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SCHOOL OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

The Impact of Online Experience Sharing, Self-Congruity, and Functional Congruity on Tourist Satisfaction: A Study of University Students in Hong Kong

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Sharing of travel experiences through social media has become a new "social norm." Tourists get satisfaction not only from the services or images of a destination, but also from online interactions with friends and relatives about a trip after they return home. Previous studies on tourist satisfaction have focused almost exclusively on tourists on-site experiences. Few studies have investigated tourists online experience sharing and little is known about its effect on tourist satisfaction. This study examines the impact of quality of online experience sharing, self-congruity and functional congruity on two phases of tourist satisfaction: satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences.

Data were obtained from 553 university students in Hong Kong using a self-administered questionnaire. An instrument measuring the underlying constructs was developed, based on literature review and expert judgment. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling were used to examine the reliability, validity and causal relationships of the constructs. The results indicated that self-congruity and functional congruity had a significant impact on satisfaction with the destination. Quality of online experience sharing was found to comprise of factors such as personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty and had a significant impact on satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Satisfaction with the entire travel experience was found to be related to satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. These results imply that both the on-site stage (i.e. at which most of the tourism activities occur) and recollection stage (i.e. at which tourists reflect and share their memorable travel experiences with others) should be considered by tourism operators in order to develop tourism programmes that are memorable and satisfactory. This study adds to a growing body of literature on tourist satisfaction in general, and experience sharing in particular. It provides insights for managers of tourism organizations for effective management of tourist satisfaction at different stages.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1.   Overview

The notion that a satisfactory travel experience leads to repeat travel, positive word-of-mouth and loyalty has been widely demonstrated in the tourism literature (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004; Xu & Chan, 2010b). In this respect, most studies have focused exclusively on the functional congruity (e.g., Alegre & Cladera, 2006; Hui, Wan & Ho, 2007; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). The fact that image congruity may also have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction has largely been ignored (Chon & Olsen, 1991). Indeed, tourists not only evaluate the functional performance of the destination, but also compare their self-image with the image of the destination. Tourists are not satisfied if the destination image does not match their self-image (Chon & Olsen, 1991). Another gap in the tourism literature is that there is a lack of understanding of post-visit experiences of tourists and how they affect tourist satisfaction. When the trip has ended, many tourists continue to gain satisfaction from sharing their travel photos and stories with friends and relatives on social media sites. The overall aim of the present study, therefore, is to determine whether and how

tourist satisfaction is influenced by self-congruity, functional congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences on social media.

1.2.   Self-Congruity and Functional Congruity

The importance of functional congruity has been underscored in many tourism studies (e.g., Alegre & Cladera, 2006; Alegre & Garau, 2010; Chi & Qu, 2008; Hui et al., 2007). Tourists are more satisfied if functional performance of a destination matches or exceeds their expectations, a process referred to as functional congruity. Yet, functional congruity alone is not sufficient to explain tourist satisfaction (Bosnjak, Sirgy, Hellriegel & Maurer, 2011). Previous studies have shown that tourists' attitudes towards a destination are also influenced by the matching of the destination's image with the self-image of the tourist (Sirgy & Su, 2000). That is, the greater the match between the destination's image and the self-image of the tourist, the more likely the tourist has a favourable attitude towards that destination and the more likely the tourist would be satisfied with the destination.

Self-congruity is built on self-image (i.e. actual, ideal, social or ideal social image),

which is multidimensional in nature (Sirgy, 1982). Borrowing from the service marketing literature, Sirgy and Su (2000) proposed four corresponding types of image congruities in the context of tourism, namely, actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity. Actual self-congruity occurs when a tourist acts in ways consistent with his/her actual self-image. Self-consistency is argued to be the main motive that drives actual self-congruity (Sirgy, Lee, Johar & Tidwell, 2008). In contrast, ideal self-congruity refers to the degree of match of a tourist's ideal self-image and a destination image (Sirgy et al., 2005). It is the tourist's private self that motivates the evaluation (Sirgy & Su, 2000). Social self-congruity refers to the degree of match between a tourist's social self-image and a destination image (Sirgy & Su, 2000). It responds to the tourist's social approval and self-consistency motives, which means the tourist seeks to maintain a coherent image in social contexts by consistently showcasing the self to significant others (Hung & Petrick, 2011). Ideal social self-congruity refers to the degree of match between the ideal social self-image of a tourist and a destination image (Sirgy & Su, 2000). It is be motivated by self-enhancement and social approval.

In addition to self-congruity, functional or utilitarian attributes may also serve as the basis for tourists evaluating a destination (Sirgy & Su, 2000). According to

Kressmann et al. (2006), functional congruity is defined as the matching between customer perceptions towards product attributes before the purchases and their evaluation after the purchases. More recently, Bosnjak et al. (2011) proposed an alternative approach which focuses on the utilitarian aspects of a destination. Functional congruity was conceptualized as a formative construct consisting of five generic aspects: a) performance (i.e. the extent to which the sum of all services related to the destination enables the tourist to accomplish his or her goal, function, or performance); b) quality (i.e. the extent to which tourist services are convenient); c) reliability (i.e. the extent to which tourist services perform consistently well over time); d) convenience (i.e. the extent to which tourists find the services easy to use) and e) customer service (i.e. the extent to which the tourist services are customer friendly). Following this logic, functional congruity in the present study is captured by using a multi-attribute method, in which the attributes are functional consequences involving both financial costs and utilitarian benefits (Hung & Petrick, 2011).

1.3. Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

The concept of tourist experience has been part of tourism studies for many years. Researchers generally agree that experience of a tourist is dictated by his/her subjective psychological state (Moscardo, 2009). Some researchers support tourist experience as a process involving progression through a series of stages (e.g., Aho, 2001; Jennings & Weiler, 2006; Pearce, 2005). Clawson and Knetsch (1966) suggested a five-phase process in their recreational experience model that covers (1) anticipation (i.e. planning and thinking about the trip); (2) travel to the site (i.e. getting to the destination); (3) on-site behaviour (i.e. behaviour at the site or destination region); (4) return travel (i.e. travelling home); and (5) recollection (i.e. recall, reflection and memory of the trip). Although each phase can have an impact on tourist satisfaction, previous studies have focused almost exclusively on evaluation of the on-site experience (e.g., J. Huang & Hsu, 2009, 2010). Few studies have related tourist satisfaction to the post-visit or recollection phase.

Recollection refers to the efforts made and actions taken by respondents to remember the tourism experience and/or reflect back on the trip (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Bryant and Veroff (2007), Gretzel, Fesenmaier, Lee and Tussyadiah (2011) and Morgan and Xu (2009) have argued that recollection not only involves savouring the holiday experience through reminiscing of past holidays by himself/herself, more importantly,

it is a need of tourists to share their travel experiences with others as memories of their trip. As a result, tourists frequently share travel stories, re-examine photographs and write long travelogues about their past adventures (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Pearce, 1991; Willson & McIntosh, 2007; Yagi, 2001). In recent years, many tourists narrate and share their travel experience on social network sites. Some do it simply for fun, others seek recognition, and still others look for interactions with friends and relatives. These feelings should have significant effect on tourist satisfaction. Thus, tourist's satisfaction does not depend on only the services or image of a destination, but also on interactions with friends and relatives that occur after the trip.

1.4. Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is an important topic for both researchers and industry practitioners because a high level of satisfaction not only leads to repeat purchases but recommendations from current customers (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001). Given the vital role of customer satisfaction, a great deal of research has been devoted to investigating the process by which customers form judgements about consumption experiences. In spite of the noticeable progress achieved and a number of theoretical

foundations having been developed, a review of literature suggests that a consensus

on conceptualisation of customer satisfaction is yet to be reached. There is continuous

debate whether satisfaction is a cognitive evaluation or an emotional state (Cronin &

Taylor, 1992). Some researchers define satisfaction merely from a cognitive

perspective, while others counter argue that satisfaction is not solely a cognitive

phenomenon, rather it also comprises an element of affects or feelings, in that

consumers feel subjectively good when satisfied and bad when dissatisfied. The latter

approach is more comprehensive, has gained general acceptance in tourism research

and is adopted in this thesis.

1.5.   Purposes of Study

The major purpose of the present study is to explore the impact of self-congruity,

functional congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences on tourist

satisfaction. Unlike previous studies which have focused mainly on destination

satisfaction, the present study looked at satisfaction with the destination as well as

satisfaction with the online sharing experience. A global measure that captures tourist

satisfaction encompassing the entire travel experience was also examined. Hong

Kong university students were the subjects of this study. Four research objectives have been identified to guide the entire research effort:

1. To examine the influences of self-congruity and functional congruity on tourist satisfaction with the destination;

2. To explore the dimensions of quality of online sharing of travel experiences and to develop a scale to measure these dimensions;

3. To explore the impact of quality of online sharing of travel experiences on tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences; and

4. To determine the impact of tourist satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences on satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

1.6.   Conceptual Framework

Commensurate with the previous discussions, the conceptual model is proposed in Figure 1.1. The proposed model consists of six components: (1) self-congruity; (2) functional congruity; (3) quality of online sharing of travel experiences; (4) tourist satisfaction with the destination; (5) tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel

experiences; and (6) tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience. Among these components, self-congruity, functional congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences are exogenous variables. Tourist satisfaction with the destination, tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences and tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience are endogenous variables.

The conceptual model is based on previous research in extant literature on self-congruity and functional congruity by Sirgy and Su (2000) and tourist satisfaction framework by Clawson and Knetsch (1966). Tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience is hypothesised to be affected by tourist satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. These are in turn influenced by self-congruity, functional congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences. Specifically, tourist satisfaction with the destination is affected by self-congruity and functional congruity whilst satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences is driven by quality of online sharing of travel experiences.

Self-Congruity and Functional Congruity

- Self-Congruity
- Functional Congruity

Online Experience Sharing

- Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences
- Satisfaction with the Destination
- Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Travel Experiences
- Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience
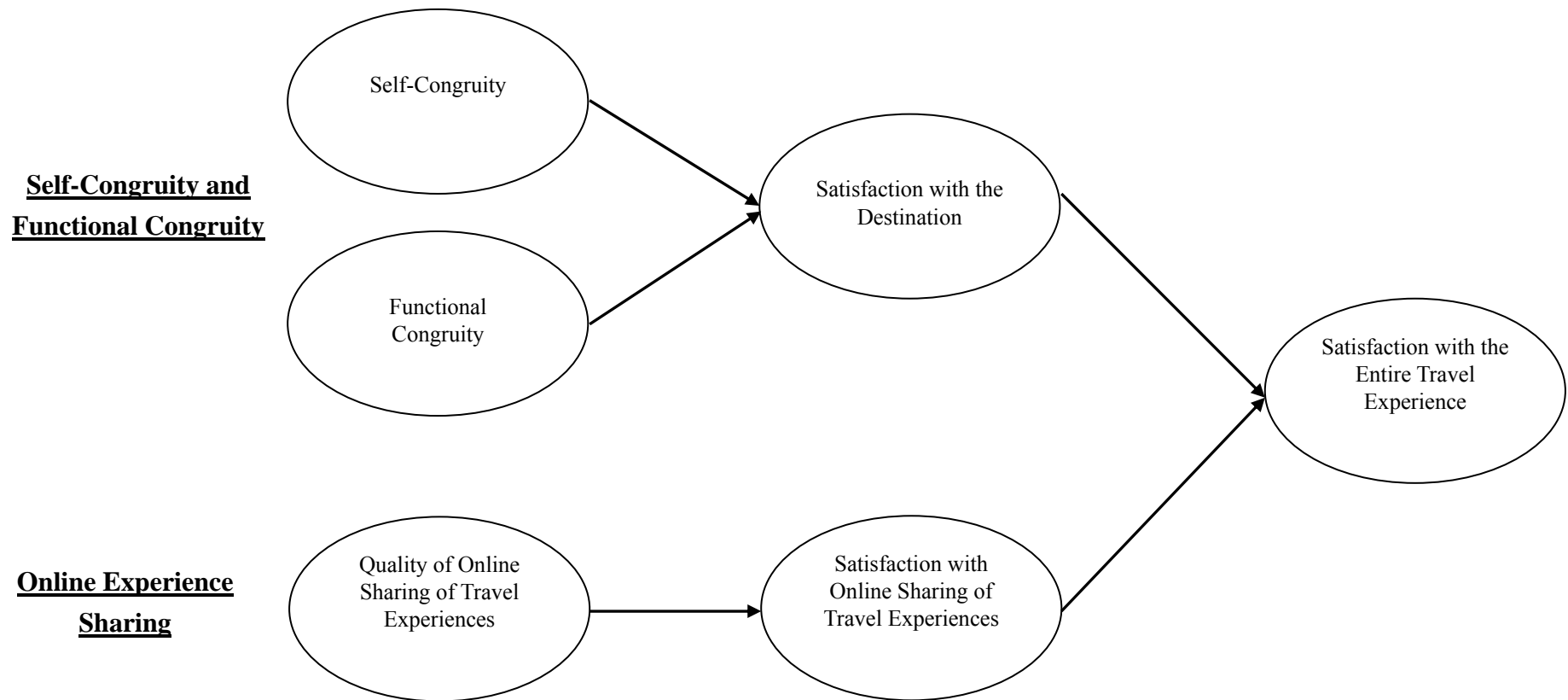
Figure 1.1. Conceptual Framework

1.7.   Contributions of the Study

1.7.1.   Theoretical Contributions

This study represents the first attempt to explore the relationships among quality of online sharing of travel experiences, self-congruity, functional congruity and tourist satisfaction. It advances our understanding of tourist behaviour in several ways. First, studies that have attempted to understand how various stages of travel experiences affect tourist satisfaction are limited in numbers. In the current work, a multiphase conceptual framework is proposed, which enriches the understanding of tourists' post-visit satisfaction. Second, an increasing amount of research has been carried out on tourists' online behaviours. Various aspects have been addressed such as tourists motivations for sharing travel information online (e.g., Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Y. Huang, Basu & Hsu, 2010; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004b; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008), the role of tourist experiences on social media sites (e.g., Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), tourists' online travel information search (e.g., Kim, Lehto & Morrison, 2007), and profiles of those who share experiences online (e.g., Ip, Lee & Law, 2012; Lo, McKercher, Lo, Cheung & Law, 2011). Yet, little is known regarding the possible role

of technology (social network sites) on tourist satisfaction. Third, self-congruity and functional congruity have been applied separately to pre-purchase studies, mainly to examine choice behaviours of tourists. This study integrates the two concepts to examine their relative effect on tourists' satisfaction.

1.7.2. Managerial Contributions

Faced with growing global competition, destination marketing organizations (DMOs) are in constant battle to attract travellers (Pike & Ryan, 2004). The findings of this study provide information to destination marketing organizations (DMOs) which helps them survive and gain competitive advantage in an intensely competitive environment. Specifically, the result of self-congruity and functional congruity can provide DMOs with additional insights that can increase tourist satisfaction. For example, DMOs can pay more attention to promotion campaigns showing a typical tourist reflective of the destination's image. If the right destination image is shown in promotional materials, the majority of potential travelers are more likely to be satisfied because the difference between destination image and their self-image is low. In contrast, DMOs can design effective and innovative products that match tourist' perceptions if functional congruity is sufficiently significant to affect tourist

satisfaction. In addition, DMOs and social network sites' providers will be able to better comprehend tourists' psychological benefits of sharing experiences online through insights provided in this study. Hence, management efforts can be effectively directed at addressing the psychological benefits of tourists. Furthermore, if the online experience sharing is suggested to be influential on tourist satisfaction, it can be an important variable in tourist satisfaction. This would encourage DMOs and social network sites providers to design and manage the relevant facilities for providing powerful and effective experiences to tourists who share their travel experiences online.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

Self-image: The totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings in reference to themselves as an object (Rosenberg, 1979).

Destination image: The sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination (Crompton, 1979).

Self-congruity: The matching process between destination image and tourist

self-image (actual, ideal, social and ideal social self-image) (Sirgy & Su, 2000).

Functional congruity: Tourists' utilitarian evaluation of a destination (Bosnjak et al., 2011).

Quality of online sharing of travel experiences: Psychological benefits/outcomes derived by tourists from sharing their travel experiences with others after the trip (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004).

Satisfaction with the destination: Tourists' evaluation of their personal experiences encountered during their visit to the destination (S. Huang, Hsu & Chan, 2010).

Satisfaction with online sharing of experiences: The extent to which psychological benefits of sharing experience compare to those desired (Tian-Cole, Crompton & Willson, 2002).

Satisfaction with the entire travel experience: Tourists' post-consumption summary evaluation of the totality of the travel experience (Otto & Ritchie, 1996).

1.9.   Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured as follows. Firstly, Chapter 1 introduces the general background of the research topic, defines the research objectives, and delineates contributions of the present study to the existing knowledge base. The key concepts are also defined in this chapter. Chapter 2 presents an extended literature review relevant to the proposed model. The key constructs, namely, self-image, destination image, self-congruity, functional congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and tourist satisfaction are also discussed. Hypotheses developments are elaborated in this chapter by examining how satisfaction with the entire experience might be influenced in two different ways: (1) through satisfaction with the destination; and (2) via satisfaction with online sharing of experiences. The relationship between self-congruity and functional congruity on satisfaction with destination, and quality of online sharing of travel experiences and satisfaction with online sharing of experiences, are also reviewed. Chapter 3 focuses on the research methodology. Specifically, the research design, scale development, survey design, sampling procedure and procedures of data analysis are discussed in detail. Chapter 4 presents the findings of instrument development, including expert panels and pilot study. Next, Chapter 5 presents the results of the main survey. Finally, Chapter 6

discusses the findings and outlines some theoretical and managerial implications of

the analysis, followed by limitations of this study and offers suggestions for future

research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the concept of self-image. The literature on destination image is discussed in the second section. The third section reviews the literature on self-congruity and functional congruity. Quality of online sharing of travel experiences is discussed in the fourth section. Tourist satisfaction is then described, followed by research model and hypotheses.

2.2. Self-Image

Consumers do not purchase products only for the physical attributes or functional benefits derived from the products, but also for the symbolic meaning of those products as portrayed in their images (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber & Lee, 2006). Through the purchase and use of products, self-concept can be defined, maintained and enhanced (Graeff, 1996). The notion of self-image has its origins in classical Greek philosophy, which defines it as the total sum of what a man thinks of

himself, including his body and intellect, as well as his belongings, family, reputation and work (Beerli, Meneses & Gil, 2007). Over the years, the core definition of self-image remains the same as advocated by Rosenberg (1979), that is, the totality of the thoughts and feelings of an individual in reference to himself/herself as an object.

Most of the self-image literature revolves around whether self-image is a one-dimensional or multi-dimensional concept. Some researchers have conceptualised it as having several components, such as "actual self", "real self" and "basic self". Other researchers have restricted it to merely gender-role self-image, defined as image of one's self as he/she perceives his/her gender role (Sirgy, 1982). However, the more recent psychological literature on self-image suggests the possibility of multiple selves. That is, the self is a collection of masks, each tied to a particular set of social circumstances (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Sirgy, 1986). Sirgy and Su (2000), for example, suggested that self-image is diverse and multi-faceted. Each facet represents hopes and fears of an individual, and indicates what can be realised in certain situations. Within the multiple self-image tradition, self-image has often been conceptualised as having two constructs: the actual self-concept and the ideal self-concept. The former is defined as the way a person actually sees himself or herself, while the latter has been labelled as 'ideal self', 'idealised self' and 'desired

self', and has been defined as 'the image of oneself as one would like to be' (Sirgy, 1982, p. 288).

In addition, other researchers have conceptualised self-image under more than two dimensions. For instance, according to Shavelson, Hubner and Stanton (1976), general self-image is composed of four facets: academic self-image, social self-image, emotional self-image and physical self-image. More recently, consumer researchers have generally used four aspects of the self-image to explain and predict consumer behaviour. These are the actual self-image, ideal self-image, social self-image and ideal social self-image (Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy & Su, 2000). Actual self refers to the way a person actually sees himself or herself. Ideal self refers to the way a person would like to be. Social self is the way a person presents himself or herself to others. Finally, social ideal self refers to the way a person would like other people to perceive himself or herself (Sirgy, Grzeskowiak & Su, 2005).

Malhotra (1988) has advocated a multi-dimensional view of self-image. He proposed that self-image includes (1) the self as knower, or subject, or 'I' (i.e. the process of actively experiencing); and (2) the self as known, or object, or 'me' (i.e. the content of

that experiencing). These are important components of self-concept, as the goals of an individual could be to maintain (actual self-concept), enhance (ideal self-concept), or project a certain self concept to significant others (social self-concept).

Following in the footsteps of others in the self-image research (e.g., Hung & Petrick, 2011; Lee & Back, 2009; Sirgy & Su, 2000), this study conceptualises and operationalizes self-image as multi-dimensional, which includes the actual self-image, the ideal self-image, the social self-image, and the ideal social self-image. Moreover, discussions of self-congruity are often not conducted in the context of destination image literature, causing a disconnect between conceptualisation and measurement of self-congruity. To address these concerns, the following paragraphs briefly review the destination image literature.

2.3. Destination Image

The trigger for the widespread interest in destination development literature, more specifically, destination image, can be traced to the early and influential work of Hunt (1971). Since then, destination image has become one of the dominant areas of

tourism research (S. Huang & Gross, 2010). Over the years, a wide range of issues

relating to destination image have been investigated, including image formation and

travel decision-making processes (e.g., Bigné Alcañiz, Sánchez García & Sanz Blas,

2009; Chen & Tsai, 2007), tourist satisfaction (e.g., Chen & Tsai, 2007; Chi & Qu,

2008), measurement techniques (e.g., Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gallarza, Saura &

García, 2002), antecedents of destination image (e.g., Baloglu & McCleary, 1999;

Beerli & Martín, 2004), differences between perceived and projected image (e.g.,

Andreu, Bigné & Cooper, 2001; Beerli et al., 2007), image modification process (e.g.,

Chon, 1991), and positioning strategies and destination branding (e.g., Echtner &

Ritchie, 1991; Baker & Cameron, 2008). The number of studies conducted underpins

the complexity and, hence, the difficulty of obtaining an explicit concept of image

formation and measurement.

2.3.1.   Definition of Destination Image

Hunt (1971) defined the image of a state (destination) as impressions that a person or

persons hold about a state in which they do not reside. Some authors also focus on the

holistic nature of image, considering it to be an overall impression that is greater than

the sum of its parts (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997). The

subjective nature of image is also emphasised as a representation of the destination in the mind of a tourist (Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2001; Crompton, 1979; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Crompton (1979) posited that the image is not only an individual and subjective perception, but can also correspond to a group perspective. Destination image, therefore, also includes a social part, reflected in the perception held by a segment of tourists (Bigné Alcañiz et al., 2009).

Apart from subjective perception and group perspective, other researchers have further described image as based on cognitive/affective image (Chi & Qu, 2008; Qu, Kim & Im, 2011), three continuum dimensions of attributes-holistic, functional-psychological and common-unique (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991), and functional and symbolic image (Chon & Olsen, 1991; Sirgy & Su, 2000). Despite the profusion of studies on the subject, there is no consensus on the definition of destination image (Gallarza et al., 2002). As Pearce (1988, p. 162) stated, 'image is one of those terms that will not go away… a term with vague and shifting meanings.' Nevertheless, the most commonly cited definition is 'the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination' (Crompton, 1979, p. 18).

2.3.2.   Importance of Destination Image

Destination image has been a worthy area of investigation for researchers for several decades. The importance of the tourist destination is universally acknowledged as it affects tourists' perceptions and behaviour. According to O'Leary and Deegan (2005), destination image is important because of the role it plays in the potential decision-making process of tourists. Destination image is also significant because it affects the level of satisfaction with the tourist experience, which is critical for encouraging positive word-of-mouth recommendations and return visits to the destination. Chen and Tsai (2007) claimed that destination image plays two important roles in behaviour: (1) to influence the destination choice decision-making process; and (2) to condition the after-decision-making behaviours.

The influence of image on the choice of destination has been investigated in many studies (e.g., Bigné et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007; San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008). Much of this research has shown that destinations with stronger positive images have a higher probability of being included and chosen in the process of decision-making. Similarly, empirical evidence supporting a positive relationship between destination image and post-decision-making behaviour is abundant. Chon

(1990), for example, found that a positive image and positive travel experience result in a moderately positive evaluation of a destination. Other authors, such as Chi and Qu (2008), Moreno Gil and Ritchie (2009), and Prayag (2009) also concluded that destination image has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction. In addition, a more recent study has confirmed that destination image exerts a positive influence on behavioural intentions of tourists.

2.4.   Self-Congruity and Functional Congruity

Studies of self-congruity and functional congruity in tourism research dates back to the 1990s; emphasis has been placed on the role of self-congruity, functional congruity and the consequences. Chon and Olsen (1991) were the pioneers in applying the theory of self-congruity to tourism research. They have attempted to examine the role of destination image with regard to tourist satisfaction/dissatisfaction by using self-congruity and functional congruity, and found that satisfaction is related to both self-congruity and functional congruity. That is, the higher the congruity between tourist self-image (or tourist ideal expectation) and destination image (or utilitarian attribute of destination) is, the greater is the

satisfaction of the tourists. In addition, functional congruity is a better predictor of tourist satisfaction than self-congruity.

Using the same theoretical background, Chon (1992) further applied self-congruity (actual congruity and social congruity) theory to investigate the impact on tourist satisfaction with the destination. He claimed that tourist satisfaction is a function of symbolic evaluative congruity between destination image and tourist self-image. Moreover, he also stressed that the level of satisfaction would manifest in the form of four congruity conditions: positive self-congruity, positive self-incongruity condition, negative self-incongruity condition and negative self-congruity. However, results regarding the relative degree of influence of two other types of congruity (social congruity and ideal social congruity) are inconclusive.

Sirgy and Su (2000) developed an integrative model to explain the effect of self-congruity on tourist behaviour. Their theoretical model postulated that tourist behaviour is influenced not only by self-congruity, but also by the destination's functional congruity. Although the model incorporates a comprehensive analysis and follows the logic of self-congruity theory to illustrate the interrelationship betweens all constructs, it has not been empirically tested.

Since Chon and Olsen's (1991) original study, several researchers have sought to empirically validate self-congruity and functional congruity in the context of tourism. Litvin and Goh (2002) attempted to expand the work of Chon (1992) to explore the relationship between actual-self and ideal self-congruity, with pre-trip visitation interest and purchase proclivity. They employed two self-image scales by Malhotra (1981) and Chon and Olsen (1991). Consistent with Chon (1992), their results supported the role of self-congruity in tourism context. The method of Chon is significantly correlated to travel interest and purchase likelihood. In contrast, results of Malhotra are far from robust, implying the need for future research to further validate the theory of self-congruity, especially in developing a valid measure of self-congruity.

Litvin and Kar (2003) added the cultural construct of individualism/collectivism as a possible moderating variable when investigating whether actual and ideal self-congruity influence tourist satisfaction with the destination. Results indicate that at aggregate level, tourists who felt a destination closely matched the way they saw themselves (actual self-congruity) and what they would like to be (ideal self-congruity) were more satisfied with their experience at the destination than those

with low levels of self-congruity.

Kastenholz (2004) examined the influence of self-congruity on travel intention in rural tourism context. Self-congruity is operationalised by direct comparison between actual self-image and affective destination image. The author adopted 16 semantic differential scales of Malhotra to understand self-image and affective destination image. Although the results support claims that self-congruity has significant effect on intention to repeat visits, the author still questions the relevance of self-congruity in predicting tourist behaviour.

Beerli et al. (2007) examined the congruity between actual self and ideal self-concept and also investigated the effects of moderators, past experience and involvement. The results further confirmed that the greater is the congruity between actual and ideal self-image and the tourist image of the destination, the greater is the possibility that the tourist will be motivated to travel. Moreover, the findings further suggest that the mediating effect between self-congruity and degree of involvement is significantly correlated. In other words, the greater the involvement of a tourist, the greater is the predictive power self-congruity has over destination choice. However, congruity between actual and ideal concepts and the destination image is less important in the

choice of destination for vacations if the tourists have previously visited the location.

One of the most recent studies that has applied the self-congruity theory to the context of tourism is by Hung and Petrick (2011). This particular research proposes a theoretical model for cruise tourism. They have endeavoured to investigate the influence of self-congruity and functional congruity on cruising intention. Similar with previous self-congruity studies in tourism research, the above study uses self-congruity construct of Malhotra (1981). The findings confirm the effects stated by the model, indicating that self-congruity and functional congruity significantly affect the likelihood of a tourist opting for a cruise vacation.

Bosnjak et al. (2011) have developed a comprehensive model that investigates indicators of post-visit destination loyalty using seven congruity components (self-congruity, functional congruity, hedonic congruity, economic congruity, safety congruity, moral congruity and leisure congruity), and conclude that the effects of all congruities on post-visit behaviour are strong. This study further articulates that self-congruity does hold in a tourism context. Additionally, the result is in accord with Chon and Olsen (1991) where functional congruity is more predicable to post-visit behaviour than self-congruity.

Apart from the image studies, the value of using personality attributes to measure congruity has also been demonstrated. In their study covering Australia, Murphy, Benckendorff and Moscardo (2007) argued that if the perception of brand personality of destination matches the desired experience of a tourist, this should result in higher self-congruity. In turn, this should be related to stronger intention to visit and for those who have visited the destination, higher satisfaction as long as the destination meets the expectations triggered by the destination image. They report the results only at the aggregate level; self-congruity for all four selves was found higher for Whitsunday Islands than Carins. In addition, the group with higher levels of congruity with Whitsunday Islands were less likely to have visited Carins, and no difference was found between groups in terms of their intention to visit the destination in future. The author calls for further research to better understand the relationship between destination brand personality, self-congruity and tourist behaviour. This call is reinforced by Usakli and Baloglu (2011), who have examined the relationships among perceived destination personality, self-congruity and tourists' behaviour intentions. Their study not only supports that self-congruity leads to behaviour intention, but also confirms the moderating effect of self-congruity on the relationship between destination personality and behaviour intentions.

The overview of literature indicates that significant efforts have been put in for examining self-congruity or functional congruity independently, and pre-visit constructs, such as destination choice, travel intention and destination loyalty. This provides a framework for pursuing related research for identifying their relative effects on tourist satisfaction. In addition, the use of self-congruity and functional congruity in combination has occurred only recently, in limited tourism studies, and their relative weights in influencing tourist satisfaction is also unspecified. The present study, therefore, attempts to incorporate self-congruity and functional congruity into a single model to examine their impact on tourist satisfaction. Sirgy et al. (2005) and Bosnjak et al. (2011) suggest that self-congruity and functional congruity are reciprocal, and that integrating them may better explain tourist satisfaction.

Table 2.1. Summary of Self-Congruity and Functional Congruity in Tourism Research

Author(s)	Context	Salient Focus	Major Finding(s)	Corresponding Conceptual Components in the Current Study
Chon and Olsen (1991)	Destination image (USA)	To examine the role of destination image with regard to satisfaction	• The relationship of functional congruity and symbolic congruity on satisfaction	• Preference outcomes (symbolic congruity, functional congruity and satisfaction)
Chon (1992)	Destination image (USA)	To demonstrate the relationship between tourist-self concept and his/her satisfaction with a destination area	• Satisfaction is significantly correlated with self-image/destination image congruity	• Preference outcomes (self-image/destination image congruity and satisfaction)
Sirgy and Su (2000)	N/A	To develop an integrative model of destination image, self-congruity and tourist behaviour	• Tourist behaviour is influenced by both self-congruity and functional congruity • Moderating variables affect the relationship between self-congruity and functional congruity	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity and functional congruity) • Measurement of self-congruity
Goh and Litvin (2000)	Destination image (New Zealand, India and Japan)	To explore the relationship of actual and ideal self-congruity with pre-trip visitation interest and purchase proclivity	• Pre-trip travel interest and purchase likelihood are positively correlated with actual and ideal self-congruity	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity)
Litvin and Goh (2002)	Destination image (New Zealand, India, and Japan)	To identify the relationship between actual and ideal self-image congruity on intention to visit	• Chon's method of measuring self-congruity is significantly correlated to travel interest and purchase likelihood	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity)

Table 2.1. Continued

Author (s)	Context	Salient Focus	Major Finding	Corresponding Conceptual Components in Current Study
Litvin and Kar (2003)	Tourist's culture (Singapore)	To identify the effect of cultural difference on self-congruity	• Self-congruity is correlated with satisfaction • Individualists show a more significant correlation between satisfaction and self-image congruity than collectivists do	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity and satisfaction)
Kastenholz (2004)	Destination image (rural tourism in Portugal)	To address the role of destination self-congruity in explaining tourist behaviour	• Destination self-congruity has significant effect on intention to return, but not on intention to recommend	• Preference outcomes (destination self-congruity)
Murphy et al. (2007)	Destination image (Australia)	To explore the link among needs of tourists, destination brand personality, self-congruity and behaviour intention	• Self-congruity is related to satisfaction	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity and satisfaction) • Measurement of self-congruity
Beerli et al. (2007)	Destination image (Kenya, Paris and Dominican Republic)	To identify the role of self-congruity and destination choice	• The greater is self-congruity, the greater is the tendency to visit the place • Empirically test the moderating factors	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity)
Hung and Petrick (2011)	Cruise	To investigate the influence of self-congruity and functional congruity on cruising intention	• All paths in the model are confirmed, indicating that self-congruity and functional congruity significantly impact the likelihood of taking a cruise vacation	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity and functional congruity)

Table 2.1. Continued

Author (s)	Context	Salient Focus	Major Finding	Corresponding Conceptual Components in Current Study
Usakli and Baloglu (2011)	Destination personality (Las Vegas)	To investigate the relationships among destination personality, self-congruity and tourist's behavioural intention	• Self-congruity is a partial mediator on the relationship between destination personality and behavioural intention	• Measurement of self-congruity
Bosnjak et al. (2011)	Destination Image (Multi-destination)	To examine the influence of self-congruity, functional congruity, hedonic congruity, economic congruity, safety congruity, moral congruity and leisure congruity on destination loyalty	• All congruities have significant impact on destination loyalty • Functional congruity is the best predictor	• Preference outcomes (self-congruity and functional congruity)

Table 2.2. Studies Relating to Self-Congruity and Functional Congruity in Tourism Research

	Chon & Olsen (1991)	Chon (1992)	Sirgy & Su (2000)	Goh & Litvin (2000)	Litvin & Goh (2002)	Litvin & Kar (2003)	Kastenholz (2004)	Murphy et al. (2007)	Beerli et al. (2007)	Hung & Petrick (2011)	Usakli & Baloglu (2011)	Bosnjak et al. (2011)
Type of Paper												
Empirical full paper	√					√		√	√	√	√	√
Research note		√			√		√					
Conceptual paper			√									
Conference Paper				√								
Research Context												
Destination	√	√		√	√			√	√		√	√
Cultural difference of tourist						√						
Cruise										√		
Temporal												
Pre-trip				√	√		√	√	√	√	√	
Post-trip	√	√				√		√				√
Type of Self-Congruity												
Actual self-congruity	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Ideal self-congruity	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
Social self-congruity			√					√		√		√
Ideal social self-congruity			√					√		√		√
Functional Congruity	√									√		√
Congruity Measure												
Direct/global measure	√			√	√	√		√	√		√	√
Absolute difference score					√		√			√		
Dependent Variable (s)												
Satisfaction	√	√				√		√				√
Tourist behaviour			√									
Intention to visit				√	√				√	√		
Word of mouth								√			√	√
Re-visit intention								√	√		√	√
Moderator Variable (s)												
Customer Involvement			√						√			
Knowledge			√									
Prior Experience			√						√			
Time Pressure			√									

2.5. Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

2.5.1. Quality of Experience

In this study, quality of experience has been used to understand the quality of online sharing of travel experiences. Various leisure studies have supported the idea that the quality of experience is related to the psychological benefits that tourists derive from their leisure experiences (Driver, Brown & Peterson, 1991; Manfredo & Driver, 1996; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003; Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004). Along with this line of thinking, the notion of quality of experience is fulfilment of needs or motivations that lead tourists to share their travel experiences online (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Prentice, Witt & Hamer, 1998). As a result, the focus of this approach has been on satisfaction with the experience defined in terms of the degree to which desired and expected benefits/outcomes are being met rather than on the actual nature of experience (Patterson, Watson, Williams, & Roggenbuck, 1998). It is anticipated that understanding the psychological benefits attached to the consumption process will provide insights into tourist experience (Borrie & Birzell, 2001).

Following this benefit-based approach, tourists may gain a number of psychological benefits from the use of the five-phase experience model by Clawson and Knetsch (1966). Driver et al. (1991) believed benefits can occur with or without conscious awareness and can affect psychology and physiology of an individual, as well as the social, economic and environmental systems of which he or she is a part. Sarigöllü & Huang (2005) summarized studies on benefits from tourism and identified two measurement methods: direct questioning or indirect/inferential analysis, and destination specific or general. They proposed that benefits can be sought using either direct questioning or indirect/inferential analysis. Under the former approach, individuals can reliably sum up their travel experiences based on evaluation of their perceptions of desired activities. Under the latter approach, motivation of tourists is conceptualised as conduits to fulfil the desired psychological benefits. For this study, the indirect questioning approach is set out as the means to understand the people who feel that their real psychological benefits are being met.

Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) propose a motivation model to explain the psychological benefits associated with the motivation of tourists. Tourist experience is believed to emanate from the interplay between two motivational forces: a)

escaping from routine environments and b) searching for recreational opportunities (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987). Many tourism researchers, including Baker and Crompton (2000), Biran, Poria and Oren (2011), Chen and Chen (2010), Dunn Ross and Iso-Ahola (1991), E. Kang, Scott, Lee and Ballantyne (2012), Otto and Ritchie (1996), Prentice et al. (1998), Tian-Cole et al. (2002), Tian-Cole and Chancellor (2009), Tian-Cole and Crompton (2003), Tian-Cole and Illum (2006), Tian-Cole and Scott (2004) and Xu and Chan (2010a, 2010b) follow this approach. However, such studies were typically conducted through on-site evaluations. Research on psychological benefits sought by tourists in the forms of recollections has been fairly thin. As Tarrant and Manfredo (1994) and Walker, Hull IV and Roggenbuck (1998) suggested, psychological benefits also result from recollection of a recreational trip. Therefore, quality of online sharing of experiences in the present study is conceptualised using indirect/inferential approach, which focuses on psychological benefits/outcomes derived by tourists from sharing their travel experiences with others, after the trip. The following section provides relevant literature to illustrate the related concepts of psychological benefits derived from the activities, particularly in the context of online domain.

Psychological Benefits of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

In developing the measure for quality of online sharing of travel experiences, a necessary condition is to identify the domain. As psychological benefit is the attainment of motivation, this study adopts the 'uses and gratifications paradigm' originally developed and used by communications researchers to understand the motivations of tourists for sharing travel response (e.g., Dholakia, Bagozzi & Pearo, 2004; Ko, Cho & Roberts, 2005; Stafford, Stafford & Schkade, 2004). This theory has shown that psychological benefits motivate people to engage in certain media-use behaviours to fulfil intrinsic needs (Ko et al., 2005). Generally, this paradigm focuses on motives for media-use, factors that influence motives, and outcomes from media-related behaviour.

Motives for Sharing Information Online

A review of the business and tourism literature indicates there are a variety of experiential components that various researchers have identified to help understand customer/tourist motivation to share information online. As demonstrated in Table 2.3, some studies have been conducted to understand the motives of consumer/tourist to engage online and contribute content. Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002) claimed that the

individual who strives to seek mutual goals of the virtual community is seeking to meet functional needs, such as exchange of information or hedonic needs, in the creation and consumption of confluent experience through interaction. Furthermore, Dholakia et al. (2004) conducted a follow up study to understand how to deliver value desired by online participants. They introduced five experiential values for engaging in sharing information in online communities. The results showed that five values that may drive participation are: purposive value, self-discovery, maintaining interpersonal interconnectivity, social enhancement and entertainment value. Purposive value is a great driver of participation.

In the context of online tourism domain, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004a, 2004b) studied experiential benefits derived and the incentives for online travel community members to post and contribute. They found four basic fundamental benefits that drive the extent to which participants share in virtual travel communities: (1) functional benefits; (2) social benefits; (3) psychological benefits; and (4) hedonic benefits. Y. Huang et al. (2010) studied the underlying motivations and barriers to sharing of travel knowledge on social network sites. Eventually, seven motivation factors were identified. Motivations to contribute content online have also been studied by Gretzel et al. (2011). They suggest eight motivations for online content

sharing: (1) enjoyment; (2) social interaction; (3) documentation of experience; (4) incentives; (5) venting; (6) reciprocity; (7) altruism; and (8) concern for company. More recently, some tourism studies examined the context of online communications (e.g., Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Kah, Lee & Chung, 2010; Rong, Vu, Law & Li, 2012). Ip et al. (2012), for example, found significant differences between online experience sharers and non-online experience sharers in terms of demographic characteristics. Generally, younger online experience sharers were more willing to share their travel experiences with others than older online experience sharers.

Table 2.3. Classification of Consumers' Motivational Factors for Sharing Information on Internet Sites

Factor	Relevant Literature
Entertainment	Dholakia et al. (2004); Y. Huang et al. (2010); Papacharissi (2002).
Hedonic	Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002); Chung and Buhalis (2008); Gretzel et al. (2011); Kah et al. (2010); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004a, 2004b); Yoo and Gretzel (2008).
Novelty	Gretzel et al. (2011); Kah et al. (2010); Sparks, Bradley and Jennings (2011).
Social enhancement/benefits	Armstrong and Hagel (2000); Bronner and de Hoog (2011); Dholakia et al. (2004); Gretzel et al. (2011); Hsu, Ju, Yen and Chang (2007); Y. Huang et al. (2010); Kah et al. (2010); Wang and Fesenmaier, (2004a, 2004b).
Venting	Gretzel et al. (2011); Thorsten Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh and Gremler (2004); Yoo and Gretzel (2008).
Passing time	Bronner and de Hoog (2011); Papacharissi (2002).
Status	Gretzel et al. (2011); Y. Huang et al. (2010); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004a, 2004b).
Self-enhancement/discovery	Dholakia et al. (2004); Gretzel et al. (2011).
Helping vacationers	Bronner and de Hoog (2011); Gretzel et al. (2011); Yoo and Gretzel (2008).
Functional purpose	Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002); Dholakia et al. (2004); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004a, 2004b).
Escape	Kah et al. (2010).

The preceding literature review suggests that the fulfilment of motivations for sharing information online is regarded as psychological benefits after the consumption experience. Six experiential constructs are proposed as components of quality of online sharing of travel experiences. They are described in the following paragraphs.

A. Personal Relationship

Personal relationship refers to the establishment and maintenance of interaction with other people, such as in the form of social support, friendship and intimacy, in order to derive social benefits. Social network sites give people with similar experiences the

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opportunity to come together, extend meaningful personal relationships and communicate with each other in an interactive way. Previous studies have identified that the major benefit derived by participants from sharing experiences at such platforms is cure of loneliness, meeting like-minded others, and receiving companionship and social support (McKenna & Bargh, 1999). Therefore, this psychological benefit is considered to be important for this study.

B.   Status and Prestige

Status and prestige is the basic psychological benefit that an online experience sharer derives, by way of acceptance from and approval of others, and enhancement of social status within social network sites on account of one's contributions. Studies have identified that many participants join social network sites mainly to provide and receive information, as well as comment on others, for recognition by peers (Y. Huang et al., 2010; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004b), a benefit that seems to be very important to consider sharing of travel experience online.

C.   Hedonic/Enjoyment

Many tourists enjoy sharing their travel experiences and expertise with other tourists. Indeed, the post-trip sharing of travel information is often considered as one of the joys of travel (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). The hedonic perspective views tourists as pleasure seekers engaged in online sharing for enjoyment, fun, entertainment and excitement. These types of benefits have been proved to be important in tourist information sharing behaviour (Gretzel et al., 2011; Y. Huang et al., 2010; Kah et al., 2010; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004b). The environment of social network sites provides people a platform to come together and explore a new world of fantasy and entertainment where they can engage in sharing travel information (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004b). Accordingly, hedonic enjoyment in this study is conceptualised as a form of emotive stimulation, positive emotions closely affiliated with feeling good, enjoyment, excitement, happiness and enthusiasm derived from online sharing of travel experiences.

D. Novelty

Novelty (change from routine, escape, surprise and boredom alleviation) is often considered as one of the key experiential benefits derived from tourism experience (Kim, Ritchie & McCormick, 2012). Novelty is created when a product arouses

curiosity, provides novelty and/or satisfies a desire for knowledge (Williams & Soutar, 2009). In tourism, novelty and seeking new knowledge are significant benefits for contributing online content due to tourists' desire for exploratory, novelty seeking and variety seeking behaviour (Kah et al., 2010). Novelty is, thus, likely to be a key factor in the consumption of online sharing of travel experiences. In the present study, novelty refers to the excitement of new experiences generated through sharing of travel experiences online that had not been shared.

E. Venting

Venting at recollection stage emerges from unsatisfactory previous travel experiences (Thorsten Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Emotions such as sadness, anger and frustration felt after disappointing consumption experiences lead consumers to seek ways to mitigate the frustration and reduce anxiety as well as to feel catharsis (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008), which convert to psychological benefits. These benefits often drive online experience sharers to articulate their negative personal experiences (Gretzel et al., 2011).

F. Self-Discovery

Self-discovery refers to understanding and deepening of salient aspects of one's self through social interaction (Dholakia et al., 2004). McKenna and Bargh (1999) suggested that self-discovery is necessary to obtain access to social resources and to facilitate the fulfilment of one's future goal through interaction with others. In the context of social network sites, this action may help tourists to form, define and elaborate his/her own preferences, tastes and values (Dholakia et al., 2004).

In summary, as discussed above, quality of experience can be enhanced by satisfying the intrinsic needs of an individual. Six psychological benefits derived from online sharing of travel experiences are proposed, ranging from personal relationship to self-enhancement/discovery. Table 2.4 provides a list of these constructs and their definitions.

Table 2.4. Potential Constructs of the Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Construct Domains	Construct Definition	Relevant Literature
Personal Relationship	A feeling of connection with travel partners and/or friends and relatives gained through sharing of online travel experiences	Gretzel et al. (2011); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004b).
Status and Prestige	A feeling derived from enhancement of one's social status through interacting on Internet	Dholakia et al. (2004); Gretzel et al. (2011); Y. Huang et al. (2010); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004b)
Hedonic/Enjoyment	Pleasurable feelings that excite one through online sharing of travel experience	S. Huang et al. (2010); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004b)
Novelty	A psychological feeling of newness resulting from having a new experience	Dholakia et al. (2004); Gretzel et al. (2011); Kah et al. (2010)
Venting	Psychological feelings that mitigate the pervious travel experiences through sharing online	Gretzel et al. (2011)
Self-Enhancement/Discovery	A feeling that involves understanding and deepening of salient aspects of one's self through social interactions	Dholakia et al. (2004); Gretzel et al. (2011); Wang and Fesenmaier (2004a, 2004b)

2.6.   Customer Satisfaction

2.6.1.   Definitions and Conceptualisation

Customer satisfaction is a dynamic concept and has been conceptualised in many ways. Numerous researchers have viewed customer satisfaction as a process of evaluation of what is expected and what is perceived (Oliver, 2010). In this regard, satisfaction is perceived as the final result of all activities carried out during the

process of purchase and consumption, and not only of observation and or direct consumption of the product or service (Oliver, 2010). Hence, this approach to defining customer satisfaction is directed at understanding the cognitive processes involved in satisfaction evaluation (Parker & Mathews, 2001). A well-known paradigm that adopts the cognitive approach is the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver, 2010). According to this paradigm, satisfaction judgments by customers are the result of their perceptions of the difference between their perceptions of performance and their predictions (or expectations) of performance. Positive disconfirmation leads to increase in satisfaction, whereas negative disconfirmation results in the opposite.

However, there has been an increasing recognition among researchers that a purely expectancy-disconfirmation model is inadequate in explaining consumer satisfaction because the model is primarily focused on people as cognitive beings. Some researchers have proposed adding consumption emotions to customer satisfaction and have suggested that both positive and negative emotions significantly impact satisfaction (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1993; Westbrook, 1987; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). According to this approach, "satisfaction is a fulfilment response of the consumer; it is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service

itself, that provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment, including levels of under or over-fulfilment" (Oliver, 1997, p. 13). When consumption emotions are treated as a component of the model in this way, the underlying assumption is that satisfaction is a cognitive process that contains affective elements. Cognitive response refers to objective evaluations of product/service attributes, whereas affective response refers to subjective psychological feelings felt by consumers during the consumption processes (Oliver, 1993). This definition has been supported by many researchers, including del Bosque and Martín (2008), Edvardsson (2005) and de Rojas and Camarero (2008).

2.6.2.   Customer Satisfaction Research in Tourism

The concept of customer satisfaction is also well documented in tourism and travel literature. A review of literature indicates that there has been a significant increase in the number of studies on measurement of customer satisfaction in tourism related fields by using different satisfaction frameworks. As seen in Meng, Tepanon and Uysal (2008), nine theories on satisfaction framework in tourism field have been identified in the literature, among which expectancy-disconfirmation model and

equity theory have received the widest acceptance. The former (expectancy-disconfirmation model) has been mentioned in the previous section, while the latter occurs when tourists receive more value than what they spent in terms of price, time and effort (Jang & Feng, 2007). Perceived value refers to "the overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). Value is often accepted as a variable distinct from satisfaction (Williams & Soutar, 2009), but the equity theory suggests that value could be an appropriate measure to gauge satisfaction (Oliver & Swan, 1989).

Furthermore, assessment of tourist satisfaction has been attempted in literature, using other terminologies. For instance, some researchers have examined tourist satisfaction with attribute performance (e.g., Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Neal & Gursoy, 2008); others have employed the term to reflect satisfaction with consumption experience (e.g., Kim & Severt, 2011; Um, Chon & Ro, 2006); and some others have used it to test both attribute performance and consumption experience (e.g., Chi & Qu, 2008; Yu & Goulden, 2006). Admittedly, when different researchers use the same terminology, they are not necessarily referring to the same thing. The current study adopts the definition proposed by Baker & Crompton (2000) who defined satisfaction as a tourist's psychological state of mind after a consumption

experience. They argue "satisfaction is influenced by the social-psychological state

tourist brings to a site (mood, disposition and needs) and by extraneous events (for

example, climate and social group interactions, etc.) that are beyond the provider's

control, as well as by the programme or site attributes that suppliers can control" (p.

787).

Satisfaction with the Destination

An understanding of tourist satisfaction must be included a basic parameter used to

evaluate the experience of destination's performance (Schofield, 2000). Therefore,

the number of empirical investigations to measure tourist satisfaction with the

destination has also increased over the past decade. One of the earliest studies of

tourist satisfaction was done by Pizam, Neumann and Reichel (1978). They surveyed

685 tourists vacationing at Cape Cod, Massachusetts, by using

expectancy-disconfirmation model. A factor-analytical approach produced eight

dimensions that related to the tourist satisfaction with the destination, namely, (1)

beach opportunities; (2) cost; (3) hospitality; (4) eating and drink facilities; (5)

accommodation facilities; (6) campground facilities; (7) environment; and (8) extent

of commercialization. However, they stressed that the results were not universally

applicable since the nature of influencing factors depends on the destination area, e.g., attractions, weather, and so on.

A study by Danaher and Arweiler (1996) covering 189 tourists' satisfaction towards New Zealand found that four factors that contributed to the overall satisfaction were: (a) transportation; (b) accommodation; (c) activities; and (d) attractions. Another study of 522 Japanese tourists visiting Hong Kong, Heung and Qu (2000) found that accessibility, convenience and accommodation and food were ranked top three in terms of destination satisfaction items whereas prices and commodities were ranked among the last.

Kozak (2001, 2002, 2003) and Kozak and Rimmington (2000) conducted a series of studies to investigate tourist satisfaction with the destination. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) surveyed 220 British tourists who travelled to Mallorca, Spain. Four satisfaction factors were identified through exploratory factor analysis. The factors' labels were destination attractiveness, tourist attraction and facilities, availability of English language, and facilities and services at the destination airport. Moreover, their study showed satisfaction with various components of destination to be critical to explain the level of overall satisfaction. Kozak (2001) used the same instrument to

compare the satisfaction levels of two nationalities visiting Mallorca. The results showed that British tourists were more likely to be satisfied with almost all satisfaction items than German tourists. Kozak (2003) conducted a follow up study to determine the importance of each destination attribute on the level of tourists' satisfaction and post-visit behaviour, among four different groups of tourists visiting Mallorca (Spain) and Mugla (Turkey). A total of 2,089 questionnaires were completed, and the findings yielded eight factors in relation to tourist satisfaction in which it was in accord with Kozak (2001). The findings suggested that the impact of satisfaction factor on the overall satisfaction, intentions of recommendation and repeat visits is influenced by multiple factors and is different for different tourist groups and destinations.

Alegre and Cladera (2006) investigated the effect of re-visit intention and tourist satisfaction with the destination on the rate of repeat visits. Although the central theme of their study was not to understand the underlying dimensions of satisfaction with the destination, their findings indicated five aspects of satisfaction with the destination attributes: (1) sunshine and beaches; (2) prices; (3) social; (4) hospitality; and (5) tranquility. In addition, they found satisfaction with each destination attribute positively associated with the overall tourist satisfaction.

In their study of international tourists' satisfaction with Singapore, Hui et al. (2007) assessed the relationship between satisfaction with the destination and post-visit behaviour, using a conceptual model that combined the concepts of expectancy-disconfirmation framework and service quality framework. Eight satisfaction factors emerged from their findings: (1) people; (2) overall convenience; (3) price; (4) accommodation and food; (5) commodities; (6) attractions; (7) culture; and (8) climate and change. Consistent with previous studies, the likelihood of tourists revisiting and recommending are positively related to the level of their satisfaction with the destination.

Chi and Qu (2008) identified seven underlying dimensions of tourist satisfaction with the destination in their integrated study. The results showed that the components of satisfaction with the destination include shopping, activities and events, lodging, accessibility, attractions, environment and dining. In addition, the findings indicated satisfaction with the destination is a direct antecedent of overall tourist satisfaction which also serves as empirical evidence for the present study.

In summary, as seen in the above discussion, previous studies have identified a variety

of factors that contribute to tourist satisfaction with the destination. Price, accommodation, transportation and attraction were commonly found across destinations. On the other hand, other destination attributes, such as beach and climate, etc., seem to be unique features of particular destinations.

Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

Tourist experience is commonly described as a process involving progression through a series of stages. Although this fact is well established in the travel and tourism industry, most previous studies concentrate on the idea that satisfaction is primarily achieved after a service is experienced and focus on the overall opinion of tourists on the general experience at a given point in time. To better understand the entire satisfaction, tourists' satisfaction with various phases of the trip should be examined because each phase of the trip is likely to have a significant impact on satisfaction with entire travel experience (Neal & Gursoy, 2008).

Only few studies have examined how satisfaction with various phases affects tourist satisfaction with entire travel experience (Sirgy, 2010). One of the foundations for this line of research is the theoretical framework of Clawson and Knetsch (1966), who

divided recreational experience into five phases: anticipation and planning, travels to the destination, on-site, travel back, and recollection. They postulated that various degrees of satisfaction can be achieved through each of these phases, and that each phase is important for determining the entire satisfaction with a leisure experience. This basic premise is that the entire leisure experience is functionally related to satisfaction with all of the domains and sub-domains of leisure. Satisfaction with entire leisure experience is thought to be on top of leisure satisfaction. More specifically, satisfaction with entire leisure experience is influenced by satisfaction with a particular phase of experience. That is, the greater the satisfaction with a particular phase (e.g., anticipation, travel to the site, on-site behaviour, return travel and recollection) is, the greater is the satisfaction with the entire leisure experience. However, the model has not been empirically tested.

Neal et al. (1999) made an initial attempt to empirically examine how various phases of any tourist experience affect tourist satisfaction, based on the model suggested by Clawson and Knetsch (1966). They claimed that evaluation of tourist satisfaction can be studied at various phases, and indicated two satisfaction judgments constructs: satisfaction with each aspect of travel phases, and satisfaction with travel experiences. The former is the judgment (good or bad) on the tourism products consumed during

travel phases (pre-trip, en route, destination and return home), whereas the latter includes the totality of the consumption process, which not only involves the simple cognitive evaluation of service/product attributes themselves, but also extends to the psychological value tourists attach to the act of consumption and their motives beyond the consumption of tourism products (Baker & Crompton, 2000). They further hypothesised that satisfaction with pre-trip, en route, on-site, return, and trip reflection play a significant role in determining satisfaction with travel/tourism experiences. The results show that satisfaction with each phase of the model positively leads to satisfaction with travel/tourism experiences.

Neal, Uysal and Sirgy (2007) conducted a follow-up study to examine the moderating effects of length of stay. Consistent with the study by Neal et al. (1999), their study showed that satisfaction with travel experiences is a function of satisfaction with the individual aspect of the five-phase experience model that makes up the experience. No moderating effects of length of stay in the relationship between satisfaction with each aspect and satisfaction with travel experiences were found. Furthermore, they found that satisfaction with trip reflection has stronger influence than satisfaction with the destination to explain satisfaction with travel experiences.

To sum up, findings of previous studies have fostered research that has led to the notion that tourist satisfaction depends not only on the overall evaluation from a single aspect but is also determined by the global travel experiences (de Rojas & Camarero, 2008). Hence, measuring satisfaction at the destination alone may not accurately capture tourists' satisfaction with the entire travel experience. A more appropriate strategy for understanding satisfaction would be to examine tourists' satisfaction at different phases. Based on the above arguments, this study defines satisfaction with the entire travel experience as the tourists' post-consumption summary evaluation of the totality of the travel experience. In other words, satisfaction with the entire travel experience is the product of his or her satisfaction with each stage of the trip.

2.7. Research Hypotheses

2.7.1. Self-Congruity and Satisfaction with the Destination

Self-congruity has been widely recognised as an important construct in explaining tourist behaviour (Lee & Back, 2009). Most prior studies have empirically tested the

effects on pre-trip behaviour (Back, 2005), such as travel motivation (Murphy et al., 2007), destination choice (Beerli et al., 2007) and travel intention (Litvin & Goh, 2002; Hung & Petrick, 2011). Although little attention has been paid to post-visit behaviour, tourism literature nevertheless says that self-congruity favourably affects tourist satisfaction with destination. For instance, Chon (1992) studied the direct effects of self-congruity on tourist satisfaction with a destination, and found a significant relationship between self-congruity and tourist satisfaction. Likewise, Bosnjak et al. (2011), in their study on destination loyalty, found that the greater is the match between the tourist self-image and the destination image, the greater is the satisfaction perceived by the tourist. As Sirgy and Su (2000) stated, an individual has a need for self-consistency and often behaves in ways consistent with their personal identity. As a result, self-congruity will influence tourists' overall evaluation of the destination during and after consumption.

More specifically, when a tourist perceives a small gap between his or her self image and the destination image, high congruence occurs. Such a situation would enhance the tourist's self-consistency need by maintaining and strengthening a positive self-image. Thus, the tourist would be highly satisfied. However, if the situation involves low self-congruity, a great discrepancy between self-image and destination

image will be found. In this case, tourist satisfaction would be low because the situation threatens the self-consistency of the tourist. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. Self-congruity has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction with the destination.

2.7.2.   Functional Congruity and Satisfaction with the Destination

Numerous tourism researchers (e.g., del Bosque & Martín, 2008; Hui et al., 2007; Kozak, 2001, 2003) have found that utilitarian attributes of a destination are significant predictors of tourist satisfaction with the destination. This is in accord with previous studies which showed that satisfaction with the destination is positively influenced by the perceived outcome of the experience at a destination (Chon & Olsen, 1991). More recent studies also found that functional congruity of a destination can directly affect tourist satisfaction. Tourists feel satisfied with the destinations that have basic attributes compatible with their perceptions. For instance, Bosnjak et al. (2011) suggested that tourists' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a destination can be assessed by examining their evaluation of the actual performance of the destination.

They found that tourists' perceptions of destination attributes have significant impact on their satisfaction. Drawing on these studies and the definition of functional congruity, this study posits that tourists who perceive higher utilitarian functions of a destination are more likely to be satisfied. This is because the greater the functional congruity, the greater is the likelihood that utilitarian attributes of destination will satisfy needs of tourists. The following hypothesis is, therefore, suggested:

H2: Functional congruity has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction with the destination.

2.7.3.   Quality of and Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Satisfaction is frequently influenced by other people (Fournier & Mick, 1999). With the emergence of social network sites, interaction among tourists has been further facilitated, enabling them to share their travel-related experiences with more people (Litvin et al., 2008). Some tourism researchers (e.g., Guenzi & Pelloni, 2004; Mossberg, 2007; Wu, 2007) have suggested that this posting and interacting process is

a critical aspect in determining tourist satisfaction. Ryan (2002) also contended that satisfaction can be induced by sharing of travel experiences among tourists after a trip. This reasoning was supported by Tian-Cole et al. (2002), who suggested that tourists' satisfaction was "a summation state of the psychological outcomes/benefits they have experienced over time" (p. 4). Likewise, previous studies have found that psychological benefits gained from travel experience lead to increased satisfaction. For instance, Tian-Cole and Scott (2004) found that satisfaction is largely a function of types of benefits tourists experience during their activities. That is, the stronger the psychological benefits that tourists obtain from their activities, the more positive is the attitude they are likely to have towards satisfaction with particular activities. Thus, the following proposition concerning the relationship between quality of and satisfaction with online sharing of experiences is advanced:

H3. Quality of online sharing of experiences has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences.

2.7.4. Two Phases of Satisfaction and Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

Satisfaction can be captured at each phase of tourist experience (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). As described earlier, satisfaction with the entire travel experience is thought to be derived from satisfaction with pre-trip, en-route, on-site, return home and recollection. The present study borrows the concept from the bottom-up spillover theory which posits that life satisfaction is an aggregate of individual domains in life. Satisfaction with well-being is influenced by satisfaction with different aspects of each domain. Many studies have been conducted on various consumption related experiences, using such an approach. For example, some studies have found that satisfaction with the trip contribute to satisfaction with travel life, which in turn affects satisfaction with life (Sirgy, Kruger, Lee & Yu, 2011). Based on the bottom-up spillover theory, it is hypothesised that tourists' satisfaction with the entire travel experience is directly influenced by their satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences.

Findings of Neal et al. (1999, 2007) provide empirical support for this relationship. The authors developed a model to explain how various stages of any travel experience affect tourist satisfaction based on the five-phase experience model of Clawson and Knetsch (1966). The results show that satisfaction with each stage of the model positively leads to satisfaction with travel experiences. Satisfaction with travel

experiences stems from satisfaction with individual aspects of the five phases experience model that make up the experience. With reference to the theory of bottom-up spillover in the quality of life literature and the empirical studies of Neal et al. (1999, 2007), it is reasonable to argue that satisfaction of tourists with the destination and online experience sharing play an important role in their satisfaction with entire travel experience. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4. Satisfaction with the destination has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

H5. Satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

The research model and hypotheses are shown in Figure 2.1.
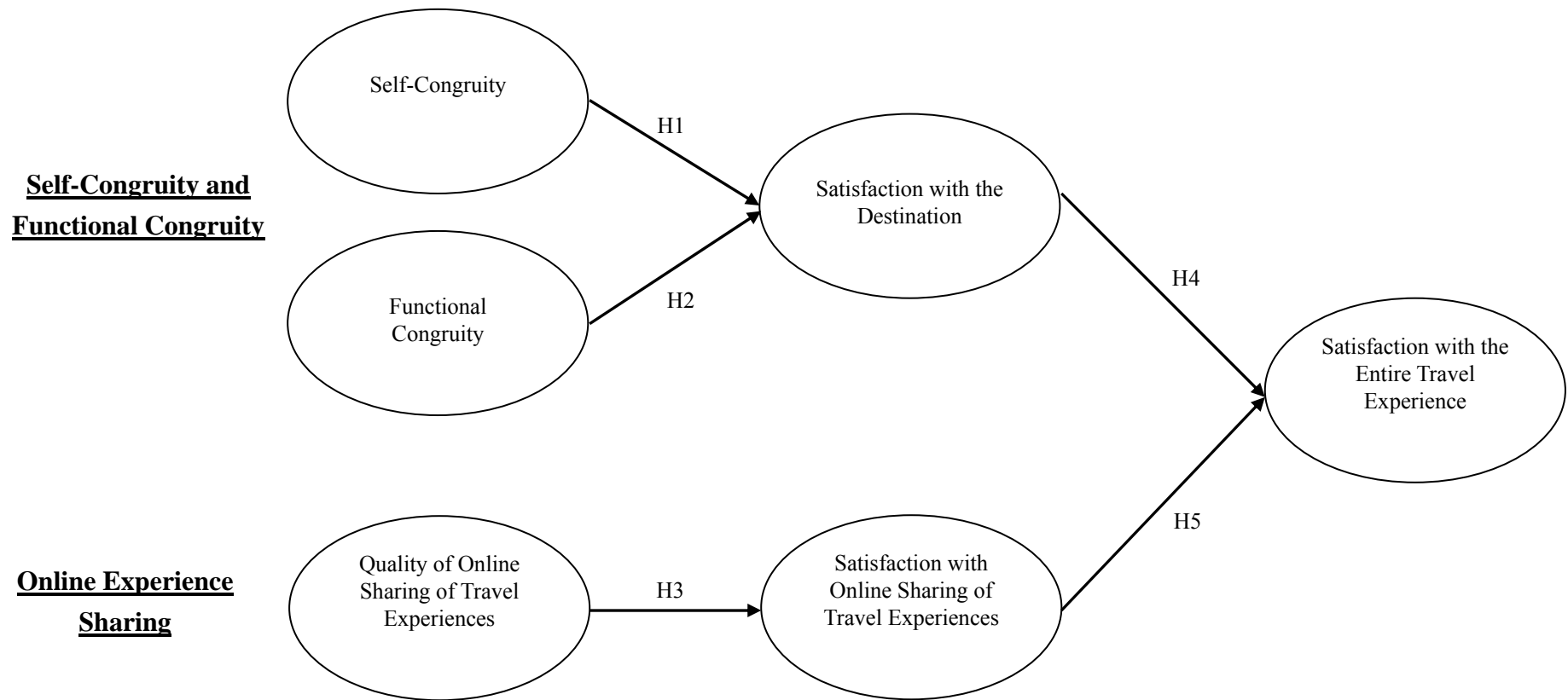
Figure 2.1. Research Model

2.8.   Chapter Summary

This chapter reviews prior research related to key constructs used in this research. The literature review consists of six parts: (1) self-concept; (2) destination image; (3) self-congruity and functional congruity; (4) post-visit quality of experience; (5) satisfaction; and (6) research hypotheses. These areas provide insights into research objectives regarding alternative frameworks for understanding satisfaction. Specifically, a multi-phased framework of tourist satisfaction is proposed. Tourist satisfaction is conceptualised and operationalised to include three measures: satisfaction with the destination, satisfaction with online experience sharing and satisfaction with entire travel experience. Self-congruity and functional congruity are key determinants of tourist satisfaction with the destination. Six psychological benefits relating to online sharing of travel experiences were also identified.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1.   Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to achieve the objectives of this study (Chapter 1). The chapter begins with a discussion of the research design and the research framework employed. The following section provides an explanation of scale development, sample design and selection and data collection. Data analysis methods are presented in the final section of the chapter.

3.2.   Research Design

This study examines the relationships among self-congruity, functional congruity, quality of online sharing of experiences and three measures of tourist satisfaction. To probe the relationships among the research constructs, a cross-sectional research was conducted with quantitative approach. According to Jennings (2001), a quantitative approach is more appropriate than a qualitative approach for examining relationships among variables, especially for empirical studies. While longitudinal studies can help

identify cause-and-effect relationships and help understand the complexity of travel behaviours and effects over time (Jennings, 2001), due to limited resources and time, a cross-sectional study is adopted for this research project.

University students were selected as the target population for several reasons. First, university students of today are travelers of tomorrow. An understanding of travel experiences and behaviours of students is likely to give some indications of how best needs of future travelers can be met. Second, university students are technology savvy. They spend more time online than with other media and are more likely than the general population to share their travel experiences online due to having grown up with the evolving technological market (Rong et al., 2012). Third, they often use internet to manage social online interactions and networks while returning home (Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2010). Last but not least, they are respondents with similar demographic and educational backgrounds, thereby reducing overall error variance (Levy, Getz & Hudson, 2011). Therefore, university students were chosen as the sample population for this study.

3.3. Research Framework

As shown in Figure 3.1, in the first stage, a thorough review of the relevant literature was conducted to specify the domain of each construct and the relationships among constructs. Results obtained from the literature review were evaluated and transformed into the proposed conceptual model. Expert panel opinions were then invited to ensure the items derived from the literature were appropriate and relevant.

The second stage involved conducting a pilot study to fine-tune the measurement instrument. Based on results of the pilot study, the instrument was refined for reliability and validity improvement. A cross-sectional survey among Hong Kong university students who had travelled abroad for pleasure for more than one day in the past six months and had shared travel experiences online after their trips was conducted, using the finalised questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences and LISREL. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used for item reduction and to identify the dimensionality of the important research concepts. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the goodness-of-fit of each measurement mode. Finally, structural equation modelling was used to estimate the hypothesised relationship among latent variables and the overall goodness-of-fit of the proposed structural model. Figure 3.1 summarises the methodological procedure of this study.

Figure 3.1. Research Procedure
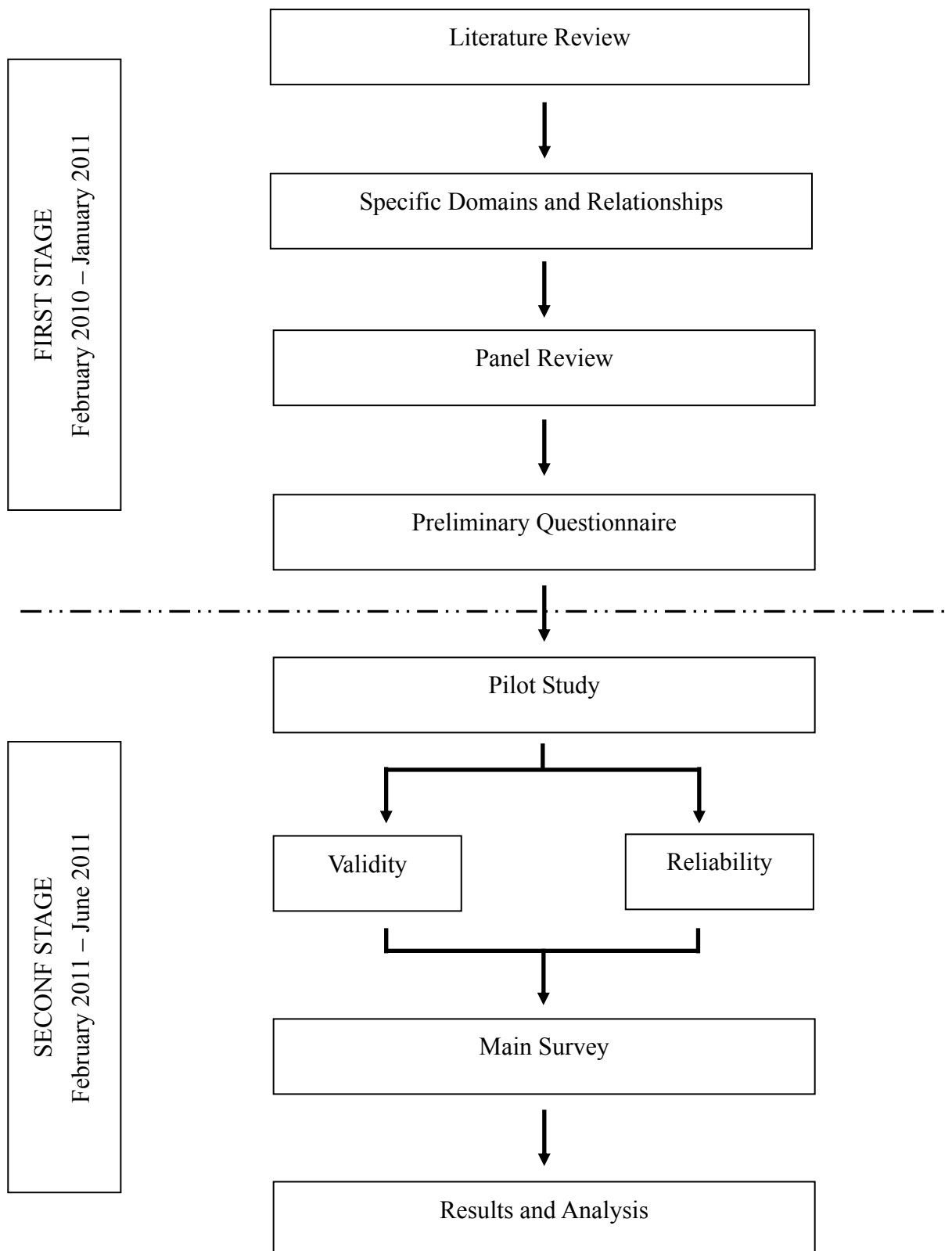
Table 3.1. Summary of the Methodological Procedures

	First Stage	
	Expert Panel	
Sample	▪ Four faculty members and ten research students	
Data collection period	▪ Early January 2011	
Purpose	▪ To clarify the items and provide suggestions as to how to reinforce the representative-ness of the developed constructs	
Expected outcome	▪ Conceptualisation of the research model and constructs	
	▪ Consolidation of the preliminary measurement	
	▪ Initial ideas about the relationships in the proposed model	

	Second Stage	
	Pilot Study	**Main Survey**
Survey type	▪ Web-based survey	▪ On-site survey
Purpose	▪ To explore the reliability and validity of the preliminary questionnaire	▪ To collect data to validate the research model
Sample	▪ Hong Kong university students who have travelled abroad for pleasure and shared their experience online within the past six months	▪ Hong Kong university students who have travelled abroad for pleasure and shared their experience online within the past six months
Sample size	▪ 100	▪ 500
Sampling procedure	▪ Snowball sampling	▪ Quota sampling
Data collection period	▪ February 2011	▪ April to June 2011
Data analysis	▪ Descriptive analysis, reliability analysis and EFA	▪ Descriptive analysis, CFA, and SEM
Expected outcome	▪ A valid and reliable survey instrument for assessing the proposed constructs via the main survey in the research model	▪ A verified model representing the relationships among self-congruity, functional congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and three measures of tourist satisfaction

3.4.   Scale Development

To develop a measurement instrument for all constructs in this study, a multi-stage development procedure proposed by Churchill (1979) was used (Figure 3.2). Hinkins's (1995) recommendations for improving the scale development process also provided guidance for the present research. Additionally, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) guidelines for established measurement reliability as well as previous scale development studies also serve as references (e.g., Kim et al., 2012; J. Huang & Hsu, 2010; Hung & Petrick, 2011; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). The following sections describe the procedures carried out within the overall stages in the process of scale construction.

Domain Specifications

The preliminary domains for self-congruity, functional congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and three measures of tourist satisfaction were explained in detail, as follows:

- Self-Congruity

Self-congruity is defined as the matching process between destination image and tourist self-image (Sirgy & Su, 2000). It is operationalised as a multi-dimensional construct with four types of congruities, namely, actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity.

- Functional Congruity

Functional congruity is defined as tourists' utilitarian evaluation of a destination (Bosnjak et al., 2011).

- Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Quality of experience is defined from a leisure perspective as the psychological benefits derived from a recreation engagement (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004). It is conceptualised as the psychological benefits derived by tourists from sharing their travel experiences online after the trip. This benefits based approach suggests that leisure activities are a means for the benefits they convey.

- Satisfaction with the Destination

Satisfaction with the destination is defined by S. Huang et al. (2010) as tourists' evaluation of their personal experiences during their visit to the destination.

- Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Experiences

Satisfaction with online sharing of experiences is defined as the affective responses that a tourist has towards the sharing of travel experiences online (Tian-Cole et al., 2002).

- Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

Satisfaction with the entire travel experience is defined as tourists' post-consumption evaluation of the totality of the travel experience (Otto & Ritchie, 1996).

Generation of a Sample of Items

The second step is to generate items that capture each of the constructs, as specified. The instrument for the present study consisted of six constructs: self-congruity, functional congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, satisfaction with the destination, satisfaction with online sharing of experiences, and satisfaction with the entire travel experience. Extensive search of relevant literature was used to establish the basic theoretical foundation and definition of each construct. Emphasis in the literature search was to discover how the variables have been defined and how many dimensions or components they contained. Based on the results of literature search, functional congruity was conceptualized as a formative construct. The remaining constructs were conceptualized as reflective measures. The items used to measure quality of online sharing of experiences were specifically developed for this study. The items of other five constructs were adapted from existing instruments. The wordings of some items were modified to fit the context of this study.

Purify the Measures

The initial item pool generated from literature search was first refined by an expert panel. The primary objective of the expert panel was to ensure that the items represent the constructs being studied. The experts were asked to clarify the items and provide

suggestions as to how to reinforce the representative-ness of the developed constructs. As a result, any irrelevant and unimportant items can be deleted. In this study, a group of fourteen experts (four faculty members and ten research students) at School of Hotel and Tourism Management of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University were invited to review the measurements in early January, 2011, and the findings were presented in later sections.

Reliability and Validity

The fourth and final step in the procedure of instrument development was to assess reliability and validity. For this purpose, a pilot study was conducted and empirical data were collected. Since reliability and validity are the primary concerns in developing reliable and valid measurement, the following paragraphs give a brief discussion of reliability and validity.

- Reliability

Reliability refers to "the degree to which measures are free from error and, therefore,

yield consistent results" (Zikmund, 2000, p. 280). Zikmund (2000) proposed two methods to assess reliability; one is test-retest, which involves administering the same scale or measure to the same respondent at two separate times to test for stability, and the second is internal consistency, which concerns the homogeneity of the measure. Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006) state that using the method of internal consistency is more common, which applies to consistency among the variables in a summated scale. To measure internal consistency of the entire scale, Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used measure, because of the higher degree of sensitivity it offers over its alternatives (Nunnally, 1978). Cronbach's alpha (reliability) can be assessed at two levels: item reliability and construct reliability (Hair et al., 2006). Item reliability refers to "the amount of variances in an item due to underlying construct rather than an error and can be obtained by squaring the factor loading" (Chau, 1997, p. 324). Construct reliability indicates the degree to which an observed instrument reflects an underlying factor (Nusair & Hua, 2010). Generally speaking, low coefficients of items imply low internal consistency in measuring the construct while high coefficients of items indicate high correlation among all items, thereby leading to high internal consistency. Both item reliability and construct reliability coefficients above 0.70 are considered as satisfactory evidence for exploratory research because more than half of the variances are explained (Nunnally,

1978).

- Validity

Having ensured that a scale instrument has satisfactory reliability, the next process is scale validity. Validity is "the extent to which a scale or set of measures accurately represents the concept of interest" (Hair et al., 2006, p. 137). Validity is accomplished when the research objectives and the theoretical hypotheses are adequately supported by the empirical data set. Although there are various types of validity, this study tested only three most widely accepted forms: content validity, criterion validity and construct validity.

a. Content (Face) Validity

Content validity is the "assessment of the correspondence of the variables to be included in a summated scale and its conceptual definition" (Hair et al., 2006, p. 136). This form of validity, also known as face validity, subjectively assesses the correspondence between individual items and the concept through a systemic review of related literature and through expert panel. Content (face) validity is recommended

to be established prior to any theoretical analysis (Hair et al., 2006). Without prior understanding of every item's content and meaning, it is impossible to reflect and precisely specify a measurement theory. Therefore, content (face) validity is the most important validity test.

b. Criterion Validity

Criterion validity refers to "the ability of some measure to correlate with other measures of the same construct" (Zikmund, 2000, p. 282). Criterion validity is also classified as either concurrent validity or predictive validity. These two measures differ only on the basis of a time dimension. The former method is to measure correlation with a criterion measure taken at the same time, while the latter method is to predict a future event. Although criterion validity can be assessed by two different methods, it is suggested that concurrent validity is preferable since its nature is to provide a more rigorous empirical test of the relationships between measures under concern rather than the time relationships between them (DeVellis, 2003). To measure criterion validity, correlation coefficients are widely adopted.

c. Construct Validity

Construct validity is established when a set of measurement items actually reflects the theoretical latent construct that those items are designed to measure (Hair et al., 2006). Construct validity is to provide empirical evidence to match with the theoretical logic of the concepts. In other words, it deals with accuracy of the measurement. Typically, construct validity is assessed through convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is synonymous with criterion validity; it refers to "the degree to which two measures of the same concept are correlated" (Hair et al., 2006). Generally, high correlations indicate that the scale is reflecting its intended concept. Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which two conceptually similar concepts differ from each other (Hair et al., 2006). Contrary to convergent validity, a low correlation indicated good discriminant validity.

Figure 3.2. Instrument Development Procedure (Churchill, 1979)
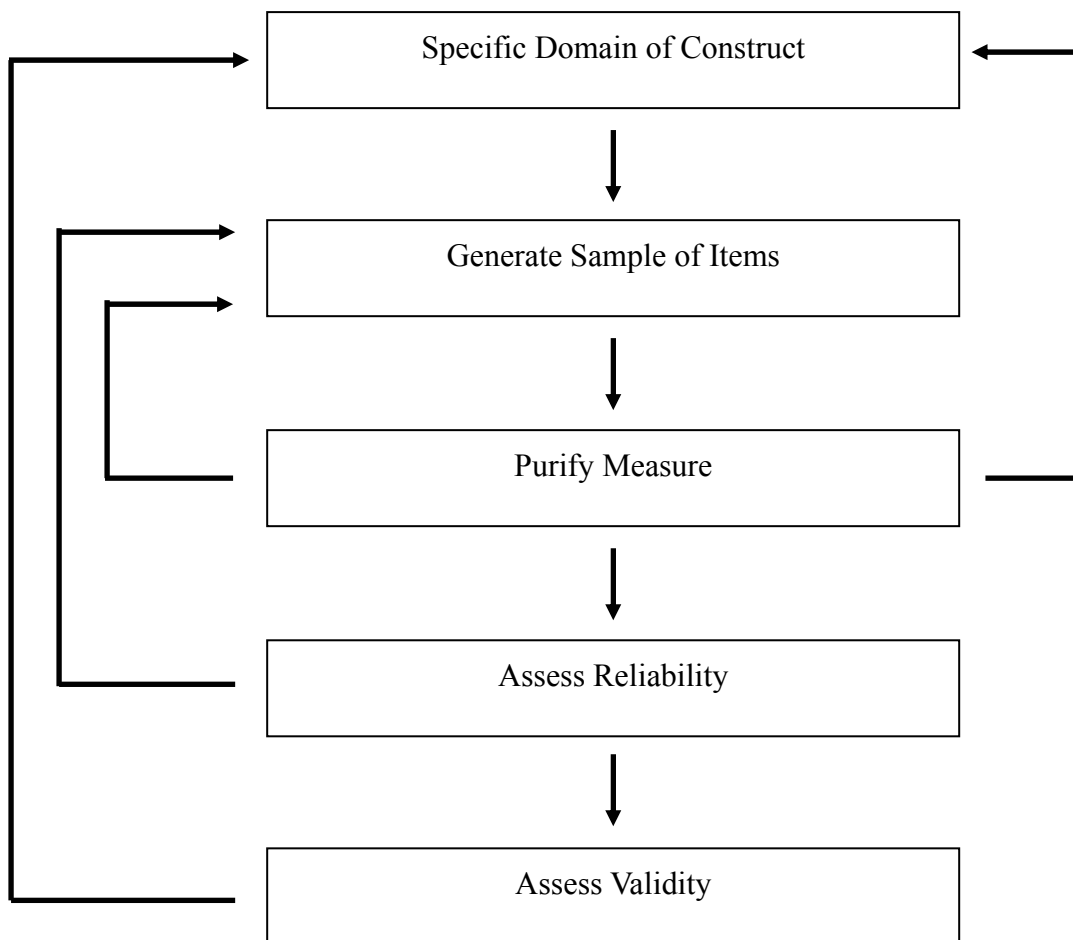
First Stage

3.5. Panel of Experts

A jury of experts was used to refine measurement items for all constructs to ensure

content validity (DeVellis, 2003). The expert panels consisted of four faculty

members (content experts) and ten research students (lay experts) at School of Hotel and Tourism Management of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Measurement items were first evaluated by ten research students. The measurement items that survived were then reviewed by four faculty members.

Second Stage

3.6.   Pilot Study

To ensure validity, reliability and comprehensiveness of the results, a pilot test was conducted on the preliminary questionnaire. University students at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University who had travelled abroad for pleasure and had shared their travel experiences online within the past six months were considered the target population. Data were collected through an online survey conducted in February, 2011. Numerous studies have concluded that online survey, compared with other survey methods, is a fast and cost effective means of collecting customer information (Jansen, Corley & Jansen, 2007). Another main reason for using online survey is the nature of this study, which is focused on the impact of quality of sharing of travel experiences through the Internet.

The online questionnaire was administered by the researcher with the online survey managed by SurveyMonkey (http://www.surveymonkey.com/). The sample was selected using the snowball sampling method on university students through Facebook, which is widely used as a primary medium for communication, experience exchange and sharing by university students. The potential respondents were first asked two screening questions, namely, "*Did you travel abroad for pleasure for more than one day in the past six months?*" and "*Did you share travel experiences (e.g., photos, videos and texts, etc.) online after the trip?*" to filter out irrelevant samples. The questionnaire consisted of nine sections: screening questions, trip profile, self-congruity, functional congruity, satisfaction with the destination, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, satisfaction with online sharing of experiences, satisfaction with the entire travel experience, and demographic variables. Subsequently, 191 responses were obtained, of which 105 completed questionnaires were used for data analyses. A reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis were carried out to fine-tune the instrument for the main survey (see Chapter Five). Any problems and misinterpretations of questions that occur in the pilot study are used to improve the questionnaire in terms of both its clarity and legibility.

3.7.   Main Survey

3.7.1.   Sample Size

A significant issue in sampling is to determine the proper sample size. With regard to the sample size, one rule of thumb is that the minimum sample size should have at least five times as many cases as the number of variables to be analysed (Hair, 1995). Hoyle (1995) recommended a sample size of 100 to 200. Schumacker (2010) surveyed the literature and found sample sizes of 250 to 500 having been used in many articles. Hair et al. (2006) recommended a sample size of 200, as 200 would provide a sound basis for estimation. In addition, they suggest that as the sample size becomes larger than 400, the test becomes too sensitive. However, structural equation modelling usually requires large sample sizes although it is difficult to determine how large a sample is needed. Based on the literature, sample sizes in the range of 100–400 are suggested. As a result, a sample size of 500 is used in this study to ensure reliable results.

3.7.2. Sample Design and Survey Procedure

The target population of this study is Hong Kong university students who have travelled abroad for pleasure and shared travel experiences online, whether through texts, photos or videos, with other users, within six months after the travel. To gain sufficient, qualified samples from each university in Hong Kong, and to ensure comparability of the samples, target respondents were selected based on quota sampling. The proportion of students from each university was determined on the basis of the total number of university students in Hong Kong, provided by The University Grants Committee (2011) (see Table 3.2).

Four trained research assistants were sent to eight major universities in Hong Kong to collect data from April to June, 2011. Eight universities in Hong Kong were chosen because they are government funded and represent the higher education level in Hong Kong. These universities are The University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Lingnan University and The Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Respondents who were waiting in the public area in each university (i.e. canteens and main entrances, etc.) were invited to fill in the questionnaire. Two screening questions were asked to verify that the respondents had travelled abroad and had shared travel experiences online within six months before going through the questionnaire.

The questionnaires in the main survey were distributed by hand with the help of research assistants. This helps improve response rates because research assistants are able to briefly introduce the research topic and the rationale of the survey. If the respondents do not clearly understand the meaning of the questionnaire, research assistants are able to explain the questionnaire, so that the problems and misunderstandings can be minimized.

To encourage research participation, the researcher provided a small compensation to each participant. All respondents received a $10 cash coupon when the surveys were handed out. As an additional incentive, five external harddisks were given via a random drawing from the pool of those who returned questionnaires.

Table 3.2. Quota Sampling Based on University Students in Hong Kong

University	Population (Student Headcount) [a]	Percentage	Target Sample Size	Expected Number of Respondents from Each University
The University of Hong Kong	13,302	18.78%		94
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	13,510	19.07%		95
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	7,197	10.16%		51
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	13,987	19.75%		99
City University of Hong Kong	10,126	14.30%	500	71
Hong Kong Baptist University	5,166	7.29%		36
The Hong Kong Institute of Education	5,248	7.41%		37
Lingnan University	2,290	3.23%		16
Total	70,826	100%		500

[a] Full time student

3.8.   Data Analysis

3.8.1.   Analysis Framework

Raw data were entered in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 18.0 (SPSS) for

statistical processing. Descriptive analysis was used to examine for all variables of

interest. Measurement models of major concepts in the hypothesised model were

validated using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis

(CFA). After the latent variables in major concepts were identified, the overall

measurement model was assessed by using confirmatory factor analysis. The

hypotheses were assessed using structural equation modelling (SEM).

3.8.2.   Analysis of the Main Survey

- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The primary purpose of EFA is to define the underlying structure of variables in the

analysis (Hair et al., 2006). EFA is to explore the data and provide information about

how many factors are needed to best represent the data. With EFA, all measured

variables are related to each factor by a factor loading estimate. A general consensus is

that when each measured variable loads highly on only one factor and has smaller

loadings on other factors (i.e. loading<0.40) (Hair et al., 2006).

However, EFA is not a robust method since EFA, by nature, is a data driven approach

for identifying (rather than confirming). It explains the covariance among items, not a

theoretically driven approach, and so the factor can only be labelled after EFA is

executed. EFA can be performed without understanding how many factors really exist

and which variables belong to which constructs. In this regard, Costello and Osborne (2005) suggested that EFA is best employed to be associated with CFA that "can allow researchers to test hypotheses via inferential techniques, and can provide more informative analytic options" (p. 8).

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The purpose of CFA is to statistically test the ability of the hypothesised factor model to reproduce the sampled data (Nusair & Hua, 2010). With CFA, the researcher specifies a certain number of factors, which are correlated, with observed variables measuring each factor (Schumacker, 2010).

The two-step modelling technique recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was adopted in the present study. They suggested that the measurement model for each latent construct be validated before testing the structural model. Measurement model describes the nature of the relationship between latent variables and the observed variables that measure those latent variables (Hair et al., 2006). The structural model specifies relationships among the latent variables as posited by theory (Schumacker, 2010). Following a two-step approach, CFA was first applied to

examine the relationships among latent variables and their related indicators with each construct, followed by testing of the structural model. The overall model fit is evaluated by examining the extent to which the theoretical model is supported by the sample (Nusair & Hua, 2010). Several measures of goodness-of-fit indices are used to evaluate the measurement model (Bone, Sharma & Shimp, 1989; Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000; Hair et al., 2006; Schumacker, 2010). These include chi-square (χ^2), nonnormed fit index (NNFI), relative fit index (RFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (INF) and standardised root mean square residential (SRMR). The measurement model is then modified based on CFA results. After achieving adequate overall fit, the measurement model is further evaluated for its reliability and validity following guidelines from previous literature (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000; Hair et al., 2006; Schumacker, 2010).

- Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is widely used for statistical methodology in academic research. As stated by Hair et al. (2006), SEM is a family of statistical models that seek to explain the relationships among multiple variables. In addition,

SEM is designed to evaluate how well a proposed conceptual model that contains

observed indicators and hypothetical constructs explains or fits the collected data

(Schumacker, 2010). Therefore, SEM is "most appropriate when a study deals with

multiple latent constructs, with each one of the constructs represented by several

observed and measurable variables" (Nusair & Hua, 2010, p. 316).

After the hypothesised measurement and after structural models have been examined

and finalized, the next step is to identify the causal relationship with each variable by

path analysis (Nusair & Hua, 2010). On a theoretical level, SEM specifies that

particular latent variables directly or indirectly influence certain other latent variables

in the model (Kline, 2011), resulting in estimations that indicate how these latent

variables are related. Similar to CFA, the overall model fit was assessed using

multiple fit indices (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000; Hair et al., 2006; Schumacker,

2010).

3.8.3. Assessing Model Fit

As previously discussed, after having the measurement model estimated, model

validity needs to be estimated using goodness-of-fit indices. Model fit determines the

degree to which the sample variance-covariance data fit the proposed measurement model (Schumacker, 2010). The fit of the measurement model was assessed with multiple-fit indices. Generally, two types of indices are common in past literature: absolute model fit (χ^2, GFI, RMSR, SRMR and RMSEA) and comparative model fit (NFI, CFI, TLI and RNI) (Hair et al., 2006). The former refers to a direct measure of how well a priori the theoretical model fits the sample data (Kenny & McCoach, 2003), and the latter refers to assessing how well a specified model fits relative to some nested baseline models (Hair et al., 2006). Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000) suggested that "for practical purposes, results of the Chi-square test used in conjunction with RMSEA, SRMR, GFI and CFI indices should be more than sufficient to reach an informed decision concerning the model's overall fit" (p. 88). Therefore, these indices are adopted and explained as follows. Table 3.3 summarises all the fit indices discussed above and their associated cut-off values.

a. Chi-Square (χ^2)

Traditionally, chi-square test statistics is used to test the null hypothesis that the population covariance matrix is equal to the covariance matrix implied by the proposed model (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). A non-significant chi-square

implies there is no significant discrepancy between the covariance matrix implied by the model and the population covariance. Hence, chi-square statistics indicate whether the model fits the data. In general, a value greater than 0.05 reflects an acceptable fit, whereas values between 0.05 and 0.20 indicate a good fit. Since chi-square statistics are always inflated by a large sample size (i.e. chi-square values tend to be large in large samples), the ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom has been commonly used as an alternative fit index. If the chi-square value is less than three, the model is found to be satisfactory (Bollen, 1989). Although chi-square statistics and the ratio of χ^2 to the degrees of freedom have been widely used, they are insufficient to assess model fit. Other alternative or complementary indices are proposed to judge the model fit.

    b.   Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

RMSEA shows "how well would the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameter values, fit the population covariance matrix if it were available" (Browne & Cudeck, 1993, p. 137-138). It additionally compensates for sample size, with low values indicating better fit. As suggested by Hair et al. (2006), RMSEA values are below 0.10 for most acceptable models, whereas those between 0.03 and 0.08 indicate

reasonable fit.

c. Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (RMR or RMSR or SRMR)

The root mean square residuals (RMR or RMSR or SRMR) reflect the discrepancies between the implied and observed covariance matrices. Low RMSR and SRMR values represent better fit and higher values represent worse fits. SRMR values less than 0.05 are generally regarded as a good fit to the data (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000).

d. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)

GFI is another indicator of the relevant amount of variance and covariance accounted for by the model; thus, it shows how closely the model comes to perfectly reproducing the observed covariance matrix. GFI is generally recommended as the most reliable measure of absolute fit in most circumstances (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). The value of GFI ranges between 0 and 1, and values over 0.90 are preferable as these indicate good model fit.

e. Comparative Fit Index (CFI)

CFI is an incremental fit index that compares the fit of two different models for the same data (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). It estimates the extent to which the null model is better, compared to the independent model. The CFI varies from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better fit. In general, CFI value of over 0.90 is usually associated with a model that fits well (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 3.3. Summary of Model Fit Index Used in the Assessment of both Measurement and Structural Model

Fit Index	Description	Cut-off Value
Chi-Square (χ^2)	Indicates the discrepancy between hypothesised model and data; Test the null hypothesis that the estimated covariance-variance matrix deviates from the sample variance-covariance matrix because of sampling error	$p > 0.05$
$\chi^2/$ df	Because the chi-square test is sensitive to sample size and is only meaningful if the degrees of freedom are considered, its value is divided by the number of degrees of freedom	2-1 or 3-1
RMSEA	Shows how well would the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameter values, fit the population covariance matrix if it were available	<0.10 is an acceptable fit
RMR or RMSR or SRMR	Reflects the discrepancies between the implied and observed covariance matrices	<0.05 is a close fit
GFI	Comparison of the squared residuals from predictions with the actual data, not adjusted for the degrees of freedom	>0.90 is a good fit
CFI	Shows how much better the model fits, compared to a baseline model, normally the null model, adjusted for the degrees of freedom	>0.90 is a good fit

Source: Based on Browne and Cudeck (1993), Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000), Hair et al. (2006)

3.9.   Chapter Summary

This chapter was devoted to explaining the research methodology used in the study.

First, research design and research framework were introduced. The scale

development for this study, including expert panel and pilot study, were discussed.

Afterwards, the survey procedures, sample size and data collection for main survey

were described. In the final section, data analysis techniques were also provided and

highlighted.

Chapter 4: Instrument Development

4.1.   Introduction

This chapter describes the procedures used to develop the instrument. The results

pertaining to and from expert panels are presented first, followed by the results from

the pilot test.

4.2.   Expert Panels

Chapter Three described the procedures for item reviewing and purification. The

panels were made up of four faculty members and ten research students. To gain a

better understanding of the developed constructs and domains derived from previous

literature, a rating tool for expert panels was developed. Panel members were given

definition of each construct and were asked to assess the representativeness of the

items, using a 3 point measurement scale, in which 3 represented *"clearly*

representative", 2 represented *"somewhat representative"*, and 1 represented *"not*

representative". Apart from rating of each item, the experts were also invited to

clarify the items and provide suggestions as to how to reinforce the representativeness of the constructs. Results of the expert panel are presented below.

4.2.1. Measurement for Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Ten research students were asked to evaluate 47 items relating to benefits obtained through online experience sharing. A priori criterion of a summated score of 16 or above (indicating that on average at least eight of the ten research students should express an item as at least being "somewhat representative" of the construct) was employed for item deletion. In addition, items that were rated as "not representative" by four students were deleted. Four faculty members then reviewed the items, based on the results of first round of evaluation. Similar to the first round of evaluation, items that obtained a score of 6 or above (meaning at least three of four members evaluated them as "somewhat representative") and two experts rated them as "not representative" were deleted. Based on the members' comments, the measurement items that were redundant or ambiguous were deleted or revised.

The initial six dimensions with 47-items pool were reduced to five dimensions with 32 items. One dimension, *Self-enhancement/discovery* was regrouped because two faculty members commented that they were similar to other dimensions, and not well differentiated by their respective items. In addition, several items were removed because some panel members felt that they were irrelevant to online experience sharing. For example, "*sharing the travel experience enhanced my fantasy*", "*sharing the travel experience enhanced my curiosity*", "*I felt sharing the travel experience online like an escape*", "*sharing the travel experience online made me feel indulgent*" and "*sharing the travel experience gave me a sense of belonging*" were considered irrelevant and were dropped from the pool. Moreover, one member advocated that an additional item "*People admired me when they commented my travel experience*" should be added in this construct.

4.2.2. Measurements for Self-Congruity, Functional Congruity, and Three Measures of Tourist Satisfaction

Measures for self-congruity, functional congruity and three measures of tourist satisfaction were adapted from the existing literature, and revisions were then made

on the basis of the panels' results.

Self-Congruity

Self-congruity comprises actual, ideal, social and ideal social self-congruity. The items were adapted from Back and Lee (2009) and Sirgy and Su (2000). Two items captured each sub-facet, yielding eight items in total. Consistent with previous evaluation, ten research students first reviewed the items, followed by four faculty members. Ratings for representativeness of the items were generally high (nearly all experts rated as "*somewhat representative*"), and the total score was >16, meaning that on average the expert panel rated each item as at least being "*somewhat representative*". Therefore, no item was deleted in this construct.

Functional Congruity

Drawing upon the relevant tourism literature, functional congruity was captured from Bosnjak et al. (2011). They summarized measures used in prior destination functional studies and proposed that the domain of functional congruity involves five generic facets, namely, performance, convenience, reliability, ease of use and customer

service. The eleven items developed by Bosnjak et al. (2011) were used without modification.

Three Measures of Tourist Satisfaction

The scale used to measure tourist satisfaction was developed based on Baker and Crompton (2000). Respondents were asked to indicate the most appropriate value for each semantic differential scale to best describe their satisfaction level. The four sets of polar terms were dissatisfied/satisfied, displeased/ pleased, unfavorable/favorable and negative/positive.

4.3. Pilot Test

The pilot test was carried out through an online survey conducted in February, 2011. Hong Kong university students were selected using the snowball sampling method through Facebook. Of the 191 responses obtained, 105 were completed and used for data analyses.

4.3.1. Demographic Profile of the Pilot Test Respondents

The descriptive analysis of the study reveals that 66.7% of those who completed questionnaires were females. 80% of respondents were aged between 18 and 21. The next largest category was made up of those between 22 and 25 years of age. Also, approximately half of the respondents were freshmen. Regarding their travel characteristics, 60% of respondents said they spend four to seven nights for a trip. More than half (50.5%) of the respondents said they were most impressed with destinations in North-East Asia, including Japan, Korea and Taiwan, and followed by China and Macau (13.6%). A majority of them (57.1%) indicated that they were first time visitors. Finally, respondents had generally spent more than 29 hours on the Internet per week. The sample characteristics are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Demographic Profile of the Pilot Test Respondents (n=105)

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	35	33.3%
	Female	70	66.7%
Age group	18-21 years	84	80.0%
	22-25 years	20	19.0%
	26 years or older	1	1.00%
Education level	Diploma/Higher Diploma	58	55.2%
	Degree level	41	39.1%
	Postgraduate level or above	6	5.7%
Year of Study	Year 1	53	50.5%
	Year 2	34	32.4%
	Year 3	18	16.1%
	Year 4 or above	0	0.0%
Length of nights	1-3 nights	27	25.7%
	4-7 nights	63	60.0%
	More than 8 nights	15	14.3%
Main Destination	North-East Asia (except China & Macau)	53	50.5%
	China & Macau	26	13.6%
	South-East Asia	17	8.9%
	Europe	6	3.1%
	Others	3	2.9%
Previous visit(s) to this destination	Never	60	57.1%
	1 time	42	40.0%
	2-3 times	3	2.9%
	4-5 times	0	0.0%
	More than 6 times	0	0.0%
Hours spent on the internet per week	1-7 hours per week	0	0.0%
	8-14 hours per week	0	0.0%
	15-21 hours per week	4	3.8%
	22-28 hours per week	3	2.9%
	29-35 hours per week	22	21.0%
	36-42 hours per week	43	41.1%
	More than 42 hours per week	37	35.2%

4.3.2. Reliabilities and Correlations

Exogenous Variables

Table 4.2 reports the coefficient alpha and item-total-correlations for self-congruity (8 items), functional congruity (11 items), and quality of online sharing of travel experiences (32 items). All scales had high coefficient alphas (0.911, 0.776 and 0.935). One item of quality of online sharing of travel experiences (QOES15) was deleted due to low item-total correlation (<0.30). The results showed that scale reliability of quality of online sharing and travel experiences were 0.945 after elimination of this item, thus exceeding Nunnally's (1978) minimum reliability criterion of 0.70 for acceptability.

Table 4.2. Coefficient Alpha and Item-Total Correlation of the Exogenous Variables

Code	Item	Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
	Self-Congruity		
SC1	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	0.668	0.903
SC2	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	0.725	0.898
SC3	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	0.739	0.897
SC4	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	0.644	0.905
SC5	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	0.744	0.897
SC6	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	0.735	0.898
SC7	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	0.674	0.903
SC8	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as	0.763	0.895
	Coefficient Alpha for Self-Congruity		0.911
	Functional Congruity		
FC1	This destination had good facilities for tourists	0.684	0.736
FC2	The quality of tourist attractions in this destination was high	0.569	0.742
FC3	This destination had easy access to attractions	0.669	0.732
FC4	This destination was convenient to visit to/from my home	0.305	0.776
FC5	Attractions in this destination have been long regarded as high quality tourist attractions	0.639	0.735
FC6	Attractions in this destination have a long history and good reputation	0.445	0.757
FC7	There was difficult for you to find selected attractions you wanted to visit in the destination	0.323	0.773
FC8	The government of the destination made it easy enough for tourists to navigate through the place	0.586	0.742
FC9	This destination had poor services provided by the tourism and hospitality organization	0.315	0.775
FC10	Tourism and hospitality organizations in the destination provided a satisfactory service quality	0.496	0.751
FC11	There was ease of communication during the vacation	0.303	0.776
	Coefficient Alpha for Functional-Congruity		0.776
	Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences		
QES1	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	0.548	0.933
QES2	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	0.548	0.933
QES3	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	0.547	0.933
QES4	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	0.663	0.932
QES5	I had a sense of affiliation after receiving feedback from audience	0.537	0.933
QES7	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	0.493	0.934
QES8	After sharing the travel experience, I experienced things that would have not normally experienced	0.579	0.933
QES9	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	0.628	0.932
QES10	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	0.598	0.932
QES11	I reflected my trip experience through sharing the travel experience online	0.656	0.932
QES12	I gained trust from audience after receiving their response	0.652	0.932

Code	Item	Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
**Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences**		
QES13	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	0.692	0.931
QES14	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my boredom	0.566	0.933
~~QES15~~	I felt upset after receiving response from audience	-0.224	0.945
QES16	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	0.698	0.931
QES17	I had pleasure when sharing the travel experience online	0.511	0.933
QES19	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	0.686	0.932
QES20	I feel more popular after sharing the travel experience online	0.596	0.932
QES21	Sharing the travel experience online was a memorable experience	0.630	0.932
QES22	I felt relaxed when I shared the travel experience online	0.664	0.932
QES23	Sharing the travel experience online gave me a sense of helpfulness to audience	0.646	0.932
QES24	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	0.622	0.932
QES26	Sharing the travel experience online is related to my personal interest	0.519	0.933
QES27	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	0.685	0.931
QES28	Sharing the travel experience online was entertaining	0.529	0.933
QES29	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	0.488	0.934
QES31	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	0.599	0.932
QES32	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	0.698	0.932
QES33	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	0.589	0.933
QES34	People admired me when they commented my travel experience	0.512	0.933
QES35	Sharing the travel experience online expressed my anger about a negative experience I had	0.357	0.935
QES36	Sharing the travel experience online expressed the negative feelings that I have had	0.380	0.935
	Coefficient Alpha for Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences		0.935

Endogenous Variables

The instrument contained three endogenous factors: satisfaction with the destination,

satisfaction with online sharing of experiences, and satisfaction with the entire travel

experience. As shown in Table 4.3, high coefficient alphas ranging from 0.937 to

0.970 were generated for these three measures, and all items exceeded the benchmark

of item-total-correlation (>0.30). Based on these results, it was concluded that these

items could be used for analysis as they had an acceptable level of reliability.

Table 4.3. Coefficient Alpha and Item-Total Correlation of the Endogenous Variables

Code	Item	Item-Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
Satisfaction with the Destination			
SATD1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the destination	0.929	0.959
SATD2	I am displeased/pleased with the destination	0.937	0.957
SATD3	My feelings about the destination are unfavourable/favourable	0.929	0.959
SATD4	My feelings about the destination are negative/positive	0.903	0.966
	Coefficient Alpha for Satisfaction with the Destination		0.970
Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Experiences			
SATQOE1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.862	0.937
SATQOE2	I am displeased/pleased with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.865	0.936
SATQOE3	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are unfavourable/favourable	0.906	0.924
SATQOE4	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are negative/positive	0.874	0.934
	Coefficient Alpha for Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Experiences		0.949
Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience			
SATEXP1	Overall, I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the entire travel experience	0.936	0.957
SATEXP2	Overall, I am displeased/pleased with the entire travel experience	0.908	0.965
SATEXP3	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are unfavourable/favourable	0.919	0.962
SATEXP4	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive	0.937	0.957
	Coefficient Alpha for Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience		0.970

4.3.3.   Exploratory Factor Analysis

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Exogenous Variables

Self-Congruity

Principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation extracted one factor for the construct of self-congruity. This factor accounted for 61.745% of the total explained variance and the coefficient alpha was 0.911, which implied high internal consistency in this construct.

Table 4.4. Factor Loading of Items of Self-Congruity

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Self-Congruity *(α=0.911)*		4.940	61.745
SC8	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as	0.827		
SC5	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	0.814		
SC3	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	0.809		
SC6	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	0.803		
SC2	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	0.795		
SC7	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	0.755		
SC1	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	0.750		
SC4	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	0.727		

Functional Congruity

Functional congruity was operationalised as a one dimensional construct. Consistent with previous literature, principal component factor analysis revealed a one factor solution that explained 53.167% of the total variance, with an acceptable coefficient alpha of 0.776.

Table 4.5. Factor Loading of Items of Functional Congruity

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Functional Congruity (α=0.776)		4.785	53.167
FC1	This destination had good facilities for tourists	0.798		
FC2	The quality of tourist attraction in this destination was high	0.793		
FC3	This destination had an ease access to the attractions	0.794		
FC5	Attractions in this destination have been long regarded as a high quality tourist attraction	0.792		
FC8	The government of the destination made it easy enough for tourist to navigate through the place	0.759		
FC10	Tourism and hospitality organization in the destination provided a satisfactory service quality	0.750		
FC6	Attractions in this destination had a long history and good reputation	0.706		
FC4	This destination was convenient to visit to/from your home	0.592		
FC11	There was ease of communication during the vacation	0.523		
FC7	There was difficult for you to find selected attractions you wanted to visit in the destination	0.512		
FC9	This destination had poor services provided by the tourism and hospitality organization	0.503		

Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Results of the principal components factor analysis are presented in Table 4.6. Of the 32 items, six items (QES8, QES22, QES34, QES35 and QES36) were dropped because of low factor loadings (<0.50), and four items (QES5, QES11, QES23 and QES28) were removed owing to cross-loading. Two rounds of factor analysis were

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conducted with a four-factor solution derived, and accounted for 66.07% of the explained variances in the data set. Of the four factors, the first factor, personal relationship, accounted for the largest proportion (19.137%) of the total explained variance. This factor contained six items (QES12, QES20, QES24, QES27, QES29 and QES31), which primarily related to social benefits gained through communication, discussion and exchange of travel experience, extension of relationship and involvement with other audiences. The second factor, status and prestige, explained 18.165% of the total variance in the data and comprised six items (QES4, QES7, QES9, QES10, QES13 and QES32). These items referred to basic psychological benefits, including acceptance, relaxation and prestige, sought from online sharing. The third factor, enjoyment, was associated with six items (QES1, QES2, QES3, QES14, QES17 and QES21) and explained 18.002% of the variance in the data. These items referred to sharing by tourists of their experiences online. This sharing elicits enjoyment, entertainment and fun. The fourth and the last factor, novelty, explained 10.762% of the total variance. It contained four items (QOES16, QOES19, QOES26 and QOES33) that referred to novelty as new and unfamiliar experiences, different from prior experiences. Following the widely recognized rule of thumb of using a reliability level of 0.70, the analysis indicated that the 22-item scale was highly reliable.

Table 4.6. Factor Loading of Items of Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Factor 1: Personal Relationship (α=0.799)		4.210	19.137
QES31	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	0.835		
QES24	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	0.818		
QES29	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	0.711		
QES27	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	0.645		
QES20	I feel more popular after sharing the travel experience online	0.641		
QES12	I gained trust from audience after receiving their response	0.633		
	Factor 2: Status and Prestige (α=0.762)		3.996	18.165
QES10	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	0.888		
QES9	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	0.811		
QES4	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	0.736		
QES32	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	0.557		
QES13	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	0.530		
QES7	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	0.504		
	Factor 3: Enjoyment (α=0.834)		3.961	18.002
QES2	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	0.846		
QES3	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	0.808		
QES1	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	0.758		
QES17	I had pleasure when sharing the travel experience online	0.717		
QES14	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my boredom	0.671		
QES21	Sharing the travel experience online was a memorable experience	0.651		
	Factor 4: Novelty (α=0.775)		2.368	10.762
QES26	Sharing the travel experience online is related to my personal interest	0.740		
QES33	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	0.737		
QES19	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	0.519		
QES16	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	0.516		

Endogenous Variables

A factor analysis with principal components was conducted to test the dimensionality

and reliability of the 4-item satisfaction scale of each aspect of tourist satisfaction. The

following presents the results of each facet of tourist satisfaction.

Satisfaction with the Destination

Table 4.7 shows that only one factor was extracted, which explained 91.752% of the

total variance. All standardized factor loadings were above 0.90. The coefficient alpha

was 0.970.

Table 4.7. Factor Loading of Items of Satisfaction with the Destination

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Satisfaction with the Destination (α=0.970)		3.670	91.752
SATD2	I am displeased/pleased with the destination	0.965		
SATD3	My feelings about the destination are unfavourable/favourable	0.961		
SATD1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the destination	0.960		
SATD4	My feelings about the destination are negative/positive	0.945		

Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Experiences

The factor analysis shows this construct was a one-component structure that

cumulatively explained 86.807% of the variance in the data. The coefficient alpha was

0.949.

Table 4.8. Factor Loading of Items of Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Experiences

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Experiences (α=0.949)		3.472	86.807
SATQOE3	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are unfavourable/favourable	0.948		
SATQOE4	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are negative/positive	0.931		
SATQOE2	I am displeased/pleased with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.924		
SATQOE1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.923		

Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

The result of principal components factor analysis was a one-component solution with an eigenvalue of 3.672, which accounted for 91.796% of the variance in the data set. Factor loadings were satisfactory, ranging from 0.948 to 0.965. The coefficient alpha was 0.970.

Table 4.9. Factor Loading of Items of Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

Code	Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen value	Variance Explained
	Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience (α=0.970)		3.672	91.796
SATEXP4	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive	0.965		
SATEXP1	Overall, I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the entire travel experience	0.965		
SATEXP3	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are unfavourable/favourable	0.955		
SATEXP2	Overall, I am displeased/pleased with the entire travel experience	0.948		

4.4.   Final Instrument

The final instrument consisted of ten sections with samples shown in Appendices II.

The first section included two screening questions, which were aimed at filtering out

irrelevant samples. The second section aimed to understand travel characteristics of

respondents. Questions regarding the most recent destination visited, in terms of

length of travel, and pervious travel experiences were then asked. The purpose of

these questions was to refresh memories of respondents regarding their most recent

vacations. The third section asked respondents to indicate their level of self-congruity

(eight questions) on most recently visited destination. The fourth section measured the

functional performance of the most recently visited destination with eleven questions.

The fifth section required respondents to evaluate their satisfaction with four items

regarding the experience at the destination. The sixth section asked respondents about

characteristics of sharing travel experiences online. This section was mainly for

descriptive analysis. The seventh section contained 22 questions to assess the

psychological benefits of sharing travel experiences online. The eighth and ninth

sections measured tourist satisfaction with the quality of online sharing of travel

experiences and with the entire travel experience, respectively. The last section

included demographic variables, such as age, gender, year of study and current

education level, etc. This enables collection of data from the respondent's profile for future analysis.

4.5. **Chapter Summary**

This chapter first presents the instrument development process. 67 preliminary items were developed from literature review. Expert panel were used to purify the items. A pilot test was carried out through an online survey conducted in February, 2011, in order to further refine the questionnaire before the main survey. 105 university students were sampled. After a series of data analyses, the questionnaire was finalized; it contained ten sections.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Results

5.1. Introduction

This chapter reports results of the main survey. The first section describes the response rate and the data examination. The second section outlines demographic profiles of the respondents, travel and online sharing characteristics. Afterwards, descriptive statistics of the variables are reported in the third section. The fourth section illustrates results of confirmatory factor analysis through which relationships among the constructs and their underlying variables are examined, and the last section discusses testing of the hypothesised relationships through structural equation modelling.

5.2. Responses Rate

The main survey was conducted at eight universities in Hong Kong, from April to June in 2011. Of the 620 students contacted by the research assistants, a total of 553 respondents agreed to participate in the survey, resulting in an effective response rate of 89.19%, which is relatively high. Table 5.1 shows distribution of samples in eight

universities in Hong Kong.

Table 5.1. Distribution of Samples in Eight Universities in Hong Kong

Name of University	Number in Sample	Percentage
The University of Hong Kong	99	17.9
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	99	17.9
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	71	12.8
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	106	19.2
City University of Hong Kong	75	13.6
Hong Kong Baptist University	39	7.0
The Hong Kong Institute of Education	36	6.5
Lingnan University	28	5.1
Total	553	100%

Quota sampling method was used to collect a homogeneous sample that represented the corresponding sample population. The target respondents were chosen based on headcounts of university students in Hong Kong published by The University Grants Committee (2011). Table 5.2 shows the sampling proportion for each university. The result indicated that all universities had the minimum number of students and generally obtained a high response rate. City University of Hong Kong had the highest response rate (93.75%), followed by Lingnan University (93.33%) and three universities had the same response rate (90.00%), including The University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and The Hong Kong Institute of Education. Conversely, Hong Kong Baptist University had a relatively lowest response rate (78.00%).

Table 5.2. Sampling Proportions for Each University (n=553)

University	Population Proportion in Hong Kong for Each University	Expected Number of Respondents in Each University	Total Student Intercepted	Completed Interviews	Respond Rate
The University of Hong Kong	18.78%	94	110	99	90.00%
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	19.07%	95	110	99	90.00%
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	10.16%	51	80	71	88.75%
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	19.75%	99	120	106	88.33%
City University of Hong Kong	14.30%	71	80	75	93.75%
Hong Kong Baptist University	7.29%	36	50	39	78.00%
The Hong Kong Institute of Education	7.41%	37	40	36	90.00%
Lingnan University	3.23%	16	30	28	93.33%
Total	100.00%	500	620	553	89.19%

5.3.   Data Examination

Prior to major data analysis by confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling, the raw data were checked for missing values, univariate outliners and normality. The following paragraphs present the results of data examination.

5.3.1.   Identify Missing Value

No missing values were found in the data set because the research assistants were continually reminded to ensure the questionnaires were completely answered, and to further check for missing values after return of the questionnaire.

5.3.2. Outliers

Hair et al. (2006) suggested that univariate, bivariate and multivariate outliers need to be identified. Univariate outliers were irrelevant for the present study because all scales were measured by either a 7-point Likert scale or a semantic differential scale. Multivariate outliers detection was by Mahalanobis distance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and no cases with high or low scores on many variables were identified.

5.3.3. Normality

To assess whether data normality has been achieved, skewness and kurtosis were employed in the present study. Although there are no rules of thumb for data normality, Kline (2011) suggests that if absolute values of standardized skewness are greater than 3, data can be described as extremely skewed, and absolute values of standardized kurtosis greater than 10 may cause a problem, while values greater than 20 indicate a serious problem. After the analysis, distribution of the data set was identified as non-normal, and majority of items were found to have positive kurtosis and negative

skewness. Therefore, Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square with maximum likelihood was

applied to adjust the non-normal distribution of the data set.

5.4.   Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 5.3 summarizes profile of the sample in terms of principal demographic

characteristics, which are briefly described hereunder.

Gender: The sample had slightly more female respondents (57.7%) than male

respondents (42.3%). Research assistants observed that female university students

were more willing to answer the questionnaire than male students.

Age: A considerable proportion of respondents were in the 18-21 age group (73.4%),

followed by 22-25 age group (25.9%). Respondents aged 26 or above occupied a very

small percentage. It appears that sample respondents are mostly young persons (18-25

years old). Similar to the findings of Zhang, Qu and Tang (2004), younger travelers

are more likely to engage in pleasure travel than other age groups.

Current Education Level: Majority of the respondents were undergraduate students

(75.8%). Remaining respondents were either pursuing diploma/higher diploma (22.8%) or postgraduate degree or above qualification (1.4%).

Year of Study: About half of respondents (50.1%) were in the first year of their studies, followed by sophomore (32.7%) and year three (16.5%).

Major Study: Approximately 23% of respondents majored in business related subjects. The next largest category comprised art related subjects (20.1%) and hotel and tourism related studies (13.2%).

Table 5.3. Demographic Profile of the Main Survey Respondents (n=553)

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	234	42.3%
	Female	319	57.7%
Age group	18-21 years	406	73.4%
	22-25 years	143	25.9%
	26 years or older	4	0.7%
Current Education level	Diploma/Higher Diploma	126	22.8%
	Degree	419	75.8%
	Postgraduate level or above	8	1.4%
Year of Study	Year 1	277	50.1%
	Year 2	181	32.7%
	Year 3	91	16.5%
	Year 4 or above	4	0.7%
Major Study	Medicine related	29	5.2%
	Business related	124	22.4%
	Hotel and tourism related	73	13.2%
	Engineering related	48	8.7%
	Art related	111	20.1%
	Social science related	49	8.9%
	Science related	45	8.1%
	Information technology related	42	7.6%
	Others	32	5.8%

5.5.   Travel Characteristics of the Main Survey Respondents

Table 5.4 shows results of respondents regarding their travel characteristics.

Destination: Recognizing that any such trips may well involve more than one destination, respondents were asked to name a prime country and destination that impressed them most. Taipei (14.8%) was the most visited destination, while Macau (11.8%) and Tokyo (11.0%) were the second and third popular destinations, respectively. In terms of destination by region, approximately 40% of respondents said they were impressed with destinations in China, followed by North-East Asia, including Japan, South Korea and Taiwan (36.6%), South-East Asia (9.8%) and Europe (9.8%).

Previous Visit: Approximately 37% of the respondents were first-time visitors and nearly 34% had visited it at least once. The remaining had visited their favourite destinations 2 to 3 times (19.7%) and some had visited 4 to 5 times (3.6%), and more than six times (6.0%).

Length of Trip: About 50% reported having undertaken leisure travel for 4 to 7 nights within the preceding six months. Nearly 36% of respondents had stayed between 1 to 3 nights while 16.1% of respondents indicated they had stayed more than 8 nights at the destination. The mean number of nights spent overseas was 5.2, indicating that university students prefer to take short trips for vacation.

Table 5.4. Travel Characteristics of the Main Survey Respondents (n=553)

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Destination (by city)	Taipei	82	14.8%
	Macau	65	11.8%
	Tokyo	61	11.0%
	Seoul	43	7.8%
	Beijing	34	6.1%
	Bangkok	28	5.1%
	London	24	4.3%
	Singapore	17	3.1%
	Shanghai	17	3.1%
	Paris	15	2.7%
	Shenzhen	16	2.9%
	Others	151	27.3%
Destination (by region)	China	210	38.0%
	North-East Asia (exclude China)	203	36.6%
	South-East Asia	54	9.8%
	Europe	54	9.8%
	America	17	3.1%
	Others (include Australia & Africa)	15	2.7%
Previous visit(s) to this destination	Never	204	36.9%
	1 time	187	33.8%
	2-3 times	109	19.7%
	4-5 times	20	3.6%
	More than 6 times	33	6.0%
Length of trip	1-3 nights	195	35.3%
	4-7 nights	269	48.6%
	More than 8 nights	89	16.1%

5.6. Online Travel Sharing Characteristics of the Main Survey Respondents

Table 5.5 reports the findings on online sharing characteristics of the main survey respondents.

Sharing Channel: About 81% of the respondents documented their travel experiences on Facebook frequently, followed by Twitter/Weibo (14.2%) and Youtube (3.8%). This suggested that respondents were more likely to post content on their "own" social media website (e.g., Facebook and personal blogs) than on a media sharing (e.g., YouTube) or review site (e.g., forum/online community, travel website).

Type of Sharing Content: A large percentage of respondents (75.1%) frequently share photos, 22.3% of respondents wrote travel reviews on the Internet frequently whereas other forms of content (e.g., video) were posted rarely.

Frequency of Receiving Responses and Managing Content: About half of respondents reported having shared travel experiences "rather frequently" on the Internet. Similar

to the findings of receiving responses, the majority of respondents shared their travel

experiences online rather frequently.

Internet Usage: As to the Internet usage, approximately 23% of the respondents spent

15 to 21 hours on the Internet each week. In addition, 17.5% of respondents had

accessed the Internet 29-35 hours a week on average and 17.2% for more than 42

hours per week. Not surprisingly, the results showed that university students in Hong

Kong spend considerable time on the Internet.

Table 5.5. Online Travel Sharing Characteristics of the Main Survey Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Channel I use to share (n=655, multiple responses)	Facebook	530	80.9%
	Youtube	25	3.8%
	Twitter/Weibo	93	14.2%
	Others: (include forum & travel website)	7	1.1%
Type of sharing content (n=698, multiple responses)	Travel reviews	156	22.3%
	Photos	524	75.1%
	Videos	18	2.6%
Frequency of receive responses (n=534)	Rarely	5	0.9%
	Occasionally	40	7.5%
	Neutral	174	32.6%
	Rather frequently	261	48.9%
	Very frequently	54	10.1%
Frequency of manage the content (n=534)	Rarely	11	2.1%
	Occasionally	51	9.6%
	Neutral	170	31.8%
	Rather frequently	218	40.8%
	Very frequently	84	15.7%
Hours spent on the internet per week (n=553)	1-7 hours per week	33	6.0%
	8-14 hours per week	62	11.2%
	15-21 hours per week	125	22.6%
	22-28 hours per week	84	15.2%
	29-35 hours per week	97	17.5%
	36-42 hours per week	57	10.3%
	More than 42 hours per week	95	17.2%

5.7.   Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis with mean score and standard deviation was carried out to better understand how university students perceived their self-image in relation to the destination image, functional performance of the destination, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and three measures of tourist satisfaction. The following paragraphs describe the findings for the related constructs.

Exogenous Variables

In the present study, exogenous variables included self-congruity, functional congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences. Each exogenous variable was measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 7 for strongly agree. The items in each subscale are arranged in descending order, according to their mean values, in Tables 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8. The results showed that all items in each exogenous component were generally well-rated, with mean score of over 4.

Self-Congruity

Self-congruity comprises actual, ideal, social and ideal social self-congruity. As shown in Table 5.6, two items captured each sub-facet, yielding eight items in total. The result shows that although respondents assigned similar scores to eight items, *"A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be"* was ranked the highest (4.41), followed by *"A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others"* (4.39), and *"A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like"* (4.39).

Table 5.6. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Self-Congruity

Code	Item	Mean	SD
SC3	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	4.41	1.19
SE6	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	4.39	1.14
SE7	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	4.39	1.12
SC2	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	4.38	1.16
SC1	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	4.37	1.19
SE8	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as	4.35	1.12
SC4	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	4.34	1.19
SE5	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	4.32	1.20

Functional Congruity

As shown in Table 5.7, eleven items that mainly describe the essential aspects of the destination were used to measure functional congruity. Overall, respondents gave

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relatively high scores to functional congruity, as all items were above the standard

benchmark (>3.5). Mean scores for these items ranged from 4.71 to 5.04. Item related

to *"long history and good reputation"* received the highest rating (5.04), followed by

"good facilities" (5.01), *"high quality of tourist attractions"* (5.00), *"long high*

quality of tourist attraction" (4.97) and *"convenient"* (4.86). Relatively low mean

scores were recorded for items related to *"difficult to find selected attraction"* (4.73)

and *"poor services"* (4.71). In general, items describing destination performances

were well acknowledged by university students as they received above average mean

scores.

Table 5.7. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Functional Congruity

Code	Item	Mean	SD
FC6	Attractions in this destination have a long history and good reputation	5.04	1.20
FC1	This destination had good facilities for tourists	5.01	1.14
FC2	The quality of tourist attractions in this destination was high	5.00	1.16
FC5	Attractions in this destination have been long regarded as high quality tourist attractions	4.97	1.12
FC3	This destination had easy access to attractions	4.94	1.17
FC10	Tourism and hospitality organizations in the destination provided a satisfactory service quality	4.87	1.11
FC4	This destination was convenient to visit to/from my home	4.86	1.26
FC8	The government of the destination made it easy enough for tourists to navigate through the place	4.80	1.30
FC11	There was ease of communication during the vacation	4.80	1.10
FC7	There was difficult for you to find selected attractions you wanted to visit in the destination	4.73	1.13
FC9	This destination had poor services provided by the tourism and hospitality organization	4.71	1.16

Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Quality of online sharing of travel experiences was evaluated on four dimensions, namely, personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty. Altogether 22 items were used to measure quality of online sharing of travel experiences, rated on a 7-point scale. Table 5.8 presents the mean score and standard deviation on each dimension.

Personal Relationship: Personal relationship is primarily related to social benefits gained through communication and discussion and exchange of travel experiences, measured by six items. The statements accounting for the highest mean scores were related to *"stay in touch with the audience"* (4.69), followed by *"extended my personal relationship with the audience"* (4.67) and *"felt closer to the audience"* (4.61).

Status and Prestige: This factor referred to basic psychological benefits, including acceptance, relaxation, pride, prestige and recognition sought from online sharing. As illustrated in Table 5.8, status and prestige was measured by six items. *"Acceptance"* (4.83) had the highest mean score, followed by *"recognition"* (4.75), *"prestige"* (4.69), and *"pride"* (4.62).

Enjoyment: Compared with other factors, mean scores of six items in this factor were generally higher. In particular, two items were rated above mean scores of five: *"I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online"* (5.13), and *"Sharing the travel experience online was fun"* (5.06).

Novelty: Novelty was measured by four items. Respondents perceived that sharing of travel experiences online was the best channel to *"gain different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online"* (4.85), *"doing something new and different"* (4.63), *"gained a new insight into myself"* (4.52), *"related to my personal interest"* (4.46), all of which had high ratings.

The mean score for each factor is also presented in Table 5.8. It was found that enjoyment obtained the highest ratings (4.89), followed by status and prestige (4.67) and then novelty (4.65). The results indicated that respondents were able to perceive happiness and fun through sharing travel experiences online after a trip. In addition, they also sought social recognition and obtained experience which is different from the previous throughout the sharing process.

Table 5.8. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Code	Item	Mean	SD
	Factor 1: Personal Relationship	4.55	0.82
QES24	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	4.69	1.06
QES31	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	4.67	1.06
QES29	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	4.61	1.03
QES27	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	4.57	1.03
QES20	I feel more popular after sharing the travel experience online	4.52	1.19
QES12	I gained trust from audience after receiving their response	4.39	1.10
	Factor 2: Status and Prestige	4.67	0.81
QES4	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	4.83	1.08
QES32	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	4.75	1.00
QES9	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	4.69	1.06
QES13	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	4.62	1.08
QES10	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	4.60	1.06
QES7	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	4.53	1.09
	Factor 3: Enjoyment	4.89	0.79
QES3	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	5.13	1.01
QES2	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	5.06	1.04
QES17	I had pleasure when sharing the travel experience online	4.88	1.02
QES1	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	4.87	1.09
QES14	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my boredom	4.69	1.06
QES21	Sharing the travel experience online was a memorable experience	4.69	1.05
	Factor 4: Novelty	4.65	0.80
QES33	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	4.85	1.01
QES19	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	4.63	1.05
QES16	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	4.52	1.04
QES26	Sharing the travel experience online is related to my personal interest	4.46	1.10

Endogenous Variables

Three Measures of Tourist Satisfaction

The mean scores and standard deviations of the three measures of tourist satisfaction are presented in Tables 5.9 to 5.11. All the mean scores were above 5 which indicate that respondents were generally satisfied with the experiences.

Table 5.9. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Satisfaction with Destination

Code	Item	Mean	SD
SATD1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the destination	5.37	1.04
SATD4	My feelings about the destination are negative/positive	5.36	1.08
SATD3	My feelings about the destination are unfavourable/favourable	5.33	1.15
SATD2	I am displeased/pleased with the destination	5.33	1.11

Table 5.10. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Satisfaction with the Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Code	Item	Mean	SD
SATQOE3	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are unfavourable/favourable	5.16	0.97
SATQOE2	I am displeased/pleased with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	5.15	1.00
SATQOE4	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are negative/positive	5.15	0.99
SATQOE1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	5.10	0.99

Table 5.11. Mean and Standard Deviation of Items of Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience

Code	Item	Mean	SD
SATEXP3	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are unfavourable/favourable	5.40	1.02
SATEXP2	Overall, I am displeased/pleased with the entire travel experience	5.39	1.06
SATEXP4	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive	5.37	1.02
SATEXP1	Overall, I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the entire travel experience	5.32	1.07

5.8. Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using LISREL 8.8 with covariance matrix to verify the factor structure identified from the previous EFA. Functional congruity was excluded from CFA since it was considered as a formative construct.

Validity of the measurement model in each latent construct was first assessed separately, followed by an overall assessment. After achieving adequate overall fit indices, the overall measurement model was further evaluated for its reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Construct Validity

According to Campbell and Fiske (1959), there are two main components of construct validity: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity assesses the degree to which dimensional measures of the same concept are correlated. High correlations indicate that the scale instrument is measuring its intended construct (Nusair & Hua, 2010). Convergent validity can be verified by checking average variance extracted (AVE) and *t*-tests. In the former method, higher variance extracted values show that the manifest variables are truly measuring the same construct. Conventional guidelines suggest that the AVE value of each construct should exceed 0.50 (Hair et al., 2006). The latter method is suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), where all factor loadings of the manifest variables are statistically significant at 0.05 level. To ensure convergent validity, all the reflective constructs were analyzed using these two methods.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which conceptually similar concepts are distinct (Nusair & Hua, 2010). The measures of theoretically different constructs should have low correlations with each other. Thus, a significantly low cross-construct correlation implies that discriminant validity is achieved. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be verified using AVE which must exceed the corresponding correlation estimate between any two factors (i.e. the square of their intercorrelations).

Construct Reliability

Construct reliability was measured through composite reliability. Traditionally, Cronbach's alpha is commonly used to establish the internal consistency construct's reliability. However, LISREL does not provide this statistic, so construct reliability was calculated using the equation suggested by Hair et al. (2006). In general, a composite construct reliability value of 0.70 or higher indicates good reliability, and between 0.60 and 0.70 is acceptable (Hair et al., 2006).

5.8.1.   CFA of Self-Congruity

The CFA results of self-congruity are shown in Table 5.12. The fit for the model was acceptable (χ^2=22.13, df=203, p>0.01, standardized RMR=0.017, RMSEA=0.030, CFI=1.00 and GFI=0.98). The results supported a four-dimensional structure of self-congruity.

Construct Validity: Assessed by Convergent Validity

As observed in Table 5.12, the estimated AVE value of each dimension was greater than the unexplained variance (>0.50) and all of the factor loadings were significant. Thus, convergent validity of self-congruity was confirmed.

Construct Reliability Indicators: Composite Reliability

The coefficient alpha values are presented in Table 5.12. All values were above the suggested cutoff of 0.70 (actual self-congruity = 0.840, ideal self-congruity = 0.804, social self-congruity = 0.804, and ideal social self-congruity = 0.822), which means

that the items were reliable (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 5.12. Results of CFA of Self-Congruity

Item No.	Item/ Factor	Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability	Variance Extracted
	Self-Congruity Factor 1: Actual Self-Congruity		**0.840**	**0.725**
SC1	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	0.90		
SC2	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	0.80		
	Self-Congruity Factor 2: Ideal Self-Congruity		**0.804**	**0.673**
SC3	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	0.83		
SC4	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	0.81		
	Self-Congruity Factor 3: Social Self-Congruity		**0.804**	**0.673**
SC5	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	0.82		
SC6	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	0.82		
	Self-Congruity Factor 4: Ideal Social Self-Congruity		**0.822**	**0.698**
SC8	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as	0.85		
SC7	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	0.82		

5.8.2.   CFA of Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

A 22 items, four dimensional confirmatory factor analysis was performed to verify the dimensions of online sharing of travel experiences. The initial model did not offer a good fit (χ^2=816.29, df=203, p<0.01, standardized RMR=0.083, RMSEA=0.074, CFI=0.98 and GFI=0.80). An inspection of modification indices and factor loadings revealed that the model would be significantly improved if the following six items

were deleted: QES12, QES14, QES17, QES20, QES21 and QES26. Following

Hosany and Witham (2010), the first item was deleted and a χ^2 test difference was

conducted between CFA of the full scale (22 items) and the reduced scale (21 items).

The reduced scale was considered better if the chi-square difference was significant

and GFI increased. The process was repeated when eliminating the remaining items.

The revised model of four factors with 16 items finally obtained a good fit. The

chi-square was 292.32, df=98 and p<0.01, which did not exceed 3 times its degrees of

freedom (Bollen, 1989) and other commonly used goodness-of-fit indices

(standardized RMR=0.056, RMSEA=0.060, CFI=0.99, and GFI=0.90) were in line

with the established criteria (RMR=close to 0.50, CFI>0.90, RMSEA<0.10 and

GFI>0.90). It can be concluded that the overall fit indices indicated that the

hypothesised model accurately represented the structure underlying the observed data.

Table 5.13 presents factor loadings, composite reliability and AVE for these variables.

Construct Validity: Assessed by Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was supported by the fact that all AVE were greater than 0.50

(Fornell & Larcker, 1981) for all the four dimensions (personal relationship=0.606;

status and prestige=0.533; enjoyment=0.799; and novelty=0.519), suggesting that the

subscales are unidimensional. As shown in Table 5.13, CFA results further supported

convergent validity of the measures because the estimated loadings for all indicators

were significant at p<0.05 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) and standardized factor

loadings for all items were above the ideal level of 0.70.

Construct Reliability Indicators: Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is calculated for each factor. These results are shown in Table

5.13. The results indicated that the measurement items proposed for measurement of

latent variables provided consistent measures.

Table 5.13. Results of CFA of Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

Item No.	Item/ Factor	Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability	Variance Extracted
	Factor 1: Personal Relationship		**0.860**	**0.606**
QES27	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	0.82		
QES31	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	0.80		
QES24	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	0.76		
QES29	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	0.73		
	Factor 2: Status and Prestige		**0.873**	**0.533**
QES13	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	0.75		
QES10	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	0.74		
QES9	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	0.74		
QES4	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	0.73		
QES32	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	0.72		
QES7	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	0.70		
	Factor 3: Enjoyment		**0.923**	**0.799**
QES2	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	0.94		
QES3	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	0.87		
QES1	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	0.87		
	Factor 4: Novelty		**0.764**	**0.519**
QES16	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	0.76		
QES33	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	0.70		
QES19	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	0.70		

5.8.3.   CFA of Endogenous Variables

Three Measures of Tourist Satisfaction

CFA results for the three measures of tourist satisfaction model constructs: satisfaction

with the destination, satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences and satisfaction with the entire travel experience, showed χ^2=87.35, df=48, p<0.05, standardized RMR=0.056, RMSEA=0.039, CFI=1.00 and GFI=0.93). The results revealed that the sample data fit the proposed measurement model well. The result also implied tourist satisfaction is temporally represented in terms of three phases, with each item tapping into a unique facet of the underlying dimension. In addition, the measure of tourist satisfaction identified in this study was compared with previous literature (e.g., Baker & Crompton, 2000; Tian-Cole & Illum, 2006). Table 5.14 shows the results of CFA of endogenous variables.

Construct Validity: Assessed by Convergent Validity

As observed in Table 5.14, the AVE values ranged from 0.867 to 0.884, exceeding the 0.50 threshold value and all factor loadings for individual items were significant. Therefore, the convergent validity was not an issue.

Construct Reliability Indicators: Composite Reliability

The composite reliability estimates, ranging from 0.963 to 0.968, indicate a

satisfactory internal consistency of multiple indicators of each construct (i.e.

composite reliability (>0.70) (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 5.14. Results of CFA of Endogenous Variables

Item No.	Item/ Factor	Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability	Variance Extracted
	Satisfaction with the Destination		**0.968**	**0.884**
SATD4	My feelings about the destination are negative/positive	0.95		
SATD1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the destination	0.94		
SATD2	I am displeased/pleased with the destination	0.94		
SATD3	My feelings about the destination are unfavourable/favourable	0.93		
	Satisfaction with the Online Sharing of Travel Experiences		**0.964**	**0.872**
SATQOE4	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are negative/positive	0.99		
SATQOE3	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are unfavourable/favourable	0.98		
SATQOE1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.88		
SATQOE2	I am displeased/pleased with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.87		
	Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience		**0.963**	**0.867**
SATEXP4	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive	0.98		
SATEXP1	Overall, I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the entire travel experience	0.94		
SATEXP3	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are unfavourable/favourable	0.95		
SATEXP2	Overall, I am displeased/pleased with the entire travel experience	0.86		

5.8.4.   CFA of Overall Measurement Model

Given the acceptable measurement model of each latent construct, an overall CFA

measurement model was then undertaken. The model consisted of five reflective

constructs including self-congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and three measures of tourist satisfaction. The goodness-of-fit indices were within an acceptable range (χ^2=1,245.37, RMSEA=0.052, CFI=0.98, GFI=0.90, and standardized RMR=0.062). Standardized factor loading for all variables were greater than 0.70. Composite reliability calculations also revealed a high level of internal consistency for each construct. Convergent validity was supported as the t-test value of each indicator was statistics significant and the estimated AVE values of all constructs were greater than the unexplained variances (>0.50).

Table 5.15. Results of the Overall Measurement Model

Item No.	Item/ Factor	Factor Loadings	t-Value	Composite Reliability
	Self-Congruity Factor 1: Actual Self-Congruity			**0.84**
SC2	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	0.89	24.83	
SC1	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	0.81	NA	
	Self-Congruity Factor 2: Ideal Self-Congruity			**0.80**
SC3	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	0.83	NA	
SC4	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	0.81	21.71	
	Self-Congruity Factor 3: Social Self-Congruity			**0.81**
SC6	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	0.83	26.30	
SC5	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	0.82	NA	
	Self-Congruity Factor 4: Ideal Social Self-Congruity			**0.82**
SC8	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as	0.85	25.59	
SC7	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	0.82	NA	
	Quality of online sharing of travel experiences Factor 1: Personal Relationship			**0.84**
QES27	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	0.78	NA	
QES24	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	0.75	15.25	
QES31	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	0.73	14.16	
QES29	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	0.73	14.09	
	Quality of online sharing of travel experiences Factor 2: Status and Prestige			**0.90**
QES9	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	0.87	13.61	
QES10	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	0.83	13.59	
QES7	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	0.81	13.31	
QES13	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	0.74	NA	
QES32	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	0.71	11.00	
QES4	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	0.70	10.50	

	Quality of online sharing of travel experiences **Factor 3: Enjoyment**			**0.93**
QES1	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	0.93	NA	
QES3	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	0.90	36.16	
QES2	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	0.86	36.85	
	Quality of online sharing of travel experiences **Factor 4: Novelty**			**0.77**
QES33	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	0.76	14.09	
QES16	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	0.73	NA	
QES19	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	0.70	13.61	
	Satisfaction with the Destination			**0.82**
SATD3	My feelings about the destination are unfavourable/favourable	0.75	13.82	
SATD1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the destination	0.75	NA	
SATD2	I am displeased/pleased with the destination	0.74	15.09	
SATD4	My feelings about the destination are negative/positive	0.70	12.05	
	Satisfaction with the Online Sharing of Travel **Experiences**			**0.96**
SATQOE3	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are unfavourable/favourable	0.97	29.86	
SATQOE1	I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.95	NA	
SATQOE4	My feelings about the online travel experience sharing are negative/positive	0.94	33.85	
SATQOE2	I am displeased/pleased with the online travel experience sharing after the trip	0.85	25.42	
	Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience			**0.96**
SATEXP4	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive	0.96	38.23	
SATEXP1	Overall, I am dissatisfied/satisfied with the entire travel experience	0.94	NA	
SATEXP3	Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are unfavourable/favourable	0.93	32.21	
SATEXP2	Overall, I am displeased/pleased with the entire travel experience	0.85	31.63	

Discriminant Validity: Correlation Estimate

Discriminant validity was assessed based on the shared variance of all possible pairs

of constructs (i.e. the square of their intercorrelation) in the model. Table 5.16 showed that the AVE of each construct is greater than its shared variance with any other construct, indicating good discriminant validity.

Table 5.16. Correlations (Squared Correlations) and AVE

	ASC	ISC	SSC	ISSC	Personal Relationship	Status and Prestige	Enjoyment	Novelty	SATD	SATQOE	SATEXP
ASC	1.00										
ISC	0.72 (0.52)[a]	1.00									
SSC	0.67 (0.45)	0.72 (0.52)	1.00								
ISSC	0.71 (0.50)	0.76 (0.58)	0.78 (0.61)	1.00							
Personal Relationship	0.21 (0.04)	0.22 (0.05)	0.27 (0.07)	0.21 (0.04)	1.00						
Status and Prestige	0.29 (0.08)	0.27 (0.07)	0.33 (0.11)	0.30 (0.09)	0.71 (0.50)	1.00					
Enjoyment	0.26 (0.07)	0.23 (0.05)	0.25 (0.06)	0.21 (0.04)	0.44 (0.19)	0.58 (0.34)	1.00				
Novelty	0.26 (0.07)	0.27 (0.07)	0.31 (0.10)	0.29 (0,08)	0.65 (0.42)	0.68 (0.46)	0.51 (0.26)	1.00			
SATD	0.39 (0.15)	0.36 (0.13)	0.39 (0.15)	0.33 (0.11)	0.26 (0.07)	0.32 (0.10)	0.44 (0.20)	0.30 (0.09)	1.00		
SATQOE	0.27 (0.07)	0.20 (0.04)	0.31 (0.10)	0.21 (0.04)	0.47 (0.22)	0.54 (0.29)	0.59 (0.35)	0.49 (0.24)	0.60 (0.36)	1.00	
SATEXP	0.34 (0.12)	0.29 (0.08)	0.32 (0.10)	0.26 (0.07)	0.33 (0.11)	0.36 (0.13)	0.51 (0.26)	0.36 (0.13)	0.77 (0.60)	0.69 (0.48)	1.00
AVE	0.72	0.67	0.68	0.70	0.56	0.60	0.80	0.53	0.71	0.86	0.85

Note. ASC=Actual self-congruity; ISC=Ideal self-congruity; SSC=Social self-congruity; ISSC=Ideal social self-congruity; SATD=Satisfaction with the destination; SATQOE=Satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences; SATEXP=Satisfaction with the entire travel experience; AVE=Average variance extracted. All correlations are significant at $p<0.01$. [a]Squared correlations.

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## 5.9.	Initial Structural Model

The structural model was examined to test the hypothesized relationships between constructs. Parcels were used as indicators of latent variables in the structural model. Coffman and MacCallum (2005) suggested partial disaggregation can be used as an alternative technique to deal with data that were non-normal. In addition, the use of parcel generally provides a better overall model fit and less biased parameter estimates. With reference to the non-normal variable distribution and Coffman and MacCallum's (2005) recommendations, each reflective construct was represented by three parcels, with the exception of the three measures of satisfaction which were made up of four indicators.

The functional congruity items were combined into an index and used as a single item measure. This approach has been recommended by some researchers as a simple way to estimate models with formative indicators (e.g., Jarvis, Mackenzie, Podsakoff, Mick & Bearden, 2003; Kline, 2011; MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Jarvis, 2005; Ping, 2004). Such an approach is appropriate because the primary goal of the current study was not to understand the underlying dimensions of self-congruity and functional congruity but to investigate the relationships between tourist satisfactions.

In Figure 5.1, the standardized coefficient paths with hypothesised relationships among the constructs were identified. Of the five hypothesised paths (the five bold lines) proposed in the initial model, all paths were significant at the 0.05 level. A squared multiple correlation (R^2) is shown in each endogenous variable, which indicates the amount of variance in endogenous variables that is accounted for by the corresponding exogenous variables. The review of the initial theoretical model indicated that the chi-square value (χ^2=738.46 with 216 degree of freedom, p<0.01) was not significant, other fit indices also indicated an unsatisfactory level (standardised RMR=0.10, RMSEA=0.066, CFI=0.98 and GFI=0.90).

5.10.   Model Modification

By examining the modification indices, a direct path was identified from satisfaction with the destination to satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences, although this relationship was not expected in this study. According to this suggestion, a new path was added to determine whether or not the revised model fits the data. As presented in Figure 5.2, the revised model showed a significant chi-square value (χ^2=573.48, df=215, p<0.01). The results of goodness-of-fit indices exhibited good

improvement over the initial theoretical model and indicated better fits for all measures (standardised RMR=0.063, RMSEA=0.055, CFI=0.99 and GFI=0.92). Following Morgan and Hunt (1994), one can conclude that the revised model is preferable to the initial theoretical model because: (1) the revised model indicates greater explanatory power; (2) the revised model contains fewer coefficients; and (3) many of relationships in the revised model are stronger than in the initial theoretical model. Overall, the endogenous variables 40% of the variance in satisfaction with the destination, 62% of the variance in satisfaction with the quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and 76% of variance in satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

Table 5.17. Variance Covariance Matrix

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1.	SC	0.91																									
2.	FC	0.35	0.71																								
3.	PER(1)	0.26	0.20	1.05																							
4.	PER(2)	0.22	0.27	0.61	1.13																						
5.	PER(3)	0.14	0.21	0.67	0.67	1.20																					
6.	STA(1)	0.23	0.28	0.55	0.53	0.50	1.16																				
7.	STA(2)	0.24	0.28	0.56	0.55	0.48	0.58	0.99																			
8.	STA(3)	0.25	0.20	0.54	0.45	0.46	0.58	0.48	1.11																		
9.	ENJ(1)	0.25	0.40	0.34	0.37	0.23	0.46	0.44	0.42	1.18																	
10.	ENJ(2)	0.25	0.37	0.38	0.40	0.23	0.45	0.47	0.38	0.85	1.08																
11.	ENJ(3)	0.22	0.31	0.32	0.38	0.22	0.41	0.41	0.43	0.75	0.79	1.01															
12.	NOV(1)	0.25	0.21	0.50	0.51	0.49	0.58	0.43	0.47	0.38	0.34	0.33	1.08														
13.	NOV(2)	0.20	0.32	0.42	0.50	0.38	0.44	0.58	0.35	0.41	0.47	0.46	0.47	1.02													
14.	NOV(3)	0.31	0.26	0.48	0.42	0.40	0.43	0.41	0.39	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.55	0.46	1.11												
15.	SATD(1)	0.42	0.55	0.23	0.28	0.12	0.26	0.30	0.23	0.46	0.48	0.44	0.18	0.37	0.25	1.22											
16.	SATD(2)	0.40	0.50	0.25	0.26	0.12	0.24	0.25	0.22	0.47	0.47	0.42	0.18	0.34	0.25	1.03	1.32										
17.	SATD(3)	0.40	0.51	0.19	0.32	0.13	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.41	0.40	0.39	0.18	0.34	0.22	0.97	0.91	1.08									
18.	SATD(4)	0.37	0.50	0.18	0.29	0.11	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.16	0.34	0.23	0.99	1.04	1.01	1.17								
19.	SATQOE(1)	0.24	0.36	0.40	0.42	0.26	0.37	0.44	0.38	0.53	0.52	0.49	0.32	0.46	0.31	0.64	0.58	0.53	0.55	0.99							
20.	SATQOE(2)	0.28	0.36	0.41	0.43	0.30	0.43	0.46	0.38	0.49	0.53	0.51	0.36	0.50	0.38	0.63	0.58	0.53	0.52	0.81	1.00						
21	SATQOE(3)	0.22	0.33	0.38	0.40	0.29	0.42	0.46	0.39	0.52	0.54	0.51	0.31	0.44	0.37	0.58	0.55	0.50	0.49	0.75	0.76	0.94					
22.	SATQOE(4)	0.23	0.34	0.36	0.35	0.25	0.38	0.42	0.34	0.49	0.52	0.50	0.28	0.45	0.34	0.65	0.60	0.53	0.56	0.81	0.78	0.89	0.99				
23.	SATEXP(1)	0.33	0.47	0.23	0.32	0.14	0.28	0.33	0.29	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.23	0.41	0.24	0.85	0.74	0.75	0.75	0.69	0.64	0.60	0.65	1.14			
24.	SATEXP(2)	0.34	0.45	0.25	0.32	0.19	0.32	0.34	0.33	0.44	0.50	0.43	0.22	0.43	0.24	0.78	0.83	0.73	0.78	0.61	0.62	0.58	0.61	0.90	1.12		
25.	SATEXP(3)	0.29	0.45	0.22	0.36	0.20	0.31	0.33	0.27	0.45	0.47	0.43	0.23	0.39	0.24	0.75	0.78	0.75	0.76	0.61	0.60	0.58	0.61	0.88	0.84	1.04	
26.	SATEXP(4)	0.30	0.45	0.22	0.33	0.17	0.30	0.31	0.24	0.47	0.48	0.45	0.23	0.38	0.23	0.78	0.76	0.73	0.74	0.63	0.61	0.58	0.64	0.96	0.84	0.93	1.03

Variance on the diagonal, covariance off-diagonal; SC=Self-congruity; FC=Functional congruity; PER=Personal relationship; STA=Status and Prestige; ENJ=Enjoyment;

NOV=Novelty; SATD=Satisfaction with the destination; SATQOE=Satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences; SATEXP=Satisfaction with the entire travel experience

Self-Congruity and
Functional Congruity

Online Experience
Sharing

Note: The line indicates a path coefficient significant at the 0.05 level.

Fit statistics: χ^2=738.46, df=216, p<0.01, standardised RMR=0.10, RMSEA=0.066, CFI=0.98, GFI=0.90.

Figure 5.1. Initially Structural Model

Note: The line indicates a path coefficient significant at the 0.05 level.

The alternating dot-dash line indicates that the relationship was not hypothesised in the initial model.

Fit statistics: χ^2= 573.48, df=215, p<0.01, standardised RMR=0.063, RMSEA=0.055, CFI=0.99, GFI=0.92.

Figure 5.2. Final Model

5.11.   Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of the structural model, hypothesised relationships of latent variables with standardized coefficients and t-values in the conceptual model were tested (Table 5.18). Standardized coefficient refers to the expected change in the exogenous variable, per standard deviation increase/decrease in an endogenous variable, ceteris paribus. T-value represents whether the coefficient is significantly different from zero. T-values that fall outside the 95% of confidence interval, ranging from +1.96 to -1.96, are considered statistically significant.

Table 5.18. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	T-value	Result
H1:	Self-congruity and SAT with destination			
	SC → SATD	0.20	5.42**	Supported
H2:	Functional congruity and SAT with destination			
	FC → SATD	0.52	13.54**	Supported
H3:	Quality of online sharing of travel experiences and SAT with QOE			
	QES → SATQOE	0.50	11.75**	Supported
H4:	SAT with destination and SAT with Exp			
	SATD → SATEXP	0.61	16.05**	Supported
H5:	SAT with QOE and SAT with Exp			
	SATQOE → SATEXP	0.35	9.33**	Supported
New Path	SAT with destination and SAT with QOE			
	SATD → SATQOE	0.47	13.13**	

Note. ** Indicates significance at the 0.01 level; SC=Self-congruity; FC=Functional congruity; QES= Quality of online sharing of travel experiences; SATD=Satisfaction with the destination; SATQOE=Satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences; SATEXP=Satisfaction with the entire travel experience.
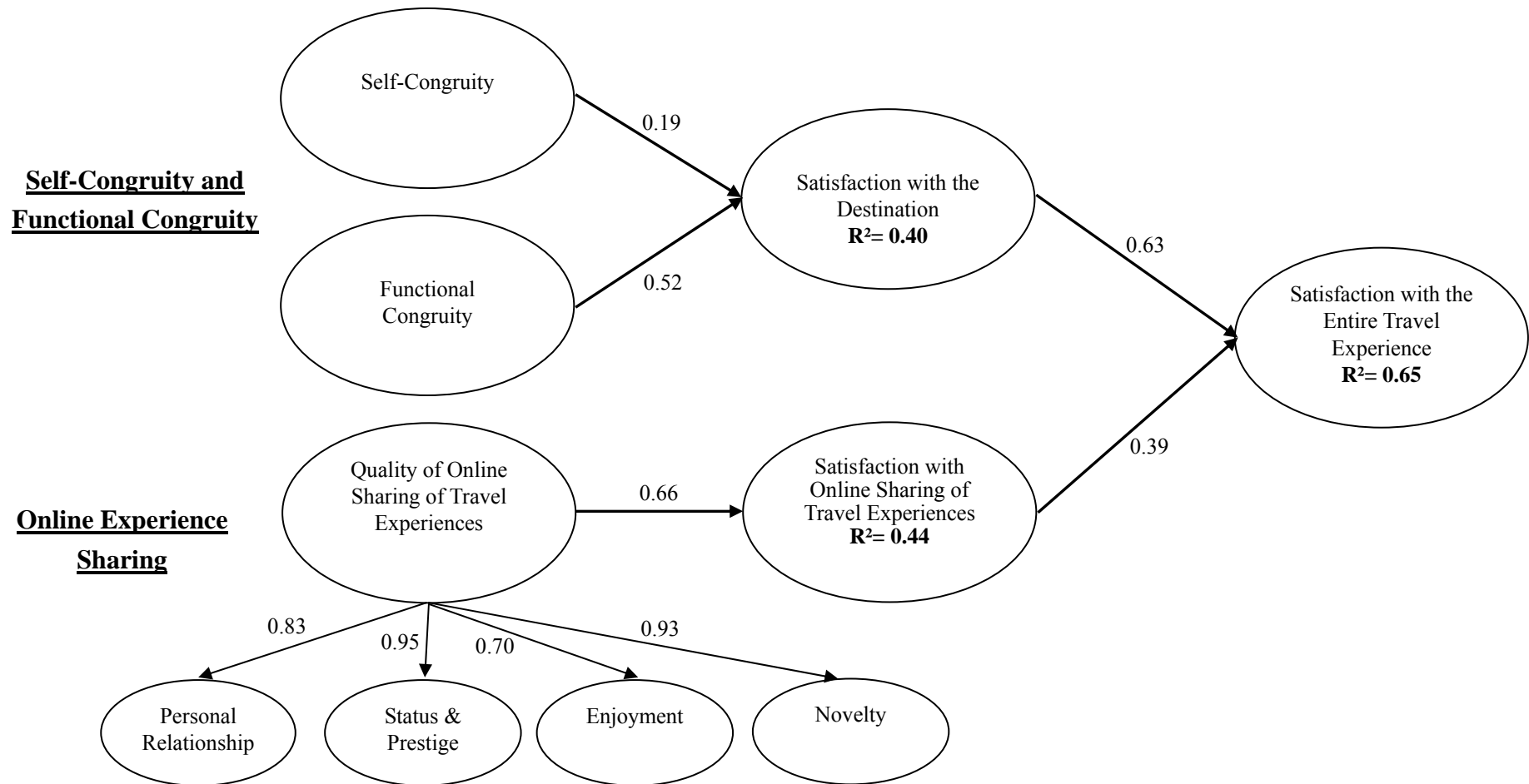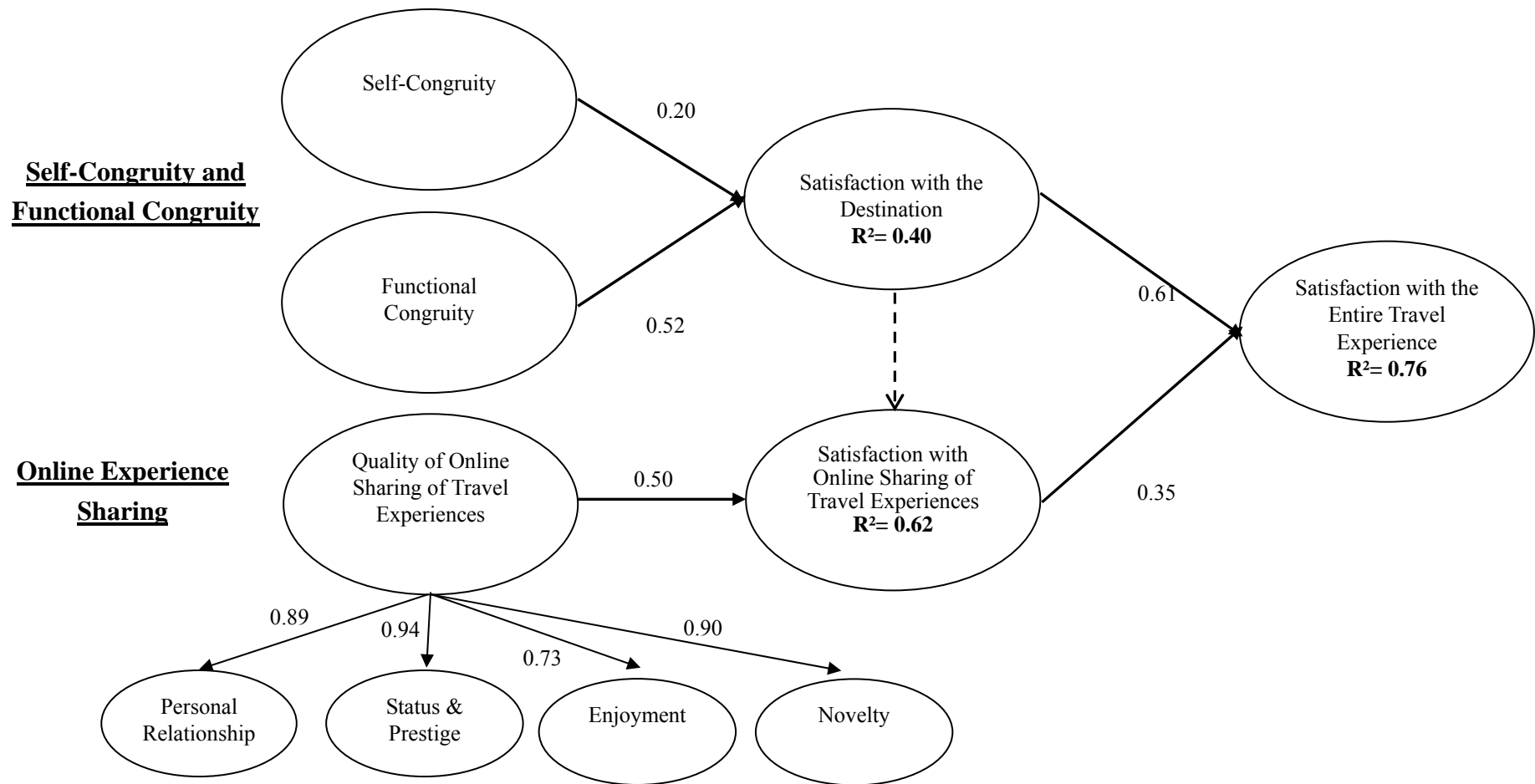
Hypothesis 1: A relationship exists between self-congruity and satisfaction with the destination

The first hypothesis proposed that self-congruity influences satisfaction with the destination. As shown in Table 5.18, this hypothesis was supported, as the standardized coefficient (β) was 0.20, which suggested the greater the match between the tourist self-image and the destination image, the greater is the satisfaction perceived by the tourist with the destination.

Hypothesis 2: A relationship exists between functional-congruity and satisfaction with the destination

Hypothesis 2 posited that functional congruity has a direct effect on satisfaction with the destination. As hypothesised, functional congruity was found to have positive effect on tourist satisfaction with the destination (β =0.52, t=13.54, p<0.01). Therefore, this hypothesis was also supported by the data, which confirmed the higher the tourists perceive the functional performance of the destination, the more likely they are to be satisfied with the experience at the destination.

Hypothesis 3: A relationship exists between quality of online sharing of travel experiences and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences

In testing this hypothesis, a positive relationship was found between quality of online sharing of travel experiences and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Table 5.18 showed that the standardized coefficient (β) in this hypothesis is 0.50, so the hypothesis cannot be rejected, indicating that the stronger the psychological benefits that tourists obtain from their sharing of travel experiences online, the more positive is the attitude they are likely to have towards satisfaction with a particular sharing.

Hypothesis 4: A relationship exists between satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

Table 5.18 offered support for the relationship between satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with the entire travel experience at a significant level of 0.05. Consequently, satisfaction with the entire travel experience is positively affected by satisfaction with the destination, as indicated by the standardized coefficient (β) of 0.61 and a t-value of 16.05.

In addition, an indirect effect of satisfaction with the destination on satisfaction with the entire travel experience through satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences (β=0.47 x 0.35=0.165) was corroborated by LISRL.

Hypothesis 5: A relationship exists between satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences and satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

The last hypothesis, that satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences was positively associated with satisfaction with the entire travel experience, was also supported by the data, as indicated by the standardized coefficient (β) of 0.35 and a t-value of 9.33.

Table 5.19 shows the results of standardized total effects of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. As expected, the results suggested that functional congruity is better explained than self-congruity to satisfaction with the destination, whereas satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences is affected to a greater extent by quality of online sharing of travel experiences, among others. Regarding satisfaction with the entire travel experience, the results demonstrated that functional congruity

has stronger effect than self-congruity and quality of online sharing of travel experiences because of the larger coefficient of functional congruity in the model.

Table 5.19. Standardized Total Effects of Exogenous Variables on Endogenous Variables

	Satisfaction with Destination	Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Travel Experiences	Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience
Self-Congruity	0.20	0.10	0.16
Functional Congruity	0.52	0.24	0.40
Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences		0.50	0.18

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level

5.12.   Chapter Summary

This chapter reports analysis of the main results, including descriptive analysis of each construct, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modelling and hypothesis testing. Results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the measurement models have good model fit, as they exceeded the recommended levels of construct reliability, discriminant validity and convergent validity. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis revealed that quality of online sharing of travel experiences has four underlying dimensions, personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty. Tourist satisfaction can also be temporally measured in terms of three phases, satisfaction with the destination, satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences, and satisfaction

with the entire travel experience. After the CFA, the initial proposed model was tested by structural equation modelling. The results demonstrated that all proposed hypotheses were statistically supported. Self-congruity and functional congruity were the antecedents of satisfaction with the destination, quality of online sharing of travel experiences directly influenced satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Also, satisfaction with the entire travel experience was positively affected by satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Additionally, one extra path, from satisfaction with the destination to satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences, was also suggested by the final model.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Implications

This study examined the impact of self-congruity, functional congruity, and quality of online sharing of travel experiences on three measures of tourist satisfaction through structural equation modelling. Self-congruity and functional congruity were found to be related to tourist satisfaction with the destination, whereas quality of online sharing of travel experiences was the determinant of tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Quality of online sharing of travel experiences comprises personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty. Tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience was found to be affected by satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. Findings pertaining to each of the four research objectives are discussed below.

Objective 1: To examine the influences of self-congruity and functional congruity on tourist satisfaction with the destination

The results indicated that self-congruity and functional congruity have significantly positive effects on tourist satisfaction with the destination. The results are in accord with Chon and Olsen (1991), Sirgy and Su (2000) and Bosnjak et al. (2011). They also

found self-congruity and functional congruity to be the important contributors to tourist satisfaction with the destination. It appears that the greater the match between self-image and destination image is, the higher is the tourist satisfaction. Similarly, the greater functional congruity is, the greater is the likelihood of tourists being satisfied with the destination. In addition, this study also indicated that self-congruity has a smaller impact (β=0.20) on satisfaction with the destination than functional congruity (β=0.52). This is justified by the study of Bosnjak et al. (2011) and Chon and Olsen (1991) who found that tourist satisfaction is better explained by functional congruity, rather than self-congruity. This phenomenon may be explained by the fact that tourists' functional congruity is biased by their self-congruity (Sirgy, Johar, Samli & Claiborne, 1991). Specifically, self-congruity involves abstract cognitive schemes which are activated and processed at a less conscious level. This is then followed by a decompositional process in which specific functional attributes of the destination are generated and consequently evaluated. The evaluation of these functional attributes is biased by a motivational tendency developed as a result of self-congruity. Therefore, the overall evaluation of the functional attributes may, in turn, strongly impact on tourist behaviour.

Objective 2: To explore the dimensions of quality of online sharing of travel

experiences through social media and to develop a scale to measure those dimensions

An instrument for assessing quality of online sharing of travel experiences was systematically developed using methods proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), Churchill (1979) and Mathwick, Malhotra & Rigdon (2001). The instrument was found to have satisfactory reliability and validity. Four factors were identified and designated as "personal relationship", "status and prestige", "enjoyment" and "novelty".

Among these four factors, "status and prestige" was found to be the most important aspect of online sharing of travel experiences, as it attained the highest factor loading. This is consistent with those who found that the sense of pride, status, affection and individual recognition are key motivators for online communications (Dholakia et al., 2004; Y. Huang et al., 2010; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004b).

Objective 3: To explore the impact of quality of online sharing of travel experiences on tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences

Tourist satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences was posited as a function

of quality of online sharing of travel experiences. As expected, this hypothesised relationship was supported. This result conforms with Tian-Cole & Scott (2004), who attested there is a positive link between psychological benefits and tourist satisfaction. That is, the stronger the psychological benefits that tourists obtain from their online sharing of travel experience, the more satisfied they are with their online sharing of travel experiences.

Objective 4: To determine the impact of tourist satisfaction at the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences on tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience

The result indicated that tourist satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences have significant influence on tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience. This result is consistent with the findings of other studies (e.g., Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Neal et al., 1999, 2007; Neal & Gursoy, 2008), which found that satisfaction with the entire travel experience was influenced by satisfaction at each phase of the trip. In addition, a direct path from satisfaction with the destination to satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences is added, followed by the recommendation by LISREL. This finding is expected because the

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more satisfied the tourists with the destination the more likely they become active and share their experiences online.

6.1. Theoretical Implications

This study has made a pioneering effort to integrate satisfaction derived from destination with satisfaction derived from recollection. It demonstrates that tourist satisfaction takes place in phases and tourists gain satisfaction not only at the destination but also after the trip is over. A clear implication of this finding is that tourist satisfaction cannot be captured at the destination level only. Interestingly, little empirical effort has addressed this issue. This finding provides a new and fertile ground for researchers who are interested in understanding the constructs of tourist satisfaction with temporal considerations.

The results also revealed that symbolic image of a destination and major functional attributes of the destination are determinants of tourist satisfaction with the destination. This evidence supports the congruity theory and echoes Bosnjak et al. (2011) who suggested that self-congruity and functional congruity should be examined simultaneously.

By focusing on quality of experience sharing in the online environment, the present study has unfolded an overlooked aspect of tourists' experiences after they return home. The results indicated that "status and prestige" was the key benefit that drove quality of online sharing of travel experiences. The importance of basic social psychological benefits in tourist experience has not only been found in online context, but also in adventure tourism (Williams & Soutar, 2009) and cruise tourism (J. Huang & Hsu, 2010). The second most important benefit is novelty. This finding is in line with Pine & Gilmore (1999) who noted that one fundamental tourist experience is the desire for learning something new that differs from prior life experiences.

This study demonstrates an effective approach to measure tourist experience. An instrument that measured tourists' online sharing of travel experiences was developed, with good construct reliability and validity, and strong predictive power on satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. It is anticipated that the instrument can be used by other researchers to develop and verify tourists' online experience and behaviour.

6.2. Managerial Implications

In light of the findings reported here and given the apparent similarity of the services and experiences offered by competing destinations, DMOs must rethink their strategies. Tourism professionals must concern themselves not only with providing quality services at the destination but also with enhancing tourist experiences at home. At the destination level, the findings of this study suggested that self-congruity and functional congruity play different roles in affecting tourist satisfaction. Although it is not possible to control all the elements contributing to the shaping of the self-image of a tourist, it is possible to manipulate some of them. For instance, promotional materials could portray a destination as a place in which people can experience things they feel comfortable with based on their true self. In addition, destination marketers could investigate tourists' expectations of the destination attributes, and provide accordingly the experience customers desire in the destination. For instance, exotic destinations and unique cultures could be featured in promotional materials to arouse tourists' interest and enhance their satisfaction.

This research provides social network site operators a measurement tool to evaluate and understand tourists' experience of online sharing after tourist return home. Four

psychological benefits derived from sharing travel experience online were identified: personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty. Although these dimensions are seemingly outside the direct control of the operators, programmes and strategies can be designed to influence users' experiences. For instance, status and prestige is found to be an important component of the online sharing experiences. Social network sites could establish and promote recognition programmes as a catalyst for more voluntary behaviour (i.e. sharing travel experience and providing comments to others). Such increased interactions with others strengthen the likelihood that online users will gain more benefits such as communication, discussion and exchange of travel experience, extension of relationship, and involvement with other audiences. Rewards can additionally be administered as a helpful tool to promote experience sharing (Qu & Lee, 2011). The importance of personal relationships in the quality of online sharing of travel experiences was also highlighted in the study. To foster such benefits, social network sites could provide various online tools where online users feel they are connecting with others. Some online tools (i.e. notification of responses and feedback to posts and communications) would be beneficial for online users (Qu & Lee, 2011).

This study found that satisfaction at an early stage was related to satisfaction at a later

stage. Hence, it is essential for both DMOs and social network site operators to pay

attention to each phase of a trip. Many elements/aspects are involved in the formation

of tourists' satisfaction, from the providers at the destination level, which offer

specific services of accommodation, transport, tourist offices, local residents, natural

and artificial resources, among others, to the experience sharing during recollection

stage. The situations become even more complicated when a single unpleasant

incident at any one phase leads to negative satisfaction with the entire travel

experience, depending on how important the incident is to the tourist. Hence, there is a

definite need for all parties involved to manage and control every tourist encounter to

achieve a high level of satisfaction with the entire travel experience.

6.3.   Limitations and Future Research

While this study makes several contributions to both theoretical and managerial

perspectives, limitations should be recognized. First, data were collected at one point

in time, not longitudinally. This approach is not without problems because it requires

respondents to recall their satisfaction with the destination. Future research could

collect data at two points in time, one at the destination and another at the recollection

phase. This will strengthen the validity of the findings. Another limitation is the lack

of generalisability of findings across different tourism experiences. The scales for this study were developed for online sharing of travel experience. The findings cannot be generalized across other modes of sharing of travel experience, such as sharing over the phone or face-to face. Future studies could validate the findings of this study using a wider context. Third, the study population was limited to Hong Kong university students and their most recent vacation travel experiences within the past six months. This means that satisfaction of only university students in Hong Kong, during on-site and recollection stages of their most recent tourist experience, was addressed. Although this sample unit was deemed appropriate, different results may be obtained in other sample populations. Fourth, there may be biases in measures of self-congruity after they were aggregated into single item indicators (actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity). Further studies are recommended to investigate these four perspectives using unaggregated items. It will help researchers better understand the impact of self-congruity on satisfaction more comprehensively. In order to develop a parsimonious questionnaire, functional congruity was measured by five facets of perceived utilitarian attributes of a destination (Bosnjak et al., 2011). Adopting such an approach may have excluded the ideal performance of the destination. Future research could use ideal performance and perceived utilitarian attributes to measure functional congruity. Finally, this study

only examined tourists' satisfaction with their most recent trip experience without

specifying any geographical location. It is possible that the level of satisfaction

perceived may differ by the type of destination to be visited. For instance, Phillips and

Back (2011) suggest tourists who visit conspicuous destinations might be more

satisfied with their trips if they have opportunities to share their visits with others after

the trip. Future studies should focus on testing the satisfactory level for specific tourist

destination, using samples from different cultures to provide comparative results.

6.4.   Conclusion

The present study attempts to identify the relationships between self-congruity,

functional congruity, quality of online sharing of travel experiences, and three

measures of tourist satisfaction. It represents the first attempt to examine these

concepts simultaneously and thus the findings are of value to both researchers and

practitioners in tourism industry. A major contribution of this study is that it adds to a

growing body of literature on tourist satisfaction, and on tourist experience in

particular, besides sharing of travel experience after return.

Data were obtained from 553 Hong Kong university students using self-administered

questionnaires. The measurement was developed based on the results obtained through expert panels and pilot testing. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling were used to test reliability, validity and causal relationships of the constructs. Five hypothesised relationships were proposed. As expected, all hypotheses were supported.

Empirical findings of this study provided evidence that the proposed model is acceptable. The results are consistent with findings of previous studies in which self-congruity and functional congruity were found to be important antecedents to tourist satisfaction with the destination. The findings also suggest that personal relationship, status and prestige, enjoyment and novelty play significant roles in contributing to tourists sharing of experiences online and satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction with the entire travel experience was affected by satisfaction with the destination and satisfaction with online sharing of travel experiences. These results imply that both on-site stage (i.e. at which most of the tourism activities occur) and during recollection (i.e. at which tourists reflect and share their memorable travel experiences with others) should be considered in order to develop tourism programmes that are memorable and satisfactory. To sum up, this study provides insights to managers of tourism destinations and businesses to manage the different

stages of tourist experiences and satisfaction.

Appendix I – Pilot Test Questionnaire
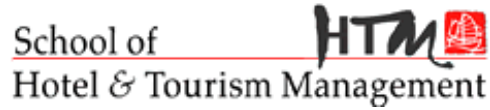
School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is conducting a study of online sharing of travel experiences. Your response can help tourism practitioners strengthen their understanding of travel experience. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Anonymity is guaranteed, and all data will be treated in an ethical and confidential manner. Thank you very much for your participation.

Section I. Screening Questions

1. Are you a university student in Hong Kong?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No(Terminate)

2. Did you travel abroad for pleasure for more than one day in the past *SIX* months?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No(Terminate)

3. Did you share the travel experience (e.g., photos, videos, texts) *Online* after the trip?

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No(Terminate)

Section II. Trip Profile

1. Among the destinations you visited during the most recent trip, select a destination that impressed you most? (e.g., Tokyo, Bangkok, Milan, etc.)

Name of the Destination		Name of the Country

2. How many times have you visited the destination (excluding the most recent one)?

☐ Never	☐ 1 time	☐ 2-3 times
☐ 4-5 times	☐ More than 6 times	

3. How many nights did you spend at this destination?

   _____ nights

Section III. Self-Congruity

Take a moment to think about the kind of person who typically visits this destination. Imagine this tourist in your mind and then describe this tourist using one or more personal adjectives such as classy, poor, stylish, masculine, sexy, old, athletic or whatever personal adjectives you can use. Once you have done this, indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section IV. Functional Congruity

This section *evaluates the functional performance of this destination*. Think carefully about each statement and indicate how you value the characteristics of this destination by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	This destination had good facilities for tourists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	The quality of tourist attractions in this destination was high	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	This destination had easy access to attractions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	This destination was convenient to visit to/from my home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Attractions in this destination have been long regarded as	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6.	Attractions in this destination have a long history and good reputation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	There was difficult for you to find selected attractions you wanted to visit in the destination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	The government of the destination made it easy enough for tourists to navigate through the place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	This destination had poor services provided by the tourism and hospitality organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Tourism and hospitality organizations in the destination provided a satisfactory service quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	There was ease of communication during the vacation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section V. Satisfaction with the Destination

This section is to *understand your overall satisfaction with the destination*. Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the destination by circling the appropriate number.

1. I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with the experience at the destination

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. I am **displeased/pleased** with the experience at the destination

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. My experience at the destination was **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. My feelings about the destination are **negative/positive**

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section VI. Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

This section aims to *understand how you feel about the entire online sharing experience (e.g., posting your stories or pictures, getting feedback from audience, etc.)*. Think carefully about each statement, and indicate the degree of your agreement by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2.	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I had a sense of affiliation after receiving feedback from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	After sharing the travel experience, I experienced things that would have not normally experienced	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I gained prestige after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I reflected my trip experience through sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I gained trust from the audience after receiving their response	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my boredom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I felt upset after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	I had pleasure when sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	I feel more popular after sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	Sharing the travel experience online was a memorable experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	I felt relaxed when I shared the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	Sharing the travel experience online gave me a sense of helpfulness to the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	Sharing the travel experience online is related to my personal interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	Sharing the travel experience online was entertaining	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	People admired me when they commented my travel experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

31.	Sharing the travel experience online expressed my anger about a negative experience I had	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	Sharing the travel experience online expressed the negative feelings that I have had	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section VII. Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Travel Experience

This section is to *understand your overall satisfaction with online sharing of travel experience*. Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the experience by circling the appropriate number.

1. I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with online travel experience sharing after the trip

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. I am **displeased/pleased** with online travel experience sharing after the trip

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. My feelings about online travel experience sharing are **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. My feelings about online travel experience sharing are **negative/positive**

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section VIII. Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience (including your feelings about the destination experience and the sharing of travel experience online after you returned home)

This section is to *understand your satisfaction with the entire travel experience, including your feelings at the destination and the sharing of travel experience online after you returned home.* Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the entire travel experience by circling the appropriate number.

1. Overall, I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with the entire travel experience

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. Overall, I am **displeased/pleased** with the entire travel experience

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

<u>**Section IX. Personal Profile**</u>

This section asks for your personal information, which will be of assistance in classifying your responses. Please choose (√) for the appropriate answer.

1. In addition to sharing the travel experience online, did you share the experience ***Offline*** (i.e. face-to-face or other forms of communication) with your friends and relatives?

☐ Yes	☐ No

   1.1. If ***YES***, how often did you share the travel experience with friends and relatives?

Rarely	1	2	3	4	5	Frequently

   1.2. Did you receive any response from your audience?

☐ Yes	☐ No

      1.2.1. If ***YES***, overall, how did you feel about those response(s)?

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

2. Gender

☐ Male	☐ Female

3. Age

☐ 18 - 21 years	☐ 22 - 25 years	☐ 26-30 years	☐ 30 years or older

4. Current Education level

☐ Associate degree/Higher Diploma	☐ Degree	☐ Postgraduate

5. Year of Study

☐ Year 1	☐ Year 2	☐ Year 3	☐ Year 4 or above

6. On average, how many hours per week do you spend on the Internet?

_____ hour(s)

~The End~
Thank you very much for your time!

Appendix II – Main Survey Questionnaire

School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is conducting a study of online sharing of travel experiences. Your response can help tourism practitioners strengthen their understanding of travel experience. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Anonymity is guaranteed, and all data will be treated in an ethical and confidential manner. By responding to the survey you will immediately be included in a lottery for external hard disks. Thank you very much for your participation.

Section I. Screening Questions

1. Did you travel abroad for pleasure for more than one day in the past *SIX* months?

   ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No(Terminate)**

2. Did you share the travel experience (e.g., photos, videos, texts) *Online* after the trip?

   ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No(Terminate)**

Section II. Trip Profile

1. Among the destinations you visited during the most recent trip, select a destination that impressed you most? (e.g., Tokyo, Bangkok, Milan, etc.)

Name of the Destination		Name of the Country

2. How many times have you visited the destination (excluding the most recent one)?

☐ **Never**	☐ **1 time**	☐ **2-3 times**
☐ **4-5 times**	☐ **More than 6 times**	

3. How many nights did you spend at this destination?

   _____ **nights**

Section III. Self-Congruity

Take a moment to think about the kind of person who typically visits this destination. Imagine this

tourist in your mind and then describe this tourist using one or more personal adjectives such as classy, poor, stylish, masculine, sexy, old, athletic or whatever personal adjectives you can use. Once you have done this, indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	A typical tourist visiting this destination reflects the type of person I would like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much like the person I admire	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to how other people see me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has personality characteristics similar to mine, as perceived by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	A typical tourist visiting this destination has an image similar to people I like	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	A typical tourist visiting this destination is very much the kind of person I would like others to see me as.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section IV. Functional Congruity

This section *evaluates the functional performance of this destination*. Think carefully about each statement and indicate how you value the characteristics of this destination by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	This destination had good facilities for tourists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	The quality of tourist attractions in this destination was high	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	This destination had easy access to attractions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	This destination was convenient to visit to/from my home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Attractions in this destination have been long regarded as high quality tourist attractions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Attractions in this destination have a long history and good reputation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	There was difficult for you to find selected attractions you wanted to visit in the destination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8.	The government of the destination made it easy enough for tourists to navigate through the place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	This destination had poor services provided by the tourism and hospitality organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Tourism and hospitality organizations in the destination provided a satisfactory service quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	There was ease of communication during the vacation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section V. Satisfaction with the Destination

This section is to *understand your overall satisfaction with the destination*. Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the destination by circling the appropriate number.

1. I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with the experience at the destination

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. I am **displeased/pleased** with the experience at the destination

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. My experience at the destination was **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. My feelings about the destination are **negative/positive**

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section VI. Sharing Travel Experience Online

This section aims to *understand how you shared the travel experience online after you returned home (from this particular destination)*.

1. Where did you share your travel experience online? (You may select more than one checkbox)

☐ Facebook	☐ YouTube	☐ Twitter	☐ Personal blog
☐ Others (Please specific): _____			

2. What type of content did you share?

☐ Travel reviews	☐ Photos	☐ Videos
☐ Others (Please specific): _____		

3. Did you get any responses?

☐ Yes	☐ No

3.1. If **YES**, how frequently did you receive responses from your audience?

Rarely	1	2	3	4	5	Frequently

4. How often did you manage the content you shared online or read the feedback you received?

Never	1	2	3	4	5	Frequently

5. In general, how did you feel about the online travel experience sharing?

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section VII. Quality of Online Sharing of Travel Experiences

This section aims to *understand how you feel about the entire online sharing experience (e.g., posting your stories or pictures, getting feedback from audience, etc.)*. Think carefully about each statement, and indicate the degree of your agreement by circling the appropriate number, where [1] = "Strongly Disagree", [7] = "Strongly Agree".

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I was excited when I shared the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Sharing the travel experience online was fun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I enjoyed sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Receiving response to online sharing made me feel accepted by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my daily stress	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I gained prestige after receiving response from audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I attained social status after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I gained trust from audience after receiving their response	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	It made me feel a sense of pride after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Sharing the travel experience online relieved my boredom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I gained a new insights into myself after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	I had pleasure when sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I was doing something new and different when sharing the travel experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I feel more popular after sharing the travel experience online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	Sharing the travel experience online was a memorable experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16.	Sharing the travel experience online helped me stay in touch with the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	Sharing the travel experience online is related to my personal interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	Sharing travel experience online enhanced my self-identity after receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	After sharing the travel experience online, I felt closer to the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	Sharing the travel experience online extended my personal relationship with the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	I gained recognition by receiving response from the audience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	After sharing the travel experience online, I gained different perspectives from previous travel experiences that were not shared online	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section VIII. Satisfaction with Online Sharing of Travel Experience

This section is to *understand your overall satisfaction with online sharing of travel experience*. Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the experience by circling the appropriate number.

1. I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with online travel experience sharing after the trip

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. I am **displeased/pleased** with online travel experience sharing after the trip

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. My feelings about online travel experience sharing are **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. My feelings about online travel experience sharing are **negative/positive**

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section IX. Satisfaction with the Entire Travel Experience (including your feelings about the destination experience and the sharing of travel experience online after you returned home)

This section is to *understand your satisfaction with the entire travel experience, including your feelings at the destination and the sharing of travel experience online after you returned home.* Please think carefully about each statement, and indicate how satisfied you are with the entire travel experience by circling the appropriate number.

1. Overall, I am **dissatisfied/satisfied** with the entire travel experience

Dissatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfied

2. Overall, I am **displeased/pleased** with the entire travel experience

Displeased	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased

3. Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are **unfavourable/favourable**

Unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favourable

4. Overall, my feelings about the entire travel experience are negative/positive

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

Section X. Personal Profile

This section asks for your personal information, which will be of assistance in classifying your responses. Please choose (√) for the appropriate answer.

1. In addition to sharing the travel experience online, did you share the experience *Offline* (i.e. face-to-face or other forms of communication) with your friends and relatives?

☐ Yes	☐ No

   1.3. If *YES*, how often did you share the travel experience with friends and relatives?

Rarely	1	2	3	4	5	Frequently

   1.4. Did you receive any response from your audience?

☐ Yes	☐ No

     1.4.1. If *YES*, overall, how did you feel about those response(s)?

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive

2. Gender

☐ Male	☐ Female

3. Age

☐ 18 - 21 years	☐ 22 - 25 years	☐ 26-30 years	☐ 30 years or older

4. Current Education level

☐ Associate degree/Higher Diploma	☐ Degree	☐ Postgraduate

5. University

☐ The University of Hong Kong	☐ The Chinese University of Hong Kong	☐ The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
☐ The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	☐ City University of Hong Kong	☐ Hong Kong Baptist University

☐ The Hong Kong Institute of Education	☐ Lingnan University	

6. What is your major? _____

7. On average, how many hours per week do you spend on the Internet?

   _____ hour(s)

If you would like to participate in the lucky draw for a prize, please provide us with your contact email: _____

~The End~

Thank you very much for your time!

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