tourism. One question relates to the fundamental processes that may operate during tourists' recall—what are the components of the savoring processes achieved through memories in the tourism context? In their foundational work, [Bryant and Veroff \(2007\)](#) identified Thanksgiving, Basking, Marveling, and Luxuriating as the core processes of savoring. In this paper, we follow the conventions of this foundational work by capitalizing on the savoring processes proposed in previous research. Additionally, when we consider savoring processes in tourism contexts, the factor of knowledge gain (henceforth referred to as Knowing)—effectively building an understanding of the place or people at the destination—may be an important consideration ([Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019](#); [Pearce, Oguchi, Wu, & Mohammadi, 2016](#)). Studies have found that tourism experiences lead to gaining knowledge and skills (e.g., [Scarinci & Pearce, 2012](#); [Stone & Petrick, 2013](#)), which assists in forming memories of the time spent, facilitating positive recall, and reflecting on experiences after traveling ([Kim & Ritchie, 2014](#); [Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012](#); [Tung & Ritchie, 2011](#)). Following this literature, we examined the content of Knowing together with the other four savoring processes.

This study aims to explore the basic processes underpinning savoring past tourism experiences. In particular, this study had two main objectives: (1) to explore the content of positive tourism experiences associated with post-travel savoring processes; and (2) to investigate the presence (or absence) of the five possible savoring processes, including Knowing, in tourism contexts and examine the fundamental relationships between these processes by assessing the extent of their co-occurrence. Our study has the potential to contribute to two aspects of the literature. First, we applied the concept of the savoring process to tourism contexts and investigated it using qualitative and quantitative data. Although [Bryant and Veroff \(2007\)](#) proposed the conceptual framework of savoring processes in psychology, few studies tested this concept. Moreover, prior work has examined savoring tourism (e.g., [Filep, Cao, Jiang, & DeLacy, 2013](#); [Sthapit, 2019](#)), yet these studies did not fully explore the co-existence or independence of the type of savoring processes. Second, this study extends the concept of savoring processes by investigating a potentially new fifth savoring process, that of Knowing, provided by [Pearce et al. \(2016\)](#). Our approach is likely to provide evidence to further understand the basic process of savoring in tourism experiences and contribute to capturing the richness of the relationship between positive tourism experiences and savoring processes.

Literature review

The concept of savoring

In reviewing the concept of savoring, [Bryant, Chadwick, and Kluge \(2011\)](#) argued that savoring includes a range of conceptual components—savoring experiences, savoring processes, savoring strategies, and savoring beliefs. At a macro level, savoring experiences involves generating thoughts and behaviors by mindfully attending to and appreciating a favorable situation ([Bryant & Veroff, 2007](#)). Savored experiences then comprise the content or events enjoyed and provide emotional benefits. As initially defined, savoring processes refer to “a sequence of mental or physical operations that unfolds over time and transforms a positive stimulus, outcome, or event into positive feelings to which a person then attends and savors” ([Bryant & Veroff, 2007](#), p. 13). These savoring processes start from recognizing something as positive, responding to this positive stimulus, and enjoying emotional reactions to the experience. A specific pivotal positive stimulus is used to prompt the savoring of a situation. It can be deployed repeatedly, thus strengthening the positive stimulus into generalized positive emotions such as gratitude, pride, awe, and physical pleasure.

As an accompaniment to the savoring processes, savoring strategies are the “thoughts and behaviors that people use to regulate their emotional responses to positive experiences” ([Smith & Bryant, 2017](#), p. 145). For instance, strategies such as Memory Building (i.e., actively creating and storing memories of positive experiences to reminisce about later) and Self-Congratulation (i.e., celebrating personal successes) can amplify positive feelings ([Smith & Bryant, 2017](#)). These concepts are associated with the cognitive control of emotions, which has been emphasized in a rich body of empirical research emphasizing the value of emotional regulation ([Gross, 1998](#)). Lastly, savoring beliefs refer to people's perceptions of their ability to appraise positive experiences of the past (reminiscence), the present (in the moment), and the future (anticipation; [Bryant, 2003](#)).

The current study focused on savoring past tourism experiences. Several studies have investigated savoring past events. For example, [Zimbardo and Boyd \(2008\)](#) found that selectively remembering the positive episodes from one's past is an important strategy for good mental health. [Bryant et al. \(2005\)](#) used a questionnaire and experimental research to reveal that people who had contemplated positive memories during the preceding week increased their current levels of happiness. Moreover, [Speer et al. \(2014\)](#) tested brain activity using fMRI and found that reminiscing about positive experiences in the past created internally generated positive emotions. The present study did not directly explore the causal relationships between tourism-linked savoring and subjective well-being, as a cross-sectional design was utilized. Nevertheless, we note the importance of this proposed link and assert that the study of savoring has consequences for those interested in subjective well-being.

Savoring processes

Savoring processes can be described as a series of generating positive emotions by recognizing, paying attention, and savoring a positive event. Previous research has proposed four types of savoring processes that reinforce different positive emotions respectively: Thanksgiving regulates gratitude, Basking regulates pride, Marveling regulates awe, and Luxuriating regulates physical pleasure ([Bryant et al., 2011](#)). As [Bryant and Veroff \(2007\)](#) described, Thanksgiving occurs when individuals appreciate the chance to be in a specific place and are pleased to have certain opportunities. Basking is a process of being proud of participating, where

Table 1

A conceptual model of savoring processes (Adapted from Bryant & Veroff, 2007).

Type of experience	Focus of attention	
	External world	Internal self
Cognitive reflection	Thanksgiving (Gratitude)	Basking (Pride)
Experiential absorption	Marveling (Awe)	Luxuriating (Physical pleasure)

Note. The words in brackets display the associated positive emotions.

individuals reflect positively on their achievements. For example, people can experience Basking when they have accomplished something that elicits praise from themselves or others. Marveling comes into play when individuals feel in awe and are amazed and impressed by the experience of a place or people they visited. Marveling can apply to tourism when individuals discover the beauty of nature or striking sights and events. It can also apply when human activities and behaviors are impressive. Finally, Luxuriating is a process of enjoying the physical and sensory pleasures of a positive experience. It does not necessarily imply that the experience is costly or expensive but could imply that individuals simply enjoy physical pleasure or relax and escape from stress or hard work (Bryant & Veroff, 2007).

When focusing on the conceptual aspects, the four savoring processes can be explained using a 2×2 conceptual framework (Table 1), consisting of the focus of attention (external and internal) and types of experience (cognitive reflection and experiential absorption; Bryant & Veroff, 2007). According to Bryant and Veroff (2007), Thanksgiving and Marveling are focused externally, as they involve considerations outside of the individual. Conversely, Basking and Luxuriating are focused internally, as they are processes in which individuals focus more on personal thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In addition, Thanksgiving and Basking correspond to cognitive reflection, in which people reflect on their subjective experiences. In contrast, Marveling and Luxuriating are classified as experiential absorption because these processes allow individuals to immerse themselves without overthinking their feelings.

Although Bryant and Veroff (2007) proposed the conceptual framework of savoring processes, few empirical studies have evaluated the overall concept of savoring processes, especially in tourism studies. Further clarification of the savoring process in tourism can provide valuable resources for tourism agencies and tourism destination management to understand what experiences add value and savor to tourists' experiences.

Savoring and tourism experiences

Several studies have examined savoring in a vacation context (de Bloom et al., 2013; Smith & Bryant, 2013), but they have primarily focused on savoring an on-site experience rather than reminiscing about past experiences. In addition to the importance of focusing on present-focused savoring, the basic process of savoring the past through reminiscence requires further investigation because recalling positive past experiences may enrich their enduring emotional benefits (Bryant & Veroff, 2007) and support the development of future revisit intentions (Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017; Kim et al., 2012). Consequently, studying savoring the past provides beneficial information to tourists and marketers who can examine the features of experience that have enduring value.

As displayed in Table 1, each savoring process regulates the positive emotions of gratitude, pride, awe, and physical pleasure (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). These emotional experiences are also seen in tourism studies. For example, some tourism studies have emphasized the importance of gratitude (Filep, Macnaughton, & Glover, 2017), pride (e.g., self-confidence; Chen, Huang, & Hu, 2019; Scarinci & Pearce, 2012), awe (Hicks, 2018; Pearce, Strickland-Munro, & Moore, 2017), and pleasure or happiness (Farber & Hall, 2007; Nawijn, 2011), building a connection to the field of savoring.

Additionally, several social, contextual, and experiential components are required to support the savoring of past tourism experiences. For example, Bryant and Veroff (2007) indicated that prolonging savoring of a positive occasion can occur after sharing the incident with others after an event, engaging in celebrating a positive event, and possessing sufficient available stimuli (e.g., memorabilia such as photos and souvenirs) to prompt reminiscence. These sharing and celebratory activities are common in tourism. Some people travel to reward themselves and celebrate major occasions (e.g., getting married; Lee, Huang, & Chen, 2010), others buy souvenirs as memorabilia (Wilkins, 2011), most take photos to reminisce about past trips (Pan, Lee, & Tsai, 2014), and many share their tourism experiences with others (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Su, Tang, & Nawijn, 2021). These social and celebratory experiences enable tourists to recall their positive tourism experiences when they return home and facilitate each savoring process.

An emerging and growing body of qualitative tourism research exists on savoring past positive experiences (e.g., Filep et al., 2013; Sthapit, 2019; Sthapit, Björk, Jiménez-Barreto, & Stone, 2021; Yan & Halpenny, 2021). Filep et al. (2013) explored the emotions tourists experience when recalling a past holiday. In studying what types of experiences are linked to those emotions, they found that positive emotions such as joy, interest, contentment, and love were the most savored affective responses. Further, natural scenery and social experiences were prominent components of savored activities. When tourists were exposed to kindness from local people, the positive emotions of love were identified. More recently, Sthapit (2019) suggested that positive emotions, such as joy and interest, were savored by tourists while enjoying gastronomic experiences. Despite the emerging attention given to savoring, attempts at developing new contributions to the framework of savoring holiday processes have been limited. Further

research is necessary to determine the types of tourism experiences and processes involved in this form of emotionally involved recall.

Savoring and knowledge gain

To further investigate the processes of savoring past tourism experiences, Pearce et al. (2016) proposed a new framework that described savoring processes and added Knowing to the list of savoring processes. They argued that Knowing was a prominent driver influencing recall and savoring. In a follow-up study on savoring in Iran, Pearce and Mohammadi (2019) reported that Iranians emphasize the co-existence of several different savoring processes in their memories of intensely experienced holiday experiences. Moreover, their domestic tourism respondents used a category that could sensibly be called Knowing and improving knowledge when recalling the features of their most valued holidays.

Research from several areas of tourism and leisure studies can be examined to reinforce the rationale of including Knowing in the list of savoring processes. Many scholars have focused on unstructured learning in tourism contexts and noted that tourism experiences are one process by which individuals acquire new knowledge and skills (e.g., Chen et al., 2019; Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012; Pearce & Foster, 2007; Scarinci & Pearce, 2012; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Moreover, empirical studies have shown that knowledge gain is an important component that makes people positively remember holiday episodes (Kim et al., 2012; Kim & Ritchie, 2014). For instance, Tung and Ritchie (2011) revealed that intellectual development (e.g., knowledge gain of the history and local culture in the destination) is a significant factor in facilitating positive recall. Additionally, in a study of backpacking as a "University of Travel," Pearce and Foster (2007) identified knowledge gains and the understanding of others as significant outcomes when respondents reflected on their holidays. Collectively, these studies suggest that tourists' knowledge gain is a crucial factor in facilitating their memories and reflection after the trip. Thus, it is reasonable to consider that Knowing could be a new fifth savoring process. However, it is unclear from the tourism literature which kinds of positive emotions and experiences are associated with Knowing. The current study, therefore, attempts to capture the content of Knowing from emotional and experiential perspectives.

Methods

Data collection

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in an online survey. Although survey approaches are mainly used to collect quantitative data, open-ended questions can be included in surveys and assessed using qualitative tools (O'Leary, 2017). In this study, we asked participants to recall and think about a positive past tourism experience. Therefore, we included an open-ended question to investigate the content and emphases participants used when recalling their past positive tourism experiences. Asking respondents to reflect on their positive stories has previously been utilized in research on savoring in general and savored tourism in particular through recalled memories (e.g., Bryant, 2021; Bryant & Veroff, 2007; Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019; Sthapit et al., 2021).

The ethics committee at a major Japanese university approved all study procedures. The participants were recruited from Macromill, Inc., an online research company in Japan. The current study required respondents to write about their tourism experiences in a free-response format (more than 400 words in Japanese). Since this task required more effort from the participants than simply responding to a survey with all scaled items, we first screened the participants to assess their willingness to complete a survey that included writing over 400 words to a free-response prompt. After this process, the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents who had agreed to write about a positive tourism experience. Participants completed all questions anonymously and received points from the Internet survey company as reward for their participation.

As the current study aimed to investigate the basic savoring processes in tourism experiences, we only analyzed those respondents who recalled their tourism experiences and provided the required additional information. We initially collected 314 respondents, but 26 were subsequently excluded from the final analyses because their answers were incomplete (e.g., they reported that they could not recall any tourism experiences). As a result, our final sample consisted of 288 Japanese adults (142 men and 146 women). Respondents had a mean age of 38.24 years ($SD = 14.96$). A total of 41.7% ($n = 120$) of the respondents were married, and 37.2% ($n = 107$) had children. Table 2 displays the demographic information of participants in this study.

Measures

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of four sections: a measure of subjective well-being (Shimai, Otake, Utsuki, Ikemi, & Lyubomirsky, 2004), a free-response describing the participants' positive tourism experiences, the respondents' assessments of savoring processes in the tourism context (Pearce et al., 2016), and demographic information.

The first section assessed subjective well-being. We used the Japanese version of the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) adapted by Shimai et al. (2004), which was initially developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999). The SHS is a well-validated, four-item, self-report measure of subjective happiness, rated on a seven-point Likert scale.

In the second section, respondents completed their free responses by writing a long paragraph. We asked respondents to describe the experience in more than 400 words in Japanese (equivalent to approximately 200 words in English). We asked them to describe one specific tourism experience that was particularly important, happy, and enjoyable. We also requested that they write

Table 2
Participants' demographic information (N = 288).

	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Men	142	49.3
Women	146	50.7
Age		
20–29	124	43.1
30–39	45	15.6
40–49	39	13.5
50–59	41	14.2
60–69	39	13.5
Marriage		
Single	168	58.3
Married	120	41.7
Children		
None	181	62.8
Has child(ren)	107	37.2
Household income		
Less than 2 M	46	16.0
2 M to 3.99 M	43	14.9
4 M to 5.99 M	39	13.5
6 M to 7.99 M	40	13.9
8 M to 9.99 M	25	8.7
10 M to 11.99 M	15	5.2
12 M to 14.99 M	7	2.4
15 M to 19.99 M	5	1.7
More than 20 M	2	0.7
Refused to answer	66	22.9

Note. The currency of the household income is Japanese YEN.

as much as they could about the place, the people, the meaning, and the feelings they had then and now (Pearce et al., 2016). These instructions were designed to encourage the participants to savor their holiday time by prompting reminiscence of their positive memories.

The third section asked respondents to appraise the extent to which they had savored the experience. When participants had finished writing the paragraph, we asked them to assign a score from 0 to 10 (0 = *not at all* to 10 = *very much*) to indicate whether their tourism experience had involved Thanksgiving, Basking, Marveling, Luxuriating, and Knowing. As in previous savoring studies (Bryant & Veroff, 2007; Pearce et al., 2016; Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019), clear and plain definitions of these categories were provided to respondents: Thanksgiving refers to being grateful, pleased that you were there, and had this opportunity; Basking is having pride in the occasion, your performance, or what you achieved there; Marveling describes being in awe, amazed, and impressed by the experience of the place or people; Luxuriating refers to enjoying the physical and sensory pleasure of the experience; and Knowing means building knowledge and understanding a lot more about the place or people.

Finally, we collected the respondents' demographic information, including age, gender, marital status, with or without children, and household income.

Data analysis

For the analysis of qualitative data, we used quantitative content analysis to analyze the content of the savored tourism experience. According to Higuchi (2020), quantitative content analysis is a method of organizing and analyzing text data using a quantitative analytical approach. This method is particularly beneficial when a dataset is large, as it can improve the reliability and objectivity of the qualitative analysis by capturing latent meanings and overall data trends. Although this method of analysis may not fully capture the richness of the text, we carefully interpreted the meanings provided through the mining software by checking the original text data.

Since Japanese has a sentence structure different from English, we used a specific analytic tool that enables researchers to investigate Japanese text. KH Coder (Higuchi, 2016a, 2016b) is one of the most frequently used software programs for quantitative content analysis in Japan and has been previously used in several tourism studies (e.g., Chen & Tussyadiah, 2021; Tussyadiah & Park, 2018). Thus, we used KH Coder version 3 to analyze the text data. There were three steps for quantitative content analysis. First, we performed several procedures to prepare the text data for analysis. Prior to the quantitative content analysis, KH Coder conducted a morphological analysis using ChaSen to separate all text data into morphemes. After this process, we ran the initial content analysis and identified synonyms and orthographical variants. We then joined synonyms and orthographical variants so they were not counted separately.

Next, we extracted emotion words from the text data and checked their relationships with savoring processes using multiple regression analysis (qualitative data analysis from an emotion-based perspective). In this study, we used categories of Japanese positive emotion words presented by Sugawara, Muto, and Sugie (2018) as a reference for coding. Sugawara et al. (2018)

examined the semantic grouping of positive emotions among a sample of students in Japan. They found six basic levels of positive emotions (love, wonder, awe/respect, peacefulness/joy, enthusiasm, and pride) and 11 subordinate categories. We revised two of their basic levels and created a modified version for our study's six positive emotion categories. First, we combined wonder and awe/respect into a single category of *awe* because of their low frequency in the participants' free responses. Second, we separated peacefulness (renamed *serenity* based on Fredrickson, 2013) and joy into two categories because participants frequently reported these emotions. We ultimately had six categories of emotion words: (a) *love* (e.g., love, compassion, gratitude), (b) *awe* (e.g., awe, respect, wonder), (c) *serenity* (e.g., serenity, relief, peacefulness), (d) *joy* (e.g., joy, sensory pleasure, happiness, contentment), (e) *enthusiasm* (e.g., enthusiasm, interest, curiosity), and (f) *pride* (e.g., pride, competency, humility). After creating the emotion word code, we used KH Coder to count the number of participants who described each emotion category and reverted it to a dummy variable.

Finally, we conducted a co-occurrence network analysis to understand what kind of past positive tourism content participants recalled and can be interpreted as having a relationship with each of the savoring processes (i.e., qualitative data analysis from an experience-based perspective). Co-occurrence network analysis identifies the connections between words frequently used together; thus, it enables researchers to understand the main topics in the text data (Higuchi, 2016a). Each network includes nodes (words) and edges (lines connecting nodes). The Jaccard coefficient determines the strength of the edges (Higuchi, 2016b). The current study targeted words that appeared in the responses of ten or more participants and filtered drawn edges to the top 60 with the strongest Jaccard coefficients.

We employed three statistical techniques to explore the five potential savoring processes to analyze the quantitative data. First, we examined the relationship between each savoring process and subjective well-being to confirm the validity of the five savoring processes. These analyses were intended to explore how these processes are connected to subjective well-being, based on previous research suggesting the value of exploring satisfaction and enduring holiday benefits. Second, we compared the correlation coefficients (Meng, Rosenthal, & Rubin, 1992) between each savoring process. Finally, we used repeated-measures analyses of variance (ANOVA) to test the differences between the mean scores of each savoring process.

Results

Understanding savoring tourism experiences using quantitative content analysis

Table 3 displays the results of multiple regression analysis of emotion categories on each savoring process. The analyses indicated that Thanksgiving ($F[6, 281] = 2.39, p = .029, R^2 = 0.05$), Marveling ($F[6, 281] = 2.29, p = .036, R^2 = 0.05$), and Luxuriating ($F[6, 281] = 2.76, p = .013, R^2 = 0.06$) had a significant coefficient of determination. Awe was positively associated with Thanksgiving ($\beta = 0.13, p = .037$), Marveling ($\beta = 0.15, p = .016$) and Luxuriating ($\beta = 0.12, p = .042$). Moreover, Joy had a significant positive relationship with Thanksgiving ($\beta = 0.15, p = .012$) and Luxuriating ($\beta = 0.16, p = .008$). However, Basking ($F[6, 281] = 1.13, p = .346, R^2 = 0.02$) and Knowing ($F[6, 281] = 2.00, p = .065, R^2 = 0.04$) did not have a significant coefficient of determination. Emotions such as enthusiasm did not significantly predict Knowing ($\beta = 0.11, p = .068$).

Fig. 1 displays the results of the co-occurrence network. In the figure, the more often words appear in the data, the larger the expressed size of the circle. In addition, the larger the Jaccard coefficient, the thicker the edges. In the co-occurrence network analysis, the position of the words inside the figure does not have substantive meaning; instead, it is more important whether the words are connected with the edges (Higuchi, 2016b). The numbers in the figure showed the Sub-Graph (communities) output from the analysis. As shown in Fig. 1, some communities were related to some of the savoring processes, including Thanksgiving (Sub-Graphs 1, 2, and 8), Marveling (Sub-Graphs 1, 2, and 4), Luxuriating (Sub-Graphs 1 and 9), and Knowing (Sub-Graphs 2, 6, and 7). Words such as *kindness* and *warm* can be interpreted as being related to the Thanksgiving and Marveling processes. For example, participants described the hosts' and residents' hospitality and how impressed they were by the warm welcome the tourists received at the destination. Similarly, regarding Sub-Graph 8 (*land-local*), participants described their memories of experiencing kindness through their interactions with local residents. Such hospitality may lead tourists to experience emotions such as gratitude, admiration, and awe.

Additionally, words such as *different-culture-expose* fit into the Marveling process. For instance, participants reported these words when describing their feelings of surprise and being impressed by the culture, scenery, and architecture. Moreover, the relationship between *wonderful-nature* may also be connected to the Marveling process. For example, participants wrote that they were impressed and overwhelmed by nature and beautiful scenery.

Several words expressed the Luxuriating process. For instance, *enjoyable-eat-delicious-cuisine* described the enjoyment attained from savoring delicious food. Moreover, participants used *daily life-work* to describe a sense of escape from everyday stress and work and achieving physical and psychological relaxation in an extraordinary place.

Some word groupings described the characteristics of the Knowing process. For instance, the relationship between *different-culture-expose* related well to the Knowing process, most directly describing learning and understanding different cultures. In addition, participants used *know-myself-overseas* to express their interest and curiosity about the world, destination, and people. Furthermore, *era-high school-school trip* have been described as a popular type of educational tourism in Japan (Nagai & Kashiwagi, 2018).

Table 3
Results of multiple regression analysis of emotion categories on savoring processes (N = 288).

Emotion categories	The number of appearances	β				
		Thanksgiving	Basking	Marveling	Luxuriating	Knowing
Love	37	0.07	-0.08	0.05	0.08	0.06
Awe	29	0.13*	0.12	0.15*	0.12*	0.08
Serenity	59	-0.02	-0.02	0.06	-0.01	0.05
Joy	124	0.15*	-0.02	-0.02	0.16**	-0.08
Enthusiasm	49	0.03	0.03	0.09	0.02	0.11
Pride	1	0.03	0.05	0.04	-0.05	0.06
R ²		0.05*	0.02	0.05*	0.06*	0.04

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Relationships between savoring processes from quantitative data analysis

The relationships between savoring processes and subjective well-being were confirmed. The results indicated that Thanksgiving (r = 0.28), Basking (r = 0.25), Marveling (r = 0.23), Luxuriating (r = 0.28), and Knowing (r = 0.32) had a positive correlation with subjective well-being (p < .001). From these analyses and the results from Pearce et al. (2016), the validity of the

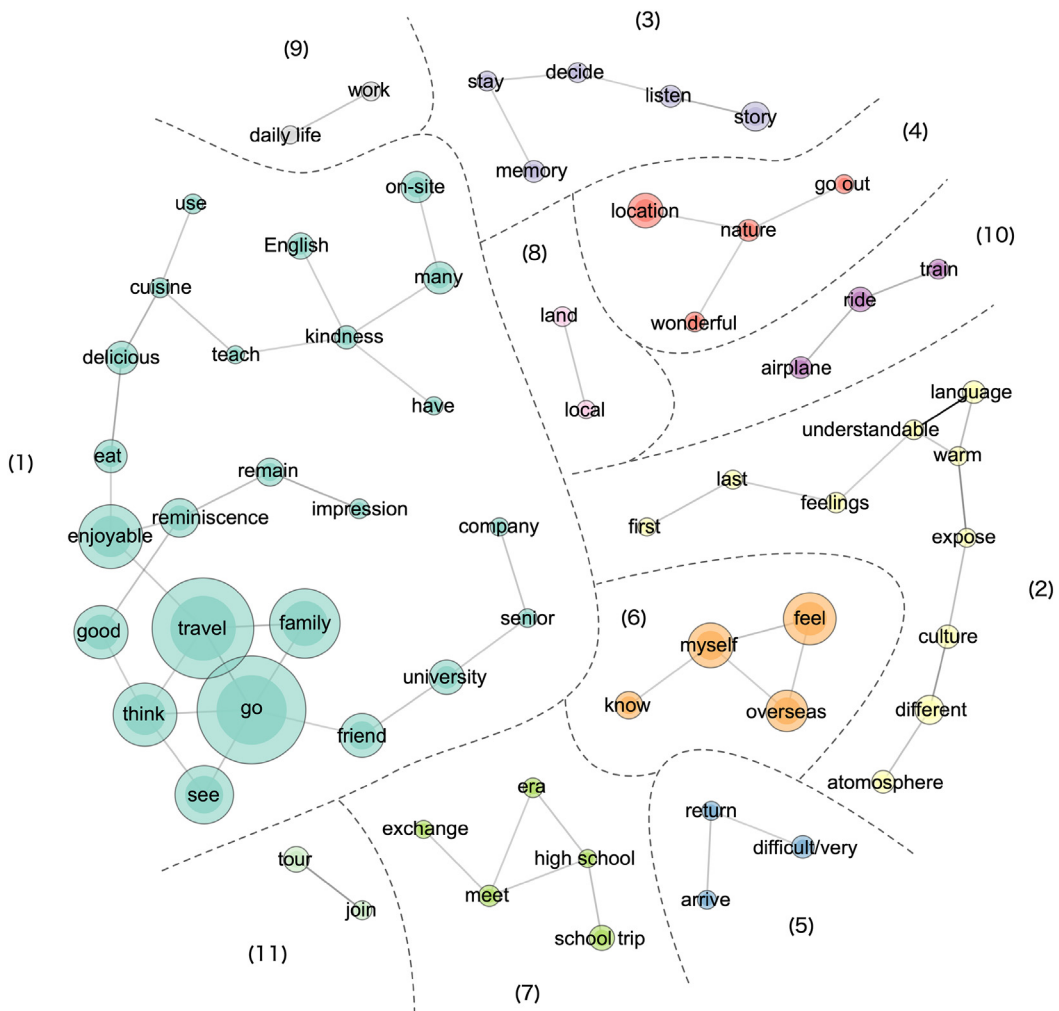


Fig. 1. The mapping of words using co-occurrence network analysis
Note. The size of the circle indicates the number of times the word appeared. The thickness of the line connecting circles expresses the strength of the relationship between words. The authors translated each word from Japanese to English and added dashed lines between Sub-Graphs 1 to 11.

Table 4
Results of mean, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients between each variable (N = 288).

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Thanksgiving	8.30 _x	1.93	–	0.50 ^{***} _b	0.48 ^{***} _b	0.62 ^{***} _a	0.50 ^{***} _b
2. Basking	6.89 _z	2.47	0.50 ^{***} _a	–	0.54 ^{***} _a	0.52 ^{***} _a	0.57 ^{***} _a
3. Marveling	7.36 _y	2.32	0.48 ^{***} _c	0.54 ^{***} _{b,c}	–	0.57 ^{***} _b	0.69 ^{***} _a
4. Luxuriating	8.05 _x	2.01	0.62 ^{***} _a	0.52 ^{***} _b	0.57 ^{***} _{a,b}	–	0.51 ^{***} _b
5. Knowing	7.32 _y	2.20	0.50 ^{***} _b	0.57 ^{***} _b	0.69 ^{***} _a	0.51 ^{***} _b	–

Note. The same subscript alphabetical letter indicates no significant difference. The differences in mean scores are shown vertically (using letters x to z), and correlation coefficients are shown horizontally (using letters a to c).

*** $p < .001$.

savoring process measures is consistent with the literature. Therefore, we used the five-item savoring processes in the following analyses.

Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations between each savoring process. All savoring processes were significantly positively correlated ($p < .001$). The comparisons of the correlation coefficients showed that those between Marveling and Knowing were higher than those between Knowing and Thanksgiving ($z = -4.32, p < .001$), Basking ($z = -3.05, p = .002$), and Luxuriating ($z = 4.46, p < .001$). Thanksgiving had a significantly larger correlation with Luxuriating than Basking ($z = -2.71, p = .007$), Marveling ($z = -3.30, p = .001$), and Knowing ($z = 2.66, p = .008$). Similarly, Luxuriating had a significantly higher correlation with Thanksgiving than Basking ($z = 2.19, p = .029$), and Knowing ($z = 2.41, p = .016$), but no significant difference with the correlation between Luxuriating and Marveling ($z = 1.09, p = .278$). In contrast, there were no significant differences in the correlations between Basking and each savoring process.

The means ranged from a low of 6.89 (Basking) to a high of 8.30 (Thanksgiving). The standard deviations across all savoring processes were relatively uniform, suggesting that the respondents did not provide widely diverging scores. The results of the repeated-measures ANOVA indicated a significant difference between savoring processes, $F(4, 1148) = 43.65, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = 0.13$. Using multiple comparison tests, our results demonstrated that Thanksgiving and Luxuriating had the highest mean scores, Marveling and Knowing had the next highest scores, and Basking had the lowest score among the savoring processes. Although Basking scored lower than the other four processes, the results of a one-sample t -test indicated that the mean score of Basking was significantly higher than the middle score (5 on a 10-point rating scale; $t[287] = 12.94, p < .001, d = 0.76$).

Discussion

The main goals of this study were to explore the content of positive tourism experiences associated with post-travel savoring processes and investigate the applicability and interrelationships of savoring processes in tourism contexts. Overall, the results of the qualitative analyses indicated that recalled positive tourism experiences were associated with Thanksgiving, Marveling, Luxuriating, and Knowing. From the emotion-based perspective, awe and joy were core emotions predicting several savoring processes (i.e., Thanksgiving, Marveling, and Luxuriating). Moreover, from the experience-based perspective, several types of experiences were associated with Thanksgiving, Marveling, Luxuriating, and Knowing. Furthermore, the quantitative analyses showed the presence of the five possible savoring processes in tourism contexts, with each being highly correlated, suggesting their co-occurrence.

Relationships between positive emotions and savoring processes (qualitative data analysis from an emotion-based perspective)

The findings revealed that awe had a positive relationship with Thanksgiving, Marveling, and Luxuriating, and joy was positively associated with Thanksgiving and Luxuriating. The awe categories included positive emotions such as awe, respect, and wonder, whereas joy included joy, sensory pleasure, happiness, and contentment. These results partially confirmed the conceptual framework (Bryant & Veroff, 2007), suggesting that Marveling regulated awe and Luxuriating regulated physical pleasure. Although Bryant and Veroff (2007) proposed that Thanksgiving regulated gratitude, the current study did not identify a significant relationship with love (including gratitude) but identified a significant association between awe and joy. Sugawara et al. (2018) explained that for Japanese people, gratitude was not clearly distinguished from other emotions, such as compassion and love, suggesting that these emotions are closely related. Moreover, they also revealed that love and awe were categorized as other-oriented positive emotions. Given that gratitude may occur in conjunction with other emotions in Japanese people, it is reasonable to consider that gratitude did not directly stimulate the Thanksgiving process. Instead, in the travel experiences of Japanese people, Thanksgiving may be facilitated by the emotions of surprise or amazement toward people and places in addition to enjoyable feelings.

Moreover, we did not observe a significant association between Knowing and the tested positive emotions. However, enthusiasm, including interest and curiosity, had a marginally significant relationship with Knowing. Consistent with the Knowing process in the current study, *interest*, a fundamental positive emotion (Fredrickson, 2013), might be one possible link that regulates the Knowing process in terms of the savoring process. Silvia (2008) argued that the function of interest is to motivate learning and exploration, leading to attaining a range of knowledge and skills. If the Knowing process regulates such positive emotions,

emotions of interest in people and places can enhance knowledge gain. However, the current study lacked sufficient evidence to determine which emotion relates to the Knowing process. Therefore, future research should evaluate the association between the Knowing process and emotions to understand its function and conceptual foundation.

Furthermore, our results did not show any significant relationship between pride and Basking. One possible interpretation of this result is insufficient text data describing pride ($n = 1$) among our participants, so the data were inadequate to test the statistical relationship between pride and Basking. Another explanation for this result is the lack of words directly describing the emotion of pride in the Japanese language. As Sugawara et al. (2018) displayed the semantic grouping for each positive emotion word in the Japanese language, emotion words expressing pride comprise less than half the number of other emotion categories (e.g., love, joy, enthusiasm). Some people may indirectly express their pride (e.g., basking in reflected glory; Cialdini et al., 1976). As such, our analysis may not show a relationship between pride and the Basking process.

Relationships between positive tourism experiences and savoring processes (qualitative data analysis from an experience-based perspective)

The results of the co-occurrence network analysis indicated that the savoring processes of Thanksgiving, Marveling, Luxuriating, and Knowing were common in the positive tourism experiences that were frequently recalled and savored. Experiences such as enjoying delicious cuisine (Luxuriating), learning about different cultures and people (Knowing), experiencing kindness from locals (Thanksgiving and Marveling), exposure to stunning nature (Marveling), expanding world perspectives (Knowing), experiencing school trips (Knowing), and detaching from daily life and work (Luxuriating) appeared as themes in the text data that were possibly related to savoring processes.

These results were partially consistent with previous studies, suggesting that people often savor specific tourism experiences, such as interpersonal relationships (Filep et al., 2013) or dining experiences (Sthapit, 2019). Relationships or gastronomic experiences may support the processes of savoring a tourism experience by facilitating positive emotions, such as awe, gratitude, and pleasure. Moreover, some studies reported an association between savoring and nature (Filep et al., 2013; Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019; Sato, Jose, & Conner, 2018) or detachment from work (de Bloom et al., 2013), consistent with the current findings. Indeed, several studies suggested that natural landscapes can evoke the emotion of awe (e.g., Hicks, 2018; Pearce et al., 2017) related to Marveling. Moreover, Bryant and Veroff (2007) indicated that Luxuriating could occur after experiencing stress or completing hard work when relaxing. Finally, several types of positive tourism experiences could be related to the Knowing process, consistent with previous studies indicating that knowledge gain can build memorable tourism experiences (Kim et al., 2012; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

However, unlike the other four savoring processes, no topics were found for the Basking process. Although some participants reported select experiences related to the Basking process (e.g., a sense of accomplishment at having completed their travel plan and feeling proud when seeing Japanese people living overseas), such comments were infrequent. Nevertheless, our quantitative results indicated that people used the Basking process when recalling past tourism experiences, yet its score was the lowest of the savoring processes. This result could be because people are less likely to experience the Basking process through tourism experiences than other events. Bryant and Veroff (2007) indicated that people reported higher Self-Congratulation scores regarding good grades rather than the vacation event. Following this literature, we can interpret the results as indicating that the use of the Basking process is less frequent when they recall tourism experiences. Another possibility can be explained from a cultural perspective. According to Lindberg (2004), individuals from Eastern cultures are more reluctant to use Self-Congratulation than those from Western cultures. Consistent with this finding, Japanese tourists might not recall many experiences related to the Basking process.

Relationships between savoring processes from quantitative data analysis

The second research objective was to investigate the relationships between the savoring processes. The co-existence of the savoring processes in respondents' reflections on their travel experiences supports the view that all processes often appear to operate together. This is consistent with the concept of savoring described by psychology researchers, who did not conceptualize the processes as mutually exclusive but contended that some processes were likely to be more dominant within some content than in others, but their co-existence or overlap was common (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Another tourism study also suggested this co-occurrence (Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019).

The quantitative analyses revealed the existence of Knowing in tourism contexts that was highly associated with the other four savoring processes. Specifically, Knowing was more highly correlated with Marveling than the other three savoring processes. Following the 2 (external or internal focus) \times 2 (cognitive reflection or experiential absorption) conceptual framework of savoring processes (Bryant & Veroff, 2007; Table 1), Marveling has been viewed as an externally focused process classified as experiential absorption. Given the high correlation between Marveling and Knowing, Knowing may belong to a similar category to Marveling. The Knowing process may occur from interest and curiosity to the place and people in the destination; thus, we could categorize the focus of the Attention of Knowing process as the "external world," same as Marveling. However, in terms of experience type, Knowing may involve both cognitive reflection and experiential absorption. For example, gaining and processing knowledge can relate to cognitive reflection, but engaging the people and places at the destination to understand their cultural background may relate to increased experiential absorption.

Finally, it is possible to assume a new category of the savoring process based on the current results. Thanksgiving and Luxuriating had the highest scores, Marveling and Knowing had the next highest scores, and Basking had the lowest score among the

savoring processes. Moreover, Thanksgiving and Luxuriating had a stronger relationship than the other three savoring processes, and Marveling and Knowing had a more prominent association than the other three savoring processes. Based on these results, a new framework of savoring processes that includes the possible fifth process of Knowing can be considered. The first group, including Thanksgiving and Luxuriating, was often stimulated by the emotions of joy and awe. In the second group, Marveling and Knowing existed as a different layer. Finally, Basking could be categorized as a different group, as it may not commonly occur in the tourism context.

Overall, further work is required to understand the conceptual framework of the Knowing process, but our exploratory results provided an initial hypothetical suggestion to provide directions for future research.

Implications

The main theoretical achievement of this study was to adapt the concept of the savoring process into tourism studies and empirically test the psychological concept using qualitative and quantitative data. Although previous studies investigated savoring tourism content (e.g., Filep et al., 2013; Sthapit, 2019), their studies limited the scope to reveal the content of recalled positive tourism experiences rather than examining the applicability and interrelationships of several savoring processes in tourism contexts. By investigating the relevance of processes that support savoring post-travel experiences, we have applied and expanded a positive psychology concept to tourism research. Additionally, our study has contributed to the body of research on savoring. While Bryant and Veroff (2007) proposed the conceptual framework of four types of savoring processes, few psychological studies have tested this concept. The present study provided evidence suggesting that these four savoring processes exist in relation to each other within positive tourism experiences. We also provided preliminary evidence showing the relationship between positive emotions and savoring processes. These findings could support the concept of savoring processes, including its relationship to positive emotions.

Moreover, the current study advances the case for a potentially new fifth savoring process—Knowing. Our results indicated that Knowing is highly associated with the other four savoring processes and is likely an important factor in tourism contexts. However, further research on the conceptual positioning of Knowing in tourism contexts is necessary. Specifically, the role of Knowing as a new savoring process, an underlying factor of another savoring process, or a highly related component of the identified savoring processes but distinct from savoring processes, should be clarified. One possibility for future research is considering the conceptual framework of the Knowing process by identifying the positive emotion related to its process. As previously noted, Bryant and Veroff (2007) stated that there are close linkages between the savoring processes and various positive emotions. When considering Knowing as a component of the savoring processes, the emotional state associated with Knowing should be proposed. Given the current results, future studies should examine emotions such as enthusiasm, interest, and curiosity, which may be linked to the Knowing process.

Based on our study, we can provide some initial practical implications. For tourists who want to savor their holiday memories, there is value in visiting places that generate awe, being grateful, allowing time for luxuriating, and supplementing these episodes with an enhanced understanding of the destination sites or local people. These experiences may help people reminisce intensely about their experiences as tourists (Kim et al., 2012). Our study indicates that tourism experience designers should consider offering opportunities to understand the destination or local people to improve the tourists' knowledge. This potential savoring process also becomes credible when contemplating the novelty and "otherness" of many tourism holidays. To take just one example, Lu and Pearce (2017) demonstrated that Chinese outbound package tourists often reflected on what they had learned about the visited cultures and their own country as a consequence of seeing novel Western communities when they recalled their holidays. Travel agencies may also provide some services to support tourists during their on-site experience and after the trip to help them recall and linger over the good holiday times. In addition to demonstrating the relevance of four established processes, this study could provide consideration for a potentially new fifth savoring process, Knowing.

Limitations

Although our study produced encouraging results and helped confirm the relevance of savoring processes in tourism studies, specific limitations should be considered. First, the measurement of the savoring processes could be improved in future studies. In the current study, we assessed each savoring process using a single measure. Although some studies indicated that single-item measurements are valid in specific situations (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007; Jovanović & Lazić, 2020), other studies have reported that single-item measurements need to be interpreted with greater caution than multi-item scales (Diamantopoulos, Sarstedt, Fuchs, Wilczynski, & Kaiser, 2012). Thus, when the savoring processes of tourism experiences are further investigated, the items used to measure the savoring processes need to be carefully considered.

Moreover, it is necessary to distinguish between savoring processes and savoring strategies when measuring savoring tourism. In the current study, we used items to measure savoring processes that corresponded with each of the savoring process descriptions from Bryant and Veroff (2007). These items were developed in previous studies to assess savoring processes in tourism (Pearce et al., 2016; Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019). However, it is essential to further identify which level of savoring (i.e., savoring process or savoring strategies) these items measured. As Bryant and Veroff (2007) argued, "savoring responses [strategies] are operational components of the savoring process" (p. 14), so savoring processes often entail specific savoring strategies. This implies that although savoring strategies and processes share some common operational meaning, the level of conceptual components differs. The method of assessing the savoring process used in this study, developed by Pearce et al. (2016), was

helpful for an initial understanding of the savoring processes. Nevertheless, future research should further test its validity for measuring savoring *processes* distinguished from savoring *strategies* and consider using psychometric measures to capture the deep reflective processes involved in savoring. For example, it may be helpful to collect data together with the validated psychometric measures that assess savoring strategies (i.e., the Ways of Savoring Checklist; Bryant & Veroff, 2007). This will allow researchers to compare the savoring process and strategies in more detail.

Second, we did not specify the timeframe of tourism experiences (e.g., how long ago the experience occurred), which may not have resulted in all participants using the same time orientation for savoring (e.g., retrospective assessments of the present- or past-focused savoring). As a result, each participant may have used their own timeline or time orientation, potentially influencing their savoring processes. This aspect of the study can be addressed in future studies.

Third, future studies could strengthen the research design to measure the savoring processes of tourism experiences. Although this study included qualitative data to explore the richness of savoring tourism experiences, we used retrospective and self-reported measurements. Therefore, the causal relationship between tourism experiences and savoring processes should be examined. Moreover, additional research is required to investigate how Knowing interacts with other savoring processes. Research that combines longitudinal designs or interview data might help clarify the underlying influence of Knowing on savoring processes. There are also possibilities for moving this research into quasi-experimental formats, where measures are taken over time to examine savoring tourism experiences. Using such methods and the random assignment of participants could address the power of the processes to elicit the content of the savored material and the interactions between the processes. This quasi-experimental design also addressed the importance of examining the role of savoring processes in prolonging tourism benefits.

Finally, we recognize that these results are culture-bound. It is essential to consider the relevance of the Basking processes for tourists' savoring in different cultural contexts. The testing format and cultural issues around the disclosure of personal material may drive the lack of information on these topics for the present Japanese sample and study. When other cultural groups reflect on and savor their travel experiences, they may emphasize alternate features of the holiday time as pivotal (Pearce & Mohammadi, 2019). The cross-cultural differences may also affect how savoring processes interrelate. The opportunity to pursue the universality or cultural specificity of the savoring processes discussed here provides a variety of opportunities for future studies.

Conclusion

The main contribution of this study lies in its exploration of the basic savoring process underpinning tourism experiences. Foundational work in positive psychology has employed Thanksgiving, Basking, Marveling, and Luxuriating as established savoring processes (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Our study applied this psychological concept to tourism studies and investigated the savoring processes in positive tourism experiences. Moreover, based on robust tourism studies regarding the benefits of knowledge gained from tourism experiences, we explored the potential of Knowing as a further savoring process. This study supported the existence of Knowing in tourism contexts and the close correlations between the savoring processes and Knowing. Future research should focus on the theoretical positioning of Knowing and the underlying relationships between the savoring processes using multiple research methods to capture the richness of information on the basic process of savoring tourism.

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CRediT authorship contribution statement

Erika Miyakawa: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Philip L. Pearce:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Takashi Oguchi:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Writing – review & editing, Funding acquisition, Supervision, Project administration.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Dedication

We would like to dedicate this paper to the memory of Dr. Philip L. Pearce, who unfortunately passed away before the publication of this article. We are thankful for his tremendous contribution to conducting this study and editing this article.

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