

Extending the memorable tourism experiences model: A study of coffee tourism in Vietnam

ABSTRACT

Purpose - Despite the increasing recognition of coffee tourism, there is limited research on the influence of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) on coffee tourist behaviours. This investigation attempted to fill the gap in extending the MTE model by integrating travel motivations and expectation-confirmation theory.

Design/methodology/approach – A mixed-method approach was employed. A survey questionnaire containing closed- and open-ended questions was used to obtain quantitative and qualitative information. Interviews with coffee shop owners were also conducted to obtain greater insight.

Findings – Both the quantitative and qualitative findings confirmed that coffee tourist revisit and word of mouth intentions were strongly influenced by satisfaction and MTEs, which were predicted by confirmation of expectations and travel motivations.

Research limitations/implications – The findings confirmed that travel motivation is one of the most important precursors of MTEs. Confirmation of expectations was also determined to be a precursor of MTEs. MTEs had positive influences on satisfaction, word of mouth and revisit intentions.

Practical implications – The results offer insights by identifying vital factors linked to coffee tourist experiences and satisfaction, which will aid practitioners develop better marketing strategies.

Originality/value – The memorable tourism experiences scale has rarely been applied in food tourism and particularly in relation to coffee consumption. Moreover, this research is unique in investigating the relationships among motivations, CoE, MTEs, satisfaction, and word of mouth and revisit intentions.

Keywords: Coffee tourism; memorable tourism experiences (MTEs); confirmation of expectations (CoE); travel motivations; satisfaction; word of mouth (WoM); revisit intentions; Vietnam.

Introduction

Coffee is viewed as a historical and cultural attraction that is capable of drawing tourists by itself (Kleidas & Jolliffe, 2010). This is certainly apparent in Vietnam where coffee has become a custom drink and the robust patronage of the beverage has paved the way for the creation of plantation tours and the Buon Ma Thout coffee festival (Jolliffe, Kwan, & Yen, 2010). Besides the tours and festivals, a small store that exhibits the character, narrative, and symbolism of coffee in a community, can fascinate visitors and positively influence local tourism development (Lyon, 2013). For instance, the Café Apartment in Ho Chi Minh City

(formerly Saigon), which is known for assembling various well-decorated coffee stores in one (apartment-style) building, has made this facility distinct for travellers and locals (Le, 2017). This attraction demonstrates the energetic and continuous evolution of the Saigon coffee culture and it is gradually becoming a “pilgrimage” site for coffee enthusiasts. The emergence of the coffee tourism market has resulted in increasing requests for more research on the topic (Yun, 2014). This is especially true in the Southeast Asian market, where coffee tourism can stimulate more investment in these developing countries (Kleidas & Jolliffe, 2010).

Contemporary tourism operators, as well as researchers, are embracing the “experience economy” concept as a means of bringing greater success and competitive advantage for destinations (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). Jolliffe (2010) suggested that coffee could be an important component of tourism experiences through the presentations of cafés and related physical establishments. However, research examining experiences in coffee tourism is very limited. The lack of experience-related research may disadvantage coffee tourism destinations from obtaining long-term competitiveness and growth capability in a fierce tourism marketplace since tourist experiences within destinations are significant drivers of future behaviour (Kim, 2014).

While investigating experiences is considered an important topic for tourism studies (Jernsand, Kraff, & Mossberg, 2015), researchers posit that understanding the factors related

to “memorable” tourism experiences (MTEs) is more critical for the success of destination management (Wei, Zhao, Zhang, & Huang, 2019). Zhang et al. (2018) found the association between tourists’ satisfactory experiences and loyalty to be very weak; however, MTEs are related to revisit intentions. These authors further argued that only those “remembered” experiences influence the decision-making for future trips. Nonetheless, the exploration of MTEs, especially the antecedents and consequences, has received limited attention in tourism (Sharma & Nayak, 2019). Therefore, more research is needed to explore the MTE model from diverse perspectives.

In the consumer behaviour literature, the expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) is widely used to predict satisfaction and future behaviour (Bhattacharjee, 2001). ECT has also been applied in several tourism studies and found to be critical to understanding experiences (Boo & Busser, 2018). For example, Chen, Chang, and Fan (2012) revealed that only if the expectation of a tourism service is matched with the perceptions of actual experiences, will people feel satisfied. Therefore, “confirmation of expectation” (CoE) plays a key role in predicting satisfaction and future behaviour (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Fang, Walters, and Chien (2017) also found that travel motivations were strongly related to expectations. However, in MTE-related research, no study has tested the relationships among travel motivations, CoE, and MTEs (Fang et al., 2017).

To respond to the need for investigating coffee tourism in developing countries and extending the MTE model, the current research examined the relationships among travel motivations, CoE, MTEs, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions by using Café Apartment as the research site. A mixed-method approach connecting both quantitative and qualitative data was chosen to meet the research goal and generate theoretical and practical implications. It was expected that the integration could expand and enhance the MTE literature, which has not addressed the coffee tourism market and the influence of motivations and CoE. This research might also help coffee tourism stakeholders such as destination management organisations (DMOs), local coffee shop owners, tour operators, and travel agencies in developing effective marketing, branding, and operational strategies to gain long-term competitiveness.

Literature review

Coffee tourism

One popular special interest tourism (SIT) market that has emerged recently is coffee tourism. The reason for its popularity may be because of the growth in coffee drinking in the 21st century. Coffee tourism can be in the form of visits to coffee-producing destinations or enjoyed in historical cafés. Activities may include trips to coffee plantations, hands-on experiences with coffee farming and cultivation, coffee processing, and coffee tasting (Lyon, 2013). Manzo (2010) explained that the growth of coffee tourism might be attributed to the third wave of the coffee industry, which elevated the conventional coffee-drinking experience

by giving customers an appreciation of how coffee is produced. This provides people with rich narratives reflecting the geological features and the cultures of coffee origins (Kleidas & Jolliffe, 2010).

When contrasted to the rapidly growing popularity of coffee tourism, scholars have been slow in recognising the phenomenon and in investigating its dimensions (Yun, 2014).

Furthermore, the existing studies mainly rely on qualitative methods to explore the role of coffee in tourism development. For example, Anbalagan and Lovelock (2014) used a case study approach to identify the barriers to the development of coffee tourism in Rwanda. Lyon

(2013) conducted ethnographic research in the coffee plantation estates in Guatemala,

Nicaragua, and Mexico to explore the opportunities to develop coffee tours at those sites.

Kleidas and Jolliffe (2010) delved into the narratives of secondary literature written about coffee travel experiences. In addition, previous investigations mostly focused on the supply side of coffee tourism, such as by outlining the economic benefits for local communities

(Anderson, 2015), describing the cooperation among destination stakeholders (Kleidas &

Jolliffe, 2010), and explaining the servicescapes of cafés (Hall, Tipler, Reddy, & Rowling,

2010). The rather limited scope of previous research on coffee tourism highlights the

opportunities to analyse unexplored themes on the demand side and to apply quantitative or mixed-method approaches (Thorn & Segal, 2006).

Memorable coffee tourism experiences

The examination of experiences is continuous in tourism studies. The exploration has evolved from experience quality (Augustyn & Ho, 1998) and satisfactory experiences (Li, 2000) to recently experiencescape (O'Dell, 2005), co-creation of experiences (Campos, Mendes, Valle, & Scott, 2018), and MTEs (Kim et al., 2012). Zhang et al. (2018) reported that lately MTEs had attracted greater attention at the forefront of tourism experience research due to their significant influences on tourist decision-making processes. Only those “remembered” experiences facilitate tourists’ intentions to revisit or recommend a tourist attraction or destination (Kim, 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2019). Kim et al. (2012) found that “an MTE is selectively constructed from tourism experiences based on the individual’s assessment of the experience” (p. 13). That is, not every on-site tourism experience becomes an MTE; instead, it depends on an individual’s cognitive evaluation of the tourism service or settings (Zhang et al., 2018). Additionally, Tung and Ritchie (2011) found that MTEs are constituted by affect, expectations, consequential reality, and recollection. Noticing a need for better measuring MTEs, Kim and his colleagues (2012) developed a scale that includes seven distinct constructs: hedonism, novelty, social interaction and local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge. However, most MTE studies have had a focus on the broader scope of destination marketing. More investigations are required to examine MTEs in differing tourism contexts, such as niche tourism or SIT (Sharma & Nayak, 2019).

Today, with consumers' increased appreciation of local coffee production processes and with greater knowledge of coffee farming, coffee-related tours have been established as a form of SIT in numerous countries (Setiyorini, 2019). Since coffee is a significant part of many culinary cultures, the people who consume coffee in a destination are not only drinking a daily beverage but experiencing a local tradition (Jolliffe, Kwan, & Yen, 2010). Authentic and unique coffee cultures can be experienced through coffee tours to plantations, coffee festivals, and local cafés, or creative DIY activities (Jolliffe, 2010). The peculiar nature of coffee consumption and coffee-related activities have become an essential part of hospitality and an indispensable element of overall tourism experiences (Jolliffe, 2010), which can be deeply remembered in tourists' minds. Therefore, understanding MTEs in coffee tourism has importance for both academics and practitioners.

Unfortunately, only a few studies have examined experiences in coffee tourism. Wang, Chen, Su, and Morrison's (2019) study is the first research works to apply the MTE concept to the coffee tourism context. These researchers found that "meaningfulness" was the most important aspect of memorable coffee tourism experiences. Furthermore, including educational activities in a coffee tour was considered to be the key to creating more unforgettable experiences for coffee tourists. These findings echoed those of Harmon and Dunlap (2017) that getting people to somehow physically or psychologically invest themselves into an event can lead to better participation and establish a base for constructing

memories. However, the investigations of memorable coffee tourism experiences are still at an exploration stage and the antecedents and consequences remain unknown.

Antecedents and consequences of MTEs

The exploration of MTEs has received greater academic attention recently. At first, researchers attempted to identify the factors comprising MTEs. Tung and Ritchie (2011) found that the essence of making particular experiences truly memorable involved affect, expectations, consequential reality, and recollection. Although conceptualising and measuring MTEs is valuable, the consequences of MTEs have also attracted researchers' attention. Kim's (2017) seminal study found that MTEs were the most influential determinant of behavioural intentions and influenced intentions through the mediation of satisfaction. Other researchers also have tried to integrate variables such as perceived images (Zhang et al., 2018), subjective well-being (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018), and destination image (Kim, 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2019) into the MTE model.

Although the consequences of MTEs are explored in some studies, insufficient research has been conducted to explain MTE antecedents and how MTEs function in the special interest or niche tourism context (Sharma & Nayak, 2019). Therefore, Wei et al. (2019) called for more investigation to identify the precursors of MTEs. In other words, factors that influence memories of a tourism experience should be integrated into the model, such as

travel motivations and personal values (Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018). Evidently, more research is needed to explore the MTE model from differing perspectives.

Studies in leisure may shed some light on the exploration of the antecedents of MTEs. For example, Clawson and Knetsch (1966) recognised that leisure experiences are multi-phase (i.e., expectations, travel to sites, onsite experiences, travel from sites, and recollections of participation), and pointed out that researchers should not only emphasize one temporal phase of the entire travel experience. This was reinforced by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), whose 2007 publication identified four stages and reasons for using destinations' digital content (UNWTO, 2007). These four stages were dreaming-enthusing-informing, planning-selecting-booking, travelling-visiting-enjoying, and repeating, recommending-recollecting. Thus, when researchers are trying to identify the antecedents of MTEs, all factors that stimulate the formation of memories should be examined.

Hypotheses on relationships among travel motivations, CoE, and MTEs

Dann's push and pull theory (1977) has been extensively applied to study individuals' travel motivations and their importance in the tourist decision-making process has been determined (Fang et al., 2017; Gnoth, 1997; Hung & Petrick, 2011). However, limited research has investigated the relationship between travel motivations and MTEs. When conceptualising "experience stages" in parks, recreation, and tourism, Ellis and Rossman (2008) found that intrinsic motivation played a critical role in the co-creation and quality of experiences and

they called for more empirical research to test the connection. To the best of the authors' knowledge, the study of Wang (2016) is the only empirical research examining the influences of university students' travel motivations on their MTEs for Spring Break vacations. The findings indicated that push travel motivations (i.e., exploration, relaxation, activity seeking, and socialisation) significantly and positively influenced student MTEs. Obtaining support from Wang's (2006) findings and responding to the need for more research, it was hypothesised in coffee tourism that:

Hypothesis 1: Motivations directly and positively influence MTEs

Gnoth (1997) introduced a model conceptualising the relationship between travel motivations and expectation formation. He posited that the expectations toward an object (e.g., tourist attraction) are driven by the individual's inner-directed needs. Fang et al. (2017) reviewed expectancy value theory and argued that expectations might be highly related to motivations. They interviewed Chinese holiday workers in Australia and confirmed the causal relationship between travel motivations and expectations. However, Bhattacharjee (2001) found that in consumer behaviour research, "confirmation of expectation" (CoE) is more influential than expectations in terms of predicting an individual's loyalty behaviour. He argued that if researchers use ECT to measure consumer expectations, they may be overlooking the potential modification in individuals' expectations after their on-site consumption experiences and the influence of this modification on subsequent perceptions.

Thus, expectations may be “coloured” by on-site purchase experiences. Post-consumption expectations can differ from pre-consumption expectations. If researchers distributed questionnaires and asked about people’s expectations of an experience after consumption, the answers probably would be different. Therefore, this research adopted CoE instead of ECT, and proposed the hypothesis that in coffee tourism:

Hypothesis 2: Motivations directly and positively influence CoE

Boo and Busser (2018) found that affective judgment of products or services co-exists with cognitive and these judgments build expectations. Expectations become central to understanding the purchasing experience. According to Harmon and Dunlap (2018), when people visit a music festival with pre-constructed impressions of what will happen, these expectations impact their on-site experiences and function as the default for future memory formation. Therefore, festival planners should pay more attention to designing peak experiences in accordance with attendees’ expectations. The selected experiences become the anchor points for recollecting memories of the festival. With this literature in mind, it was hypothesised in coffee tourism that:

Hypothesis 3: CoE directly and positively influences MTEs

Aiming to identify psychological factors influencing Chinese tourist MTEs, Wei et al. (2019) found that satisfaction was significantly influenced by tourism experiences. Kim (2018) developed the MTE scale and tested the impact of MTEs on loyalty behaviours. He

found that MTEs were a basis for destination images and satisfaction. In examining the relationships among tourist expectations of service quality, perceptions of actual experiences, and satisfaction in a theme park setting, Chen et al. (2012) also discovered that expectations directly influenced perceptions of actual experiences and satisfaction. Furthermore, actual experiences reinforced participant satisfaction. In a yoga tourism context, Sharma and Nayak (2019) also confirmed the positive influence of MTEs on destination image and satisfaction. Therefore, with support from previous research, it was hypothesised that in coffee tourism:

Hypothesis 4: MTEs directly and positively influence satisfaction

According to ECT, expectation is another determinant of and baseline for satisfaction (Bhattacharjee, 2001). When people compare their actual experiences with initial expectations and find that the expected quality of services or experiences are confirmed, they are satisfied (Chen et al., 2012; Fang et al., 2017). Boo and Busser (2018) also found that if tourist expectations are confirmed with the perceived performance of hotel events, post-satisfaction of these events is high. Chou, Kiser, and Rodriguez's (2012) study demonstrated that medical tourists' CoE predicted their satisfaction of overseas medical services, which influenced their future revisit intentions. Based on this research, it was proposed that in coffee tourism:

Hypothesis 5: CoE directly and positively influences satisfaction

The precursors of loyalty behaviour in tourism potentially are different from those in retailing situations because the desires for exploring new destinations always drive decision-making (Crompton, 1979). People may not visit the same tourist attraction again even if they feel satisfied with the services. Therefore, for the long-term competitiveness and sustainable management of destinations relying on the repeat market, understanding the factors influencing revisit intentions may be more important than their future travel intentions (Zhang et al., 2018). Wei et al. (2019) suggested that unforgettable memories of journeys encourage tourists to share their pleasing experiences with others through social media platforms, which may enhance the popularity of the destination and increase the likelihood of revisiting. Some recent studies confirm the assumption of Wei et al. (2019) and reveal that MTEs play a more critical role in predicting revisit and WoM intentions. For example, Sharma and Nayak (2019) found that yoga tourist MTEs had direct and positive influences on revisit and recommendation intentions. In addition, the effect size of MTEs on such intentions was larger than other factors. Similarly, Wang (2016) investigated university students' travel behaviours in their Spring Break vacations and found that MTEs significantly and positively influenced their revisit and WoM intentions. By using PLS- SEM to examine the predictive capability of the MTE model in an international tourism context, Zhang et al. (2018) revealed a weak relationship between satisfactory experiences and loyalty but found a

strong causal relationship between MTEs and revisit intentions. Based on these studies, it was hypothesised that in coffee tourism:

Hypothesis 6: MTEs directly and positively influence WoM intentions

Hypothesis 7: MTEs directly and positively influence revisit intentions

Customer satisfaction with services and products is an important predictor of continuance intention in marketing research (Chou et al., 2012). This is also verified in tourism studies. For example, Kim (2018) confirmed the importance of satisfaction in destination loyalty formation; a more satisfied tourist has a greater probability to recommend and revisit a destination. Similarly, the influence of satisfaction on loyalty intentions was also found in medical tourism (Chou et al., 2012), yoga tourism (Sharma & Nayak, 2019), working holidays (Fang et al., 2017), international tourism to China (Zhang et al., 2018), and festival-goers (Harmon & Dunlap, 2018). Therefore, it was hypothesised that in coffee tourism:

Hypothesis 8: Satisfaction directly and positively influences WoM intentions

Hypothesis 9: Satisfaction directly and positively influences revisit intentions

The proposed relationships among all factors related to memorable coffee tourism experiences are depicted in Figure 1:

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Based on this literature review, it was apparent that examining travel motivations, CoE, MTEs, satisfaction, WoM and revisit intentions, and their connections is still at an early stage in coffee tourism research. Therefore, in addition to the quantitative examination of the conceptual model, this research also attempted to explore memorable coffee tourism experiences by using a qualitative approach to obtain a more holistic appreciation of the phenomenon.

Methodology

Measures

A survey questionnaire containing closed- and open-ended questions was used to obtain quantitative and qualitative information. Interviews with four coffee shop owners were also conducted to obtain greater insight.

Closed-ended questions: The study measures reflected six constructs: travel motivations, CoE, MTEs, satisfaction, WoM intentions, and revisit intentions. The travel motivations covered the inner-directed needs driving people to frequent the Café Apartment. The measurement scale was modified from Filep and Greenacre (2007). Three dimensions (i.e., relaxation and novelty, social interaction and status, and self-development) and 12 items were included. It was treated as a second-order reflective construct with reflective dimensions at the first level. CoE was measured with a four-item instrument developed by Bhattacharjee (2001), which indicated if visitor expectations of the Café Apartment were confirmed by

actual visits there. MTEs were investigated using five items adopted from Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012). These measurements had questions reflecting people's views of the experiences at the Café Apartment. Satisfaction was measured using five items developed by Veasna, Wu, and Huang (2013) to determine if tourists felt satisfied with their visit experiences. Revisit and WoM intentions were measured with a four-item instrument developed by Kim (2017). The respondents answered the above-mentioned questions on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (7). Respondent demographic and travel characteristics were collected to provide the coffee tourist profile.

Open-ended questions and in-depth interviews: Since memorable coffee tourism experiences have not been investigated in previous tourism studies, the current research developed several open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire to obtain more in-depth information that might provide alternative or further explanations to those that the closed-ended questions could not capture. For the in-depth interviews with coffee shop owners, the management and marketing strategies were discussed that potentially fostered MTEs in their stores.

Data collection

Tourists visiting the Café Apartment were selected as the target population and a purposive sampling technique was used. The respondents generally completed questionnaires in 15 to

20 minutes. A total of 348 valid questionnaires out of 389 was obtained, which represented a good survey response rate of 89.5%. Four coffee shop owners who had managed stores for more than one year were selected to participate in the in-depth and semi-structured interviews. The confidentiality and anonymity for the survey respondents and interviewees were assured.

Data analysis

The data analysis comprised two steps, including analyses for validity, reliability, and hypothesis-testing. First, all data were assessed using SPSS 26.0 to test for skewness, kurtosis, missing values, and descriptive analysis. All the missing values were replaced with the EM (expectation-maximization algorithm). The reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of all reflective constructs were evaluated following the techniques recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) and Fornell and Larcker (1981). The Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) was used to test the conceptual model. Compared with Covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM), PLS-SEM can better deal with a more complex model having formative measures and multiple mediations or moderations. It is also suitable for predictive and exploratory research. In this research, the model was complex because travel motivations were conceptualized as a second-order construct with formative indicators. Furthermore, the integration of travel motivations and CoE into the MTE model had not been attempted in previous studies. Therefore, the relationships among all factors remained

exploratory. Under these conditions, PLS-SEM was an appropriate method for examining the memorable coffee tourism experience model.

Based on Popping's (2015) suggestions, representational thematic text analysis was conducted to capture the latent meanings of text generated from the open-ended responses and in-depth interviews of coffee owners. Two coders were trained and experienced in this form of content analysis. They separately and carefully read the transcripts and selected text fragments related to the research questions. The focus was not only on the apparent content, but also on the hidden connotations between the lines. Codes were developed to summarize the text fragments. The coders constantly compared the names of the codes with the previous literature. They met in person to discuss the meanings of the codes and refine the codebook for coding interview data.

Results

Respondent profile

The respondents were almost equally distributed between males (49.6%) and females (50.6%). Most were between 21-30 years old (55.5%). They visited Ho Chi Minh City for relaxation (34.5%) and pleasure (33.9%). A majority was in full-time employment (49.7%) or were students (27%). Most were first-time visitors (77.6%). More details related to their travel behaviours can be found in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Measurement model

The skewness of most indicators was between -1 and + 1 except for six items. However, the kurtosis of 11 out of 34 indicators was beyond -1 and + 1 (Table 2). Therefore, the data distributions of these 11 items were slightly non-normal. In this case, PLS-SEM performs as effectively as other techniques (e.g., multiple regression or LISREL) in detecting actual paths in the model (Goodhue, Lewis, & Thompson, 2012), and thus was used in this research. The factor loading of one item within the social interaction and status of the travel motivation construct was 0.692. Although this value did not reach the ideal threshold value of 0.7, it was in the acceptable range (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, the reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model could be established since: (1) all other factor loadings were above the satisfactory value of 0.7; (2) the composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.827 to 0.957, more than the 0.7 cut-off value; and (3) average variances extracted (AVEs) ranged from 0.574 to 0.837, above the 0.5 threshold.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Furthermore, the discriminant validity of the measurement model was confirmed by comparing the square root of AVE values to the correlations between the paired constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All the square roots of AVEs for the reflective constructs were

larger than the correlations of the corresponding constructs (Table 3) and discriminant validity was established.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Travel motivations were a second-order formative measure within which the three first-order domains (relaxation and novelty, social interaction and status, and self-development) were independent and did not need to be highly correlated with one another. Therefore, the application of the above-mentioned technique was not appropriate. Instead, the quality of this formative construct can be assessed by content validity, collinearity, and the significance of the first-order domains (BoBow-Thies & Albers, 2010). The measurement items for the travel motivations construct were adopted from previous literature and evaluated by three experts in tourism studies. Furthermore, the variance inflation factor (VIF) of the domains were 1.886 (relaxation and novelty), 2.250 (social interaction and status), and 2.384 (self-development), which were below five (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). Thus, a collinearity problem was not detected. The path weight values for the three domains were 0.418 (relaxation and novelty), 0.295 (social interaction and status), and 0.422 (self-development), and were significant at the 95% confidence level. These results indicated that all domains were relevant and significant for the second-order construct.

Structural model and hypotheses testing

The causal relationships among all factors were found to be significant and thus all nine hypotheses were supported (Figure 2). Coffee tourist travel motivations positively influenced CoE and MTEs. Furthermore, MTEs positively impacted overall satisfaction, WoM and revisit intentions. CoE in coffee tourism also positively predicted MTEs and satisfaction. Finally, satisfaction positively influenced WoM and revisit intentions.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Qualitative results

The following four themes emerged from the data:

Theme 1. Travel motivations are varied in coffee tourism, although relaxation and novelty is the most salient: Many participants mentioned that not just one travel motivation drove their visits. Getting tired of street noise and high humidity, they wanted to escape to a place that allowed them to relax and enjoy local coffee with their companions. They also wanted to explore the different taste of Vietnamese coffee and learn about the local coffee culture from baristas. The varying themes exhibited by different stores fulfilled the need for novelty seeking as well as creating a fun, hip, and unique atmosphere. It was evident that the respondents were seeking meaningful social interactions, wanted to experience an unfamiliar culture in the Café Apartment, and went there to escape the daily traffic stress and muggy weather of Ho Chi Minh in the summer months.

Theme 2. The “experiencescape” of Café Apartment leads to the formation of MTEs:

The combination of the magnificent city views, relaxing music, special durian coffee, nostalgic feelings within an old 90s building, and the enthusiastic Vietnamese staff established the “experiencescape” of the Café Apartment, making tourism experiences therein unique and unforgettable. All the senses were activated with the aroma of coffee, soft background music, and the flavourful Vietnamese coffee. The social interactions with friendly baristas, other customers and coffee enthusiasts, friends, or family made trips to Café Apartment not just an activity to check off on a list, but potentially a set of MTEs.

Theme 3. Hidden payment and the crowded environment may challenge expectations and detract from the tourism experience: People visited Café Apartment because of their friends’ recommendations or the positive reviews on online forums. They arrived with high expectations about the astonishing views and comfortable atmosphere. However, these expectations could be challenged if unpleasant events awaited them on the premises. For example, some tourists complained about the hidden costs of taking the elevator, no toilets, poor and dangerous facilities, and the crowded environment which generated unbearable noise levels. Visits to Café Apartment were preceded with an expectation of relief from the stressful, busy life on the streets of Ho Chi Minh and the chance to enjoy a calmer, more peaceful atmosphere. When these expectations were not met, experiences were blunted, and satisfaction reduced.

Theme 4. The increase of customers' WoM and revisit intentions is strongly influenced by MTEs. It is also the marketing priority for the owners: The uniqueness of the Café Apartment fosters the formation of MTEs, which encourages people to revisit and recommend it to their friends. One participant mentioned: "The uniqueness of Café Apartment gives me a happy memory that makes me want to share with family and friends once I reach home... not doing what everybody is doing makes it more memorable! Otherwise, why not just go to the library and borrow a book about the highlights of Vietnam?"

Based on the in-depth interviews, the coffee shop owners strive to create a comfortable dining environment, improve service quality, use innovative recipes, and feature unique decorations to impress customers. The purpose of all these efforts, when combined, is to evoke MTEs and to increase revisit and WoM intentions. The owners mentioned that they cannot afford the cost of advertising their stores on traditional media. All the businesses relied heavily on the influence of social media, WoM, and repeat customers. Therefore, their management and marketing priority was to make tourists remember their stores and expect them to share positive stories and photos to attract more customers.

Conclusions, discussion and implications

Conclusions and discussion

Coffee is an inseparable and pervasive part of hospitality and tourism experiences (Jolliffe, 2010); however, coffee tourism is an under-researched topic in the field (Yun, 2014).

Furthermore, despite the importance of MTEs in destinations being recognised, the investigations of antecedents and consequences of MTEs in special-interest tourism are limited to date. This research responded to the need for extending the literature by developing and testing an integrated model that associated travel motivations, expectation-confirmation theory, and the MTE model in the coffee tourism context. The quantitative and qualitative findings verified the propositions that WoM and revisit intentions toward a coffee attraction, the Café Apartment, were affected by satisfaction and MTEs, which, in turn, were predicted by travel motivations and CoE. Discussions and contributions of the current study's findings are provided below.

Travel motivation and its influences: Travel motivations are individual psychological needs driving people to seek tourism experiences to fulfil inner needs (Wang, 2016). The significance of travel motivation in the tourist decision-making process has been proven in numerous research studies (e.g., Fang et al., 2017; Gnoth, 1997; Hung & Petrick, 2011); however, previous MTE-related studies did not explore its impacts.

This study's findings confirm that travel motivation is one of the most important precursors of MTEs (H1). The "resting and relaxing" item was rated the highest with an average score of 5.879 in the travel motivation scale. The qualitative findings also verified

that “relaxation and novelty” were salient motivations among coffee tourists. When tired of the crowded and noisy streets in the city, they wanted to escape to a peaceful and serene place that allowed them to relax and enjoy local coffee with their friends or family. This feature is slightly different from other types of beverage tourists whose main travel motivations are to try a specific type of beverage.

Furthermore, “self-development” was identified as another important travel motivation for these coffee tourists of the Apartment with an aggregated weight of 0.422. The findings supplement the study of Wang et al. (2019) by identifying coffee tourists’ travel motivations. Wang and her colleagues found “meaningfulness” to be the most important dimension of MTEs among all tourists who visited Taiwanese coffee estates. However, they did not include travel motivations in their examination of MTEs. The current research discovered that the inner needs of exploring and learning about the local coffee culture drove coffee tourists to an attraction and they were the foundation of meaningful tourism experiences which can be recalled in the future.

The findings of this research also verify the influences of travel motivations on CoE (H2). Coffee tourists with higher travel motivations possessed higher expectations. The findings provide empirical evidence to validate part of Gnoth’s (1997) conceptual model illustrating the relationship between travel motivations and expectation formation. The results

also parallel the research of Fang et al. (2017) in that there was a causal relationship between travel motivations and expectations of the destination.

Lastly, both quantitative and qualitative data verify the current research's conceptualisation of travel motivations as a formative construct. No problems were detected with the analyses of VIF and collinearity. Furthermore, in the open-ended questions, many participants mentioned all travel motivations (i.e., relaxation and novelty, social interaction and status, and self-development) at the same time. They pointed out that multiple motivations convinced them to visit Café Apartment. No previous coffee tourism research has conceptualised travel motivations as a formative construct. The findings should initiate and evoke more discussions and future research on such conceptualisation.

CoE and its influences: The present study found that CoE was a precursor of MTEs (H3). Furthermore, compared to travel motivation ($\beta = 0.331$; $p < 0.01$), CoE ($\beta = 0.409$; $p < 0.01$), it can better predict MTEs. The findings supplement Harmon and Dunlap's (2018) qualitative research by providing quantitative evidence. When coffee tourists learn about the Café Apartment from the Internet and friends, high expectations are aroused by other people's stimulating comments. Once this expectation is confirmed by on-site experiences, the cognitive and affective judgment of the Apartment's coffee or service becomes the "anchor point" of future memory reconstruction (Kim, 2018). Previous coffee tourism studies have not yet included CoE into the discussion of tourism experiences. More research should

be conducted to better compare different results.

CoE was also found to be positively related to tourist satisfaction with visit experiences at the Apartment (H5). Similar results may be found in different types of special interest tourism. For example, Chou, Kiser, and Rodriguez (2012) found that medical tourist satisfaction with overseas medical services can be predicted by CoE. Boo and Busser (2018) also concluded that if the perceived performance of hotel events can be matched with tourist expectations, satisfaction with these events will be high. The qualitative findings offer another insight by indicating that unadvertised payments for elevator use and the noisy environment may confound expectations and reduce coffee tourist satisfaction with visit experiences. Therefore, tourism planners should take notice of the key role of CoE in generating positive MTEs and high levels of satisfaction.

MTEs, satisfaction, and their influences: The study also contributed by investigating the effects of MTEs on tourist loyalty in coffee tourism. The results showed that MTEs had positive influences on satisfaction (H4), WoM intentions (H6), and revisit intentions (H7). This supports the notion of the “experience economy” in which the quality of experiences supplements the product or service quality and strengthens consumers’ WoM and revisit intentions (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). The result also is in line with previous findings that MTEs play a critical role in tourist decision-making processes (Kim, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018).

The most salient items that reflected MTEs were enjoyment (mean = 5.724; $\beta = 0.823$; $p < 0.01$) and revitalization (mean = 5.494; $\beta = 0.828$; $p < 0.01$). The results were slightly different from Wang et al. (2019), in which they found “meaningfulness” was the most influential dimension of MTEs among coffee tourists who visited Taiwanese coffee estates. Since the main visit purposes of the current study’s participants were relaxation (34.5%) and pleasure (33.9%), these were different from the majority of the participants of Wang et al. (2019) who desired to be involved in educational activities. There is a wide spectrum of coffee tourists who visit coffee attractions with differing purposes (Jolliffe, 2010). Since touristic experience is highly subjective, dynamic and complex (O’Dell, 2005), different groups of coffee tourists may possess various expectations and this leads to different post-event evaluations and interpretations of on-site experiences (Harmon and Dunlap, 2018). Therefore, the recollection of the touristic experiences may be varied based on the characteristics of the coffee tourists. In future studies on this market, scholars may include travel purposes of the coffee tourists into the investigation to better compare the differences among various types of coffee tourists and their MTEs.

The results also showed that MTEs had a stronger influence ($\beta = 0.603$; $p < 0.01$) on coffee tourist satisfaction in comparison with CoE ($\beta = 0.221$; $p < 0.01$). Differing from previous studies’ suggestions (e.g., Chen et al., 2012; Fang et al., 2017), this finding provides another insight that CoE is not the only factor which can predict satisfaction. In the future,

tourism planners and researchers should not neglect the influences of MTEs. Furthermore, the findings indicated that compared to WoM intentions ($\beta = 0.215$; $p < 0.01$), MTEs had a greater effect on revisit intentions ($\beta = 0.302$; $p < 0.01$). These results are in line with Sharma and Nayak's (2019) study, which also found that MTEs had a stronger influence on yoga tourist revisit intentions than WoM intentions. Since the majority of participants (57.5%) knew the Café Apartment from the Internet and most of them were Generation Z (55.5%), future studies can include e-WoM to test if MTEs influence people's intentions to recommend the Apartment online.

Furthermore, the qualitative findings indicated that the combination of multiple factors, such as the magnificent city views, relaxing atmosphere, special Vietnamese coffee, and enthusiastic staff made the experiences unforgettable. In the future, quantitative scales should be developed to identify the most salient factors influencing the formation of MTEs among coffee tourists.

The current study also confirmed that satisfaction remains one of the most important factors influencing WoM (H8) and revisit intentions (H9) in coffee tourism. This parallels with previous studies in that satisfaction directly influences loyalty in medical tourism (Chou et al., 2012), working holidays (Fang et al., 2017), and international tourism to China (Zhang et al., 2018). Additionally, in the context of coffee tourism, satisfaction ($\beta = 0.560$; $p < 0.01$) had a stronger impact on WoM intentions than MTEs ($\beta = 0.215$; $p < 0.01$), which is different

from yoga tourism (Sharma & Nayak, 2019). Future research should include qualitative exploration to discover the factors causing such differences.

Managerial implications

DMOs and tourism operators should pay special attention to the sources that influence tourist expectations, such as traditional media, advertising, and online reviews in social media.

Particularly, the findings revealed that the major source that raised awareness of the Café

Apartment was the Internet and especially social media. Taking an attractive photo and

posting it to social media was a must-do activity among these tourists. The stakeholders of

coffee attractions must therefore frequently evaluate online images and reviews and manage

products, services, and on-site experiences to match (or exceed) customer expectations.

Every component that may influence the Café Apartment's "experiencescape" (O'Dell, 2005)

should be managed. It was frequently mentioned in the open-ended questions that the

crowding within the Café Apartment generated feelings of discomfort, which went against

the motivations of seeking a relaxing and peaceful place to enjoy cups of local coffee while

learning new things with travel companions.

Coffee consumers are eager to learn more about their daily beverage. The exploration of

coffee attractions can lead to the progress and sustainable management of coffee tourism

(Jolliffe, 2010). Based on this research, DMOs and coffee attraction operators should

understand that both CoE and MTEs play critical roles in managing satisfaction and loyalty

behaviour. Working on the circumstances influencing experiences and familiarising themselves with customer expectations are critical tasks for securing future business. Utilising the strategies of tourism experience design (Jernsand et al., 2015) may stimulate innovation and refine service encounters to increase customer satisfaction. Certainly, practitioners should not manufacture false expectations by using over-embellished advertisements. Instead, managing the quality of tourism experiences and carefully aligning business strategies with motivations and expectations will increase attractiveness and enhance customer satisfaction.

Limitations and future research directions

Although the current research employed a mixed-method design aiming to obtain a more holistic picture of memorable coffee tourism experiences, limitations need to be acknowledged. First, the sample was predominantly made up by individuals younger than 30 years old and first-time tourists. Future research should collect data from repeat visitors and wider demographics to compare their perceptions of coffee tourism. Second, the qualitative data indicated enthusiastic staff members were important to MTE formation; however, the quantitative survey items measuring MTEs did not include this component. The measurement scale developed by Kim and Ritchie (2014), which includes seven dimensions of the MTEs (hedonism, novelty, social interaction and local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge) should be expanded to offer a more comprehensive

examination of memorable coffee tourism experiences in the future. Third, additional factors that may influence satisfaction and behaviours should be integrated into the conceptual model such as the destination image, values, attitudes, and service quality. It is hoped that the integration of these factors will offer more insights for understanding coffee tourism and advance the MTE model. Fourth, the application of the MTE model to other coffee tourism destinations is needed. Although Café Apartment represents a modern coffee culture, tourists who visit traditional coffee attractions or festivals may have different travel motivations and MTEs. As the exploration of the MTE model is at the early stage, more research should be conducted to enrich the knowledge on coffee tourism.

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