

Understanding memorable tourism experiences: A case study

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The desire for new experiences that are truly authentic has become an important mainstream in the tourism industry. The main goal of this empirical case study was twofold: 1) To determine which concept of authenticity in tourism literature is most connected to Pine and Gilmore's theory on the search for authenticity in the context of the experience economy; and 2) after its application, to reflect on the scale of Kim et al.'s that measures memorable tourism experiences (MTEs). That scale was applied to Dutch tourists who visited the tourism destination Ylläs in Finnish Lapland during winter. This case study strengthens the idea that the increasing search for authentic tourism products within the experience economy does not imply a search for authenticity related to genuine artefacts alone. It also implies the search for constructed authenticity within existing, genuine places such as Ylläs. This outcome surprisingly fits Bruner's theory on genuine border zones and with that, asks for more large-scale research on the concept of authenticity in genuine border zones. Finally, based on the reflection of the scale, it suggests to do more research on different tourist types in relation to domains that influence the memorability of tourism experiences.

Keywords: authenticity, experience economy, memorable tourism experiences, tourism experience

Introduction

The trigger for widespread interest in tourism experiences, or more specifically authentic experiences in tourism, was the early work of Boorstin, MacCannell and Cohen (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The quest towards understanding authentic experiences in tourism started with Boorstin (1964), who criticised the ongoing loss of "real" travel due to the growth of mass tourism. MacCannell (1973), however, sympathised with tourists by stating that tourists were still looking for authenticity, but that they were not satisfied with events that were explicitly organised for tourists. After all, tourists were looking for authentic experiences that were in contrast with their daily lives. Cohen (1979) was supportive of MacCannell's main position towards authentic experiences, but argued that authenticity cannot be fixed. Authenticity is fluid as cultures and societies change over time. This view opposed MacCannell's.

It was Wang (1999) who did not want to limit authenticity to an object-related phenomenon. For that reason, he introduced the concept of existential authenticity, in which authenticity is not an object, but an activity-related phenomena; tourism experiences are no longer based on objects or events, but on personal feelings that are influenced by activities. This new perspective shifted the study from object-related authenticity to authenticity as "a part of being" (Kim & Jamal, 2007).

The desire for authentic experiences has become a mainstream in tourism and is in line with the current experience economy. This economy represents an economy in which consumers are searching for authentic experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). These experiences are very personal, and the consumer is engaged with an event on an emotional, physical, mental and/or intellectual level. As soon as tourists feel that

they themselves have little or no effect on their experience, such as a tourist who admires the Grand Canyon from an edge, it is possible to talk about an aesthetic experience. Pine and Gilmore were inspired by the ideas of philosopher Immanuel Kant, who in the 18th century stated that authenticity is a subjective experience. Following the aesthetic experience, Pine and Gilmore identified five core elements that are important for the creation of authentic experiences: 1) theme the experience; 2) use positive cues; 3) eliminate negative communication; 4) mix in memorabilia; and 5) make use of all senses (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The link between authentic tourism experiences and memorabilia is not new, according to Tung and Ritchie (2011, p. 1372): "This link is not new...[it] dates back to early environmental psychology. Since then scholars have investigated the influences of tourism experiences with respect to cognitive, affective and psychomotor changes at the individual level".

Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2010) developed a scale that measures these memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) in a context in which the quality of experiences that are provided to customers directly determines a business's ability to generate revenue (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). A tourism experience, however, is not only affected by touchable products and experienced services, but also to the degree in which a specific experience is unforgettable and thus, memorable. Tourism is one of the pioneering examples of the experience economy as demonstrated in earlier literature back in the 1970s (Hosany & Witham, 2009). The tourism experience is always unique, emotionally charged and of high personal value, tourism offers "...an alternative experience of time" (Wang, 2000, p. 116) and tourists are looking for sensational authentic experiences. Measuring the satisfaction and quality in order to provide an adequate description of the tourism experience has

become insufficient for value creation in tourism, according to Kim et al. (2010). In order to be able to measure both the tourism experience as well as the degree of memory, which has a significant relationship with the search for authentic experiences, Kim et al. developed this new scale. According to Kim et al. (2010), MTEs represent the new standard in tourism.

As a result, this case study does not only want to apply the scale of Kim et al. (2010) on tourists in order to measure their MTEs during their stay in Finnish Lapland and to research how these MTEs relate to the concept of authenticity within the experience economy, but also wants to reflect on that scale, in order to help improve the effective management of tourism experiences.

Theoretical framework

The debate on the meaning of the concept of authenticity continues in tourism studies (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Hall, Gössling, & Scott, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2009; Page & Connell, 2009). According to Chhabra (2010), there are several dominating discourses when it comes to the interpretation of authenticity in tourism: Essentialist, constructivist, and existentialist. The essentialist discourse considers authenticity as "...in the spirit of frozen heritage" (Chhabra, 2010, pp. 795–796) and advocates cultural continuity by local communities. This discourse states that authenticity is a tangible asset, a tourist quest for authenticity to escape from daily life, somewhere else in other cultures and in purer, simpler lifestyles. The constructivist ideology believes that authenticity is dictated by the tourists' perceptions of authenticity, and advocates consciously created pseudo-packages. Authenticity in this case is adapted to suit the customers' needs and a capitalist approach is pursued (Chhabra, 2010). The existentialist discourse uses terms such as *self-discovery* and *being true to yourself* and stands clearly for optimising experiences.

Essential, constructive and existential authenticity all focus on the social psychological part of the tourism experience (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). In the 1970s, the tourism experience was considered as fake and superficial on the one hand, and as a serious search for authenticity, on the other hand (Cohen, 1979; MacCannell, 2001). In recent decades, tourism experiences have become more and more important for tourism studies, especially as soon as it became clear that tourism experiences mean value creation within the tourism industry. The tourism experience is a complex combination of especially subjective factors that shape the feelings and attitudes towards a tourist's visit. The tourism experience is related to satisfaction, where a tourism experience is "...a subjective mental state felt by participants" (Otto & Ritchie, 1996, cited in Mendes et al., 2010, p. 112). The experience is complex, it does not start at arrival, neither does it consist of separate elements, nor does it end at the moment the actual trip ends (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). It is that memorable experience which has become an important phenomenon in tourism and leisure; it creates a holistic and long-lasting personal experience and indeed

...consumers are in search of experiences that "dazzle their senses", "engage them personally", "touch their hearts" and "stimulate their minds" (Schmitt, 1999) whilst indulging in "...fantasies, feelings and fun" (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). People are in search

of unique, memorable and extraordinary experiences (Hosany & Witham, 2009, p. 4)

It is the memorable tourism experience which is important for value creation in tourism. As a result of this insight, research on tourism experiences has shifted from researching tourism objects themselves to researching the subjective interpretation of those objects (Kim et al., 2010). The same has happened to research on the concept of authenticity in tourism. This has shifted from essential to constructive to existential.

After reviewing research on tourism experiences, Kim et al. (2010) focused on memory research, and discovered various factors that influence the memorability of an event. These include affective feelings, cognitive evaluations and novel events. They listed sixteen potential constructs of MTEs. After their data collection and the refinement of the measurement scale, seven scale items, with twenty-four indicators, remained: hedonism; refreshment; local culture; meaningfulness; knowledge; involvement; and novelty were regarded as important components of the tourism experience which affect a person's memory (Kim et al., 2010).

The quality experiences provided to customers which are indeed memorable directly determine a business's ability to generate revenue (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). However, the extant tourism literature has provided limited explanation of the factors that characterise memorable tourism experiences (Kim et al., 2010). Thus, the goal of the study of Kim et al. (2010) was to develop a valid and reliable measurement scale that will assist in understanding the concept and in improving the effective management of the memorable experience. This measurement scale assists in understanding the concept of authenticity in especially the field of tourism and may help improve the effective management of tourism experiences.

Although Kim et al. (2010) conclude that they have successfully developed and validated a MTE scale, the data were collected by convenience sampling among college students in one region in the US.

Materials and method

The limited ability to generalise the study results of Kim et al. (2010) is undeniable. But despite this limitation, it was decided to apply the scale to Dutch tourists who visited the tourism destination of Ylläs in winter. The aim of the case study was not only to measure the MTEs and to reflect on them, but also to get insight into how these MTEs were related to the concept of authenticity in the context of the experience economy. In 2010 and 2011, the scale was applied on Dutch visitors to a small tourist destination in Peru. It was the first trial to test the scale and to experience how to understand the outcomes. The scale was tested with 15 respondents who had just visited the tourism destination of Vicos in the mountains of Peru. The outcome was that the respondents had experienced the tourist product of Vicos as memorable, due to the fact that, according to all respondents, it was an authentic experience (Cornelisse, 2014).

Vicos is a small-scale tourist destination with seven homestays and lies at an elevation of more than 4 000m at the base of the highest peak in Peru, Huascarán. The approximately thousand inhabitants are primarily farmers, weavers, and bee-keepers and are spread throughout a large area. They have maintained their culture and are now trying to develop community-based

tourism for economic development. After the survey among 15 respondents, four respondents were invited for an in-depth interview. They were asked to explain what it was that had made their stay in Vicos authentic and with this memorable. According to the analysis of these interviews, the stay in the genuine homestay in an existing Quechua Indian village had influenced their experience in a very positive way (Cornelisse, 2014).

Although this study was based on a small sample, the mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods resulted in a study which had potential: it raised a number of issues concerning perceptions of authenticity among tourists that could usefully be explored with a wider and more generalisable sample (Cornelisse, 2014). In response to this explorative case study in Vicos in order to not only test the scale to measure MTEs, but also to explore how MTEs are possibly related to authenticity in contemporary tourism, in the context of the present experience economy, more research needed to be done. The follow-up case study took place on a second, different tourist destination.

In view of this debate in tourism literature about the meaning of authenticity (Chhabra, 2010; Wang, 1999) and the development of a scale to measure MTEs, the follow-up case study was concerned with: 1) the application and reflection of the MTEs among Dutch tourists who stayed at the tourist destination of Ylläs in Finnish Lapland; and 2) how these MTEs relate to the concept of authenticity within the experience economy, as outlined above.

The reason that this case study took place in Ylläs is that the development of tourism was based on the theory of Pine and Gilmore, according to the Regional Council of Lapland (2011). The development of tourism products that are full of experience and authentic received a lot of attention in Lapland: "Customers rate experience-based products in terms of their authenticity" (Regional Council of Lapland, 2011, p. 23). The villages Äkäslompolo and Ylläsjärvi, together with the Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park and seven mountains, make up the tourist area of Ylläs. The area has a capacity of over 20 000 beds. The two villages together have 750 inhabitants. The local economy is mainly based on tourism which largely takes place during the winter season from November to April.

The scale of MTEs from Kim et al. was translated from English into Dutch and then back-translated into English again to see how much the translation to Dutch was correct. In addition, the survey was examined eighteen times and checked by four other researchers before the questionnaire was distributed to departing Dutch tourists at Kittilä airport during the period December 2013 to January 2014. 94 Dutch tourists completed the survey.

In total, 515 Dutch tourists travelled to Ylläs during December 2013 and January 2014. According to the sample calculator, the number of 94 respondents is too low to give a representative picture. In total, according to this calculator, a minimum of 178 surveys should have been completed. For that reason, the results of this survey should be considered as an indication only. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten Dutch tourists. The reason for doing semi-structured, in-depth interviews was to obtain a rich, detailed and deep image of the interpretation and experience of authenticity by Dutch tourists.

Results

The results show that Ylläs scores high on four of the seven domains. Hedonism, refreshment, involvement and novelty were (strongly) experienced. Local culture, knowledge and meaningfulness were experienced less by the Dutch tourists who visited Ylläs during winter. It turns out that Dutch tourists experienced happy feelings. They were able "to let things go" and enjoyed the activities they undertook in Ylläs. The activities caused a fabulous experience. The activities were once-in-a-lifetime experiences and were experienced as unique. The holiday in Ylläs was unquestionably different from previous holidays and the tourists experienced something new. "Experienced strongly" also scored high in the domain of novelty.

The domain of local culture was experienced, but only a little. Tourists did not experience the culture. At the same time, the local people of Ylläs were seen as friendly. Refreshment was experienced, but not as strong as hedonism or novelty. The tourists had a sense of letting go of their daily routine, as well as having a feeling of revitalisation and/or getting new energy. Experiencing meaningfulness, which is significant to having the feeling that you are doing something important or that you are learning more about yourself, was not unequivocally experienced. The average was more "neutral" and "experienced a little". The involvement in activities, the sense of being sincerely interested and sincerely wanting to do something scored high. This was "experienced" to "experienced strongly" by Dutch tourists. Finally, the domain of knowledge was experienced less. Questions about obtaining more general or even profound knowledge about Ylläs and its culture was "experienced a little", although there was also a clear high score of "neutral".



Figure 1: Map of Ylläs with Äkäslompolo and Ylläsjärvi (Source: Tuulentie 2009, p. 5)

MTEs explained

The activities that were undertaken by Dutch tourists were also measured (Table 1). Husky safaris (94%) and snowmobile safaris (87%) were the most popular activities. According to two tourists, these activities influenced their MTEs in a very positive way: *"The huskies were a reason to come to Lapland, this excursion was a great experience. We wanted this for so long."* Another tourist said, *"I did not drive myself, but what an experience that was, on the snowmobile. Yes...so unique... this is only possible here, right?"* The activities were part of their MTEs.

The semi-structured interviews among Dutch tourists who visited Ylläs during winter were held after the survey, in order to get insight into why Ylläs scored high on the domains of hedonism, refreshment, involvement and novelty, but also to get insight into how their MTEs were related to the concept of authenticity. Dutch tourists responded to the question "What makes Ylläs authentic?" with words like "silence", "fairy tale", "unique" and "winter wonderland". A transcript of an observation report while taking various interviews shows these reactions:

"The silence...and it is so beautiful, fairy tale even," said a Dutch tourist (28) about the village of Äkäslompola in Finnish Lapland. Her traveling companion (30) felt admiration and surprise as soon as she arrived. She found the snowy landscape very beautiful, it was a *"true winter wonderland"*. Another tourist (56) found her trip *"incredible"*. All activities, the huskies, the snowmobile trip and the visit to the ice hotel, but especially the Northern Lights...walking in silence...all these activities touched her.

According to the analysis of the transcriptions, it appears that the MTEs and authenticity in Ylläs were strongly linked to the natural environment and the experience of unique nature. One statement in relation to the word authenticity in the context of MTEs in Ylläs was: *"You are in the middle of nature, that's uh...unique"* (tourist interview, September 2015). Despite the fact that 76% of the Dutch tourists visited a husky farm and 54% a reindeer farm, the local culture was experienced less. Moreover, the observation reports showed that the Kellokas Visitor Centre in Ylläs contains a permanent exposition of the nature and culture of and around the villages of Äkäslompola and Ylläsjärvi. None of interviewees had visited the exhibition. Tourists spoke little about culture during the interviews. When they spoke about "authenticity", it was always in relation to the unique landscape of Ylläs.

Authenticity in the context of the experience economy

On Monday we started with a snowmobile excursion. That was really great...Of course, it was dark by that time. That was a bit scary, but at the same time the darkness gave a kick. Everywhere around you, you see nothing but trees and the lights of the other scooters. You hear a lot, but you cannot see. Also the trail that they chose, uh...I assume it was a standard round... but it was very diverse (tourist interview, December 2013).

The woman in this interview is aware of the fact that the trail was set for the snowmobile safari. She indicates this with the words *"standard round...but it was very diverse"*. This did not influence her MTE in a negative way, however; the activity

Table 1: Activities undertaken by Dutch tourists in winter (N = 94)

Activity	n	Per cent
Husky safari	88	94
Snowmobile safari	82	87
Husky farm	71	76
Cross-country skiing	63	67
Snowshoeing	60	64
Reindeer farm	51	54
Downhill skiing	50	53
Snow village	47	50
Reindeer safari	41	44
Northern Lights	35	37
Ice fishing	21	22
Sauna	10	11
Other...	8	9
Lapland tipi	7	7
Santa Claus	3	3

was evaluated as really great. Another tourist was aware of the fact that the trail was set. How did this influence his MTE?

Look, we came here for the experience. Looking for something different than a standard ski holiday. A week in the cold, in the dark...There were some very nice things, uh...like the snowmobile safari. You just want to experience it once. And then you do a precautionary round, with 15 snowmobiles in a row, that does not matter. Normally you stumble across it if something is not real and we thought that to be honest. You know it's all been put together in advance, but here you feel it's unique and nobody else has ever experienced it. Really very special (tourist interview, December 2013).

The MTEs and interviews demonstrate that object-related authenticity indeed may have a positive influence on activity-related authenticity, as Wang and Wu (2013) already concluded. In this case study, the MTEs were indeed influenced by the surroundings and activities. The question now, however, is the one that is related to the debate on essentialist or constructivist authenticity in which Chhabra (2010) claims that traces of essential authenticity remain important in experiencing authenticity. The respondents were aware of the staged elements in Ylläs, such as the husky and snowmobile tours, but also the presence of Santa Claus. Nevertheless, the respondents qualified Ylläs as unique, different, authentic and therefore memorable. The reason was that the activities took place in a genuine Lappish environment, in pure, true wilderness. That element was experienced as unique and authentic.

Reflection on the scale of MTEs

For 99% of respondents, it was their first visit to Ylläs. For one respondent it was the second time. This fact could explain the high score on the domains of hedonism and novelty. If a tourist visits a destination for the first time, this could increase the chance of a high score on the domains of hedonism and, in particular, novelty. Novelty consists after all of statements such as *"it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience"* and *"the activities were unique"*.

The motivation for travelling to Ylläs was to obtain physical or mental energy (56.8%) for most respondents, but also to temporarily escape everyday life (63.7%). This motivation to travel to Ylläs may have influenced the score related to the domain of refreshment: *“A visit to Ylläs gives a feeling of freedom and gives new energy”*. The same applies to the domain of involvement, with statements such as *“I visited places I really wanted to visit”*. During the interviews, it was stated that the unique winter wonderland with its Northern Lights and snow, as well as the huskies, were reasons to travel to Ylläs. Tourists were sincerely involved in the activities they undertook. Meaningfulness was not really, or neutrally, experienced. Only 18% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to use their holiday in Ylläs to change their everyday life, and 8% was motivated to find more meaning in life with the help of their stay in Ylläs (Table 2).

In addition to the MTEs and the motivation, respondents were also asked how they would characterise themselves as tourists. For this question, the fifteen tourist types of Pearce, adjusted by Foo et al. (2004), were used. The respondents in Ylläs were asked to characterise themselves as tourists, and were allowed to tick several tourist types (Figure 2).

Based on this overview of tourist types in Ylläs, it can be concluded that most respondents characterised themselves as an independent mass traveller, anthropologist and/or escapist. Dutch tourists who visit Ylläs can be typified as independent tourists who book the tour package, but travel independently. They are interested in local cultures and like to stay in quiet places. The Pearson correlation analysis shows that there is neither a strong correlation between the tourist types of independent mass traveller and escapist, nor

between the different tourist types and the MTEs in this case study. There is, however, a modest correlation between the anthropologist tourist type and the MTE domains of hedonism and refreshment (Table 3)

Table 2: Motivation for travelling to Ylläs in winter (absolute numbers)

Motivation		n
Physical and/or mental energy	totally disagree	4
	disagree	14
	neutral	20
	agree	45
	totally agree	11
Total		94
Escape daily life temporarily	totally disagree	1
	disagree	8
	neutral	24
	agree	39
	totally agree	22
Total		94
Find meaning in life	totally disagree	20
	disagree	28
	neutral	35
	agree	9
	totally agree	1
Total		93
Change everyday life	totally disagree	14
	disagree	26
	neutral	35
	agree	16
	totally agree	2
Total		93

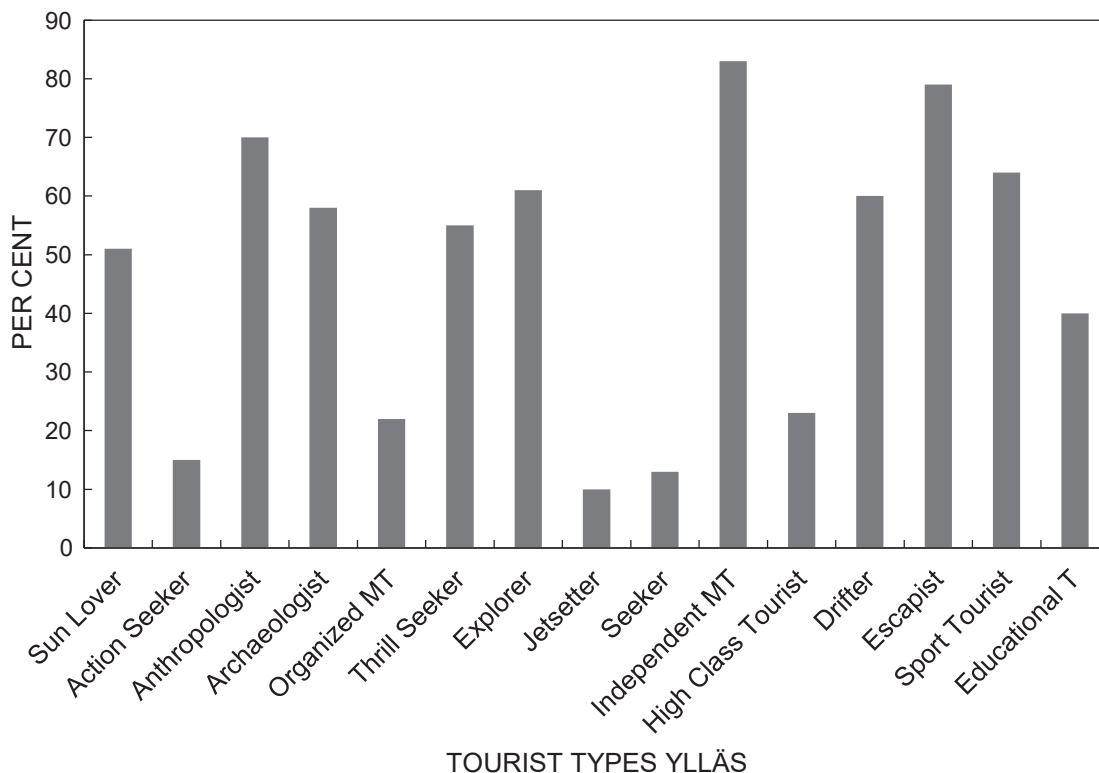


Figure 2: Tourist types in Ylläs

Table 3: Correlation between the anthropologist tourist type and MTE domains of hedonism and refreshment

Correlations		Action Seeker	Anthropologist
Hedonism	Pearson Correlation	-0.015	0.433
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.890	<0.001
	N	93	93
Novelty	Pearson Correlation	0.156	<0.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.136	1.000
	N	93	93
Local cult	Pearson Correlation	0.082	0.223
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.434	0.032
	N	93	93
Refreshment	Pearson Correlation	0.014	0.404
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.893	<0.001
	N	93	93
Meaning	Pearson Correlation	-0.080	0.230
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.451	0.027
	N	92	92
Involvement	Pearson Correlation	-0.001	0.193
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.994	0.064
	N	93	93

There also appears to be a modest negative correlation between the jetsetter and high-class tourist types with the domains of meaningfulness and involvement (Table 4).

The Pearson correlation demonstrates that there might be a difference between tourist types and the domains that influence the memorability of their tourism experiences. After all, Kim et al. (2010) indeed state that MTEs are very personal. At the same time, during the research and development of the seven domains, based on the analysis of the data that was obtained from US college students, Kim et al. (2010) deleted nine other domains. These domains included, among others, relaxation, happiness, participation, assessment of value, and assessment of service. One of the limitations of this study (Kim et al., 2010) was that the data were collected using convenience sampling of college students enrolled at a university in one region of the US.

Based in the outcomes of the possible correlations between tourist types and MTEs, an additional analysis of all data that was collected in Ylläs was done, in order to be able to reflect on the nine domains that were deleted in the final scale of Kim et al. For example, the deleted domain of relaxation means having a feeling of comfort and pleasure, without being involved in a physical activity (Kim et al., 2010). Relaxation certainly takes place in Ylläs; the sauna plays an important role in both the local culture and the tourist product. 11% of the respondents participated in a paid excursion to a sauna. Another domain, assessment of the service, is all about an individuals' perceived

Table 4: Correlation between jetsetter and high-class tourist types and MTE domains of meaningfulness and involvement

Correlations		Meaning	Involvement
Jetsetter	Pearson Correlation	-0.025	-0.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.813	0.448
	N	92	93
High class tourist	Pearson Correlation	-0.121	-0.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.254	0.343
	N	91	92

quality of service that is provided by the tourism business (Kim et al., 2010). Although the fact that this domain was deleted in the final scale of Kim et al., it could be relevant for a tourist destination such as Ylläs. The reason is that Ylläs considers service as one of the most important elements of its tourist product (Ylläs Travel Information, 2017). Finally, the domain of happiness is related to a feeling of joy that springs from the heart (Kim et al., 2010). According to the tourism marketing agency of Finland, it is Santa Claus' (one of the tourist products of Ylläs) annual mission to deliver happiness around the world (VisitFinland, 2017). 3% of the respondents, who in this case study all travelled without children, visited Santa Claus.

Conclusion

The desire for authentic experiences has become a mainstream in tourism and is in line with the current experience economy. This economy represents an economy in which consumers seek authentic experiences. Authentic experiences are always personal, and are experienced by engagement on an emotional, physical, mental and/or intellectual level. The link between authentic tourism experiences and memorabilia is not new to researchers such as Tung and Ritchie (2011). In response to the increasing desire for authentic experiences, Kim et al. (2010) developed a scale that is able to measure memorable tourism experiences (MTEs). MTEs embody both the tourism experience as well as the degree of memorability of the experience. These are two aspects that have a significant relationship with the search for authentic experiences. According to Kim et al., MTEs symbolise the new standard in tourism, the quality of experiences that are provided to customers which are indeed memorable, and directly determine a business's ability to generate revenue (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

The debate on the concept of authenticity in tourism continues at the same time. According to Chhabra (2010), there are several interpretations of authenticity that dominate the discussion: essentialist, constructivist, and existentialist. All three are related to the socio-psychological element of authenticity. Essentialist and constructivist, however, are object-related, and existentialist is activity-related. The question of this case study was: "What are the analyses of the MTEs among Dutch tourists who visit Ylläs in winter and how are these MTEs related to authenticity in the context of the experience economy?"

This case study took place in Ylläs, Finnish Lapland. The reason is that the theory of Pine and Gilmore on the experience economy was used in the development of tourism in Ylläs. And indeed, the analysis of MTEs of Dutch tourists who visited Ylläs in winter ($n = 94$) confirmed a high score, especially on the four domains of hedonism, novelty, involvement, and refreshment. Local culture, knowledge and meaningfulness were experienced less by the respondents. One possible explanation for this is that Ylläs focuses fully on providing experiences that are authentic and unique in nature instead of culture.

In order to gain insight into what contributed to the fact that the respondents evaluated their stay in Ylläs as memorable, semi-structured interviews ($n = 10$) were held. These results demonstrated that the existential interpretation of authenticity, which is activity-related in the context of Ylläs, was probably affected by the surroundings and excursions, all linked to object-related authenticity. The question now was, whether

the object-related authenticity had traces of essential or of constructive authenticity.

In Ylläs, it is the natural environment that is strongly connected to “authenticity”. Tourists associate authenticity in this context with pure wilderness, a unique landscape, and a winter wonderland. The area outside the Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park where most excursions took place, has nothing to do with the essential interpretation of authenticity. And still, the respondents defined their stay in Ylläs as authentic and memorable. Although the respondents were aware of the fact that excursions such as the husky safari were staged, they experienced Ylläs as authentic due to the fact that all excursions took place in this genuine Lappish environment.

This research strengthens the idea that the increasing search for authenticity within the experience economy does not imply a search for authenticity related to genuine artefacts (alone). It implies (also) the search for constructed authenticity within existing, genuine places such as Ylläs.

This is also the criticism on the scale of Kim et al. (2010). The researchers state that MTEs are extremely subjective and personal. Measured on a large scale, the scale of MTEs could at the same time give an indication of the extent to which the various seven domains related to the tourist product are memorable.

The Pearson correlation has, on the other hand, demonstrated that there might be a difference between tourist types and the domains that influence the memorability of their tourism experiences. In the case of Ylläs, there was a modest correlation between the anthropologist tourist type and the MTE domains of hedonism and refreshment. Jetsetters and high-class tourists, on the other hand, demonstrated a modest negative correlation with the MTE domains of meaningfulness and involvement.

Despite the fact that this analysis was not convincing, it may well criticise the scale of MTEs of Kim et al. The seven chosen domains that represent the MTEs are now based on a convenience sample of college students. What happens if these domains, together with the nine deleted domains, are tested on a large scale, with a focus on the different tourist types?

Although this study was based on a non-representative sample, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods have resulted in a study which has more potential. It not only raises a number of topics concerning perceptions of authenticity among tourists that could usefully be explored with a wider and more generalisable sample, possibly with a special focus on authenticity in genuine border zones as described by Bruner (2005), it also suggests doing more research on domains of MTEs in relation to tourist types and/or tourism destinations.

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