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### A Cross-cultural Investigation of Tourists' Memorable Experiences Between Two Nationalities

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to make a cross-cultural investigation into tourists' memorable experiences. A self-administrated survey was carried out between Turkish and British tourists visiting Didim, Turkey, in the summer of 2016. 247 valid questionnaires from Turkish tourists and 241 valid questionnaires from British tourists were collected. Seven dimensions of memorable tourism experiences-hedonism, refreshment, novelty, local culture, meaningfulness, knowledge and involvement - were identified through factor analysis in the study. The results also indicated that British tourists had found local culture more memorable in their travels than Turkish tourists. However, hedonism was the most memorable experience dimension for Turkish tourists. The practical and theoretical contributions of the study results are discussed.

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**Keywords:** Cross-cultural comparison; Memorable tourism experiences

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## Introduction

As Pine and Gilmore (1999) have revealed, customer experiences have been a feature of many commercial areas of interest. The tourism industry and its products are one of the good application areas of experiences, often because of the commercial structure of a destination. If a destination presents different experiences to their tourists alongside tourist satisfaction, they tend to memorize their experiences when they go back home. Therefore, memorable tourism experiences have become more important. According to Kim and Ritchie (2014), memorable experiences provide competitive advantages to destinations.

Travelling can be a privileged experience. Tourists can change and enrich themselves via these experiences. They want experience more than a product or service, because they are more memorable. In his/her baggage, a tourist brings expectations and takes home memories. Tourism touches and alters everyone without exception, because every single tourist is faced with emotion, experiences and intimacy during their travels (Lekic, Trezner and Mance, 2014).

Memorable experiences rather than standard experiences have become more important for the tourism industry in recent times. A memorable tourism experience is defined as a meaningful experience that is remembered and selectively reconstructed by the tourist when describing a travel experience (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). It cannot be said that all experiences are memorable. Therefore, the practice of conceptualizing and measuring memorable tourism experiences has risen among tourism researchers (Tung and Ritchie, 2011; Kim, Ritchie and McCormick, 2012). There are also some initiatives that are trying to develop a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences (Kim et al., 2012; Chandralal and Valenzuela, 2015). However, research in this field is scarce.

The role of culture may help in understanding tourists' behaviour as well as their experiences. Many studies have showed the influence of culture on tourists' behavior (Pizam and Jeong, 1996; Reisinger and Turner, 1997; Kim, Prideaux and Kim, 2002; Ramkinssoon, Uysal and Brown, 2011; Yu and Ko, 2012; Kim, 2012). Accordingly, an action that is acceptable in one culture may be unacceptable in another culture (Pizam and Sussman, 1995). These differences can be explained through national culture characteristics such as attitudes, social behaviors, perceptions, needs, expectations, beliefs, norms, and motivations (Ramkinssoon et al., 2011). Despite the importance of culture, tourism researchers have largely ignored the role of cross-cultural differences in tourists' experiences. Although an understanding of the cross-cultural influence of dimensions explaining memorable experiences is a wise area of investigation, efforts to date have been limited. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the cross-cultural similarities and differences within the dimensions of hedonism, refreshment, novelty, social interaction and local culture, knowledge, meaningfulness and the involvement of memorable tourism experiences across two different national groups at a specific destination.

## 1. Cross-cultural Studies and Memorable Tourism Experiences

Culture can be either etically or emically defined. From an etic approach, culture is defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 1997: 5). On the other hand, culture is defined as the “blueprint” of human activity in the emic approach. It determines the coordinates of social action and productive activity, specifying the behaviors and objects that issue from both (McCracken, 1988: 73). According to the definition, the etic approach focuses on the comparison of one culture with another and is typical for cross-cultural consumer behavior research. Researchers who prefer the etic approach for investigation look for universal perspectives and they search for constructs common to all cultures to explain the differences and similarities between cultures (Li, 2014). Thus, an etic approach was preferred in this paper.

Culture has a significant impact on tourist behavior and the topic of cross-cultural tourist behavior is pertinent as a study area in the industry (Li, 2014). On this basis, a quantity of remarkable research examining cross-cultural studies has been constructed in the literature. For example, Pizam and Jeong (1996) revealed considerable differences in the food preferences, adventures, trip length, novelty and familiarity among Japanese, Korean and American tourists. Hofstede (1997) stated that culture has differences called power distance, individualism-collectivism, uncertainty-avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. Power distance was defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions exist in a country. Individualism represents the ties between individuals that are loose, whereas collectivism shows a strong and cohesive integration in a society. Men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, while women are supposed to be more modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life in feminine-masculine societies. Uncertainty avoidance cultures are defined as the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by unknown situations (Hofstede, 1997). Reisinger and Turner (1997) noted cultural differences between Indonesian and Australian travellers. They found that Indonesian tourists were oriented towards collectivism whereas Australian tourists were more individualist. Kim and Prideaux (2003) presented significant differences among Japanese, Korean, Chinese and American airline passengers in their expectations of availability of in-flight materials, food and beverage preferences and duty-free purchases. Lee and Lee (2009) confirmed a difference between Korean and Japanese tourists in their evaluation of the image of Guam. Yu and Ko (2012) found a clear contrast in perceptions of medical tourism among Chinese, Japanese and Korean tourists. Accordingly, Korean tourists place the most emphasis on selection factors, whereas Chinese and Japanese tourists follow them respectively. Culture and cross-cultural studies show the importance of tourists' differences and the similarities of their behavior. Memorable tourism experiences may be different in regard to people's cultural differences.

A memorable tourism experience is defined as “a past personal travel-related event strong enough to have entered long-term memory” (Larsen, 2007: 15). Various

researchers have addressed the question of what exactly makes certain experiences special, spectacular and memorable: What are the triggers for more memorable experiences? How can tourism industry managers facilitate memorable touristic experiences (Tung and Ritchie, 2011)? In reference to these questions there have been some initiatives to explain and measure memorable touristic experiences, and all these efforts have certainly made a contribution to the tourism literature. For example, Kim et al. (2012) stressed that not all tourism experiences are memorable. Memorable touristic experiences are based on the personal assessment of the experiences and how they are later reconstructed. Therefore, different tourists may have different experiences from the same activity.

There are some initiatives to explain memorable tourism experiences in the relevant literature. For example, Azevedo (2009) asserted that unexpected surprises, professionalism, personnel responsiveness, courtesy and sympathy impart advantages to firms who thus strive to make memorable experiences. Morgan and Xu (2009) stressed the influence of past memorable experiences on future intentions. According to the results from data gathered from British students, their most memorable holiday places were Mediterranean beach resorts, and socialising with friends was the most cited memory.

Tung and Ritchie (2011) conducted in-depth interviews to try and understand what exactly makes an experience special. They found four key dimensions of memorable experiences: affect, expectations, consequentiality and recollection. Kim et al. (2012) developed a valid and reliable scale containing seven dimensions and 24 items, which is called the memorable tourism experience scale (MTES). These seven dimensions were determined as hedonism, refreshment, local culture, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement and novelty. In other words, according to the authors, a memorable tourism experience has these characteristics. Kim (2014) also explored the destination attributes in leading memorable tourism experiences for successful destinations in the highly competitive tourism marketplace. Accordingly, infrastructures, accessibility, local culture and history, physiography, activities and events, destination management, quality of service, hospitality, place attachment and superstructure are effective attributes in making tourists' experiences memorable. Kim and Ritchie (2014) tested the validity and reliability of MTES in a Taiwanese sample and made a comparison with cross-cultural analysis. Their findings confirmed the previously developed MTES in the Taiwanese sample. Sthapit (2013) investigated the memorable tourism experience scale with the sample population of tourists who visited Rovaniemi. According to the results, only local culture and novelty significantly influenced the tourists' behavioral intentions towards a destination. Chandralal and Valenzuela (2013) revealed the antecedents and behavioral outcomes of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) in an Australian sample. Findings from 35 in-depth interviews showed that there are eight antecedents - meaningfulness, authentic local experience, perceived significance, novelty, social interactions, serendipity and surprises, local hospitality, local guides' professionalism - that are effective in making memorable tourism experiences. Happiness and excitement were also found to be significant outcomes of memorable tourism experiences. Chandralal and Valenzuela (2015) further intended to develop a

valid and reliable measurement instrument for memorable tourism experiences. Their findings confirmed 34 items with ten dimensions: authentic local experiences, novelty, self-beneficial experiences, significance, serendipity and surprises, local hospitality, social interactions, impressive local guides and tour operators, fulfilment of personal travel interests and affective emotions. Park and Santos (2016) collected data from Korean backpackers to analyse their (1) pre- (2) during and (3) post-travel tourism experiences. According to the findings, unexpected experiences, performing rather than observing, journeys to attractions and banding with other Korean backpackers were the most memorable tourism experiences that they remembered after their travels.

A brief review of the above studies highlights the plethora of cross-cultural and experience studies in tourism literature. However, the literature has reflected a clear absence of studies examining the cross-cultural differences of tourists' memorable experiences. In other words, while memorable tourism experiences have been considered by some researchers (Tung and Ritchie, 2011; Kim et al., 2012; Sthapit, 2013; Kim and Ritchie, 2014; Kim, 2014; Chandralal and Valenzuela, 2013; Chandralal and Valenzuela, 2015), cross-cultural studies on memorable tourism experiences haven't been recognized. The concept still requires further investigation. Given the importance of memorable experiences in tourism consumption, investigating dimensions of memorable tourism experiences across different cultures is significant. Accordingly, it is expected that the cross-cultural analysis of memorable tourism experiences will contribute to the existing reservoir of knowledge on touristic experiences. The study findings will also contribute to destination managers' resources in exploring the features of each customer group, segmenting tourism markets and releasing new marketing strategies.

## **2. Methodology**

This study has a research question: What are the differences or similarities between the memorable experiences of people of two separate nationalities who visit a destination? The survey was set within the context of Didim, a touristic destination in which mass tourism is dominant and which is situated in the Aegean Region of Turkey. Didim is one of the most popular touristic destinations in Turkey and attracts both domestic and international tourists, especially British tourists. The history, climate and natural beauty of the destination are among the main attractions and there are daily tours to close historical locations such as Didim, Miletos, Priene, Ephesus and the Virgin Mary house. In this context, the sample consisted of Turkish and British tourists who attended a daily tour in or around Didim.

The fieldwork was undertaken in the months of May, June and July, 2016. Data was collected from 253 Turkish and 248 British respondents who participated in a daily touristic tour in one year, in Didim. Six Turkish and seven British questionnaires were eliminated as the data was incompletely coded. As a result, 247 Turkish and 241 British coded questionnaires were used for the analysis.

A self-administrated questionnaire was prepared as a quantitative approach. A memorable tourism experience scale (MTES) was adopted from the work of Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2012). There were seven dimensions with 23 items: hedonism (four items), novelty (four items), local culture (three items), refreshment (four items), meaningfulness (three items), involvement (three items) and knowledge (three items). Hedonism is defined as positive emotions such as enjoyment, excitement and happiness in a memorable tourism experience. Novelty represents tourists' new experiences that offer something different from their home life. Local culture is designated as social interaction with residents in a memorable tourism experience. Refreshment offers relaxation and solitude to tourists, whereas meaningfulness provides a sense of physical, emotional, or spiritual fulfilment. Involvement refers to experiences that are personally relevant to a tourist's interest, more than ones that are not. Lastly, knowledge shows individuals' development in terms of insights and skills in the literature (Kim and Ritchie, 2014). The scale was measured on a 5-point Likert scale, on which 1 represented "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represented "Strongly Agree".

The questionnaire was first carried out by tourism researchers in the university, in order to attain content validity. Their feedback formed the revised version of the questionnaire. Then, a pilot study was conducted with a sample of college students for the Turkish version of the questionnaire. Any detected ambiguities were corrected, based on the pilot study. The final Turkish version of the questionnaire was further translated into English again. This process was effected by English teachers fluent in both the Turkish and English languages. Then, back translation method was run. The questionnaire was constructed in two parts. The first part consisted of items for measuring tourists' perception of memorable experiences. The second part of the questionnaire was comprised of items to determine the tourists' demographic characteristics (Table 1).

Chi-square tests were employed to explain if there were any differences between the demographic variables of each group attending a touristic tour in Didim. Principal factor analysis was applied to describe the extent to which questions captured the same dimensions. T tests were performed to detect whether significant differences existed among memorable tourism experience factors between Turkish and British groups.

**Table 1. Chi-Square Analysis of Socio-Demographic Characteristics by Nationality**

Variables	Turkish (n=247)		British (n=241)		Chi <sup>2</sup>	P value
	N	%	N	%		
<i>Gender</i>					.97	.33
	Female	135	54.7	121	50,2	
	Male	112	45.3	120	49.8	
<i>Age</i>					64.98	.000
	18-29	111	44.9	46	19.1	
	30-44	82	33.2	62	25.7	
	45-64	36	14.6	90	37.3	
	65 and over	18	7.3	43	17.8	
<i>Education</i>					95.65	.000
	Primary	21	8.5	9	3.7	
	High School	97	39.3	68	28.2	
	Associate Degree	68	27.5	39	16.2	
	Undergraduate	58	23.5	90	37.3	
	Graduate	3	1.2	35	14.5	
<i>Trip purpose</i>					40.71	.000
	Pleasure	115	46.6	107	44.4	
	Relaxing	58	23.5	54	22.4	
	Business	15	6.1	8	3.3	
	Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)	26	10.5	42	17.4	
	Volunteer	14	5.7	8	3.3	
	Others	19	7.7	22	9.1	
<i>Trip party</i>					39.04	.000
	Alone	33	13.4	44	18.3	
	Boy/Girlfriend	68	27.5	41	17.0	
	Not Close Friends	4	1.6	13	5.4	
	Strangers	13	5.3	4	1.7	
	Husband/Wife	96	38.9	86	35.7	
	Friends	33	13.4	53	22.0	

According to Table 1, differences were recorded in terms of age and education between the two nationalities. There were no big differences between the trip purpose and trip party of the participants. However, significant differences with regard to gender were not found. Turkish tourists who were in the age range of 18-29 preferred Didim more, whereas the age range of British tourists who wanted to come to the destination was 45-64. In other words, Didim is a preferred location for young Turkish and older British tourists. Most Turkish tourists from high school versus most British tourists at undergraduate level come to visit Didim. However, the trip purpose and the tourists' trip party are very similar. Both groups mostly come to Didim for pleasure and with their husbands/wives.

### 3. Data Analysis and Results

The gathered data were analysed by performing the PASW/SPSS 18 computer programme. A factor analysis using principal factor analysis and varimax rotation was made before comparing memorable tourism experience dimensions according to the participants' responses. The item responses were treated as continuous in this study. Seven dimensions like the original scale were found, explaining 70.80% of the total variance. Barlett's test of sphericity with a value of 4541.128 ( $p < 0.001$ ),  $df: 231$  and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin calculation statistical results of 0.812 showed that the analysis seemed suitable (Table 2). In order to test whether or not the scale items represented the memorable experience construct, a reliability test was conducted. According to Sekaran (1992), Cronbach's coefficient alpha is the most popular measure of reliability for a multi-item scale. Therefore, reliability of data set was analysed through Cronbach's alpha. As seen in Table 2, values were all above the suggested (Hair et al., 2014) cut-off of 0.70 (hedonism = 0.786; knowledge = 0.853; novelty = 0.810; refreshment = 0.814; meaningfulness = 0.773; involvement = 0.766; local culture = 0.735). The results revealed the high reliability of these values for measuring each factor.

**Table 2. Underlying Dimensions of "Memorable Experience"**

Factor labels	Eigen values	Variance (%)	Factor loadings
<i>Hedonism</i> ( $\alpha = .786$ )	6.256	11.299	
I was thrilled about having a new experience			.785
I indulged in the activities			.736
I really enjoyed this tourism experience			.733
I found this experience exciting			.682
<i>Knowledge</i> ( $\alpha = .853$ )	2.080	10.669	
This experience was exploratory			.880
I acquired knowledge with this experience			.850
I learned new cultures			.818
<i>Novelty</i> ( $\alpha = .810$ )	1.734	10.051	
This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience			.862
This experience was unique			.774
This experience was different from previous ones			.743
<i>Refreshment</i> ( $\alpha = .814$ )	1.502	9.993	
This experience was liberating			.830
I enjoyed a sense of freedom			.776
This experience was refreshing			.751
<i>Meaningfulness</i> ( $\alpha = .773$ )	1.439	9.758	
I did something meaningful			.832
I did something important			.775
I learned about myself			.760
<i>Involvement</i> ( $\alpha = .766$ )	1.404	9.528	



I visited a place where I really wanted to go			.827
I enjoyed activities which I really wanted to do			.818
I was interested in the main activities of this tourism experience			.734
<i>Local culture (α= .735)</i>	1.160	9.498	
I had good impressions about the local people			.792
I closely experienced the local culture			.781
Local people in the destination were friendly			.757

Descriptive statistics and the correlation matrix variables are presented in Table 3. Summary values for research variables were computed. Table 3 demonstrates means, standard deviation values and skewness-kurtosis of the data. Standard deviations show that they are all greater than zero. The skewness and kurtosis depict a good distribution of the data, showing lower values than 2 regarded as acceptable (Hem, Iversen and Gronhaug, 2003). According to Table 3, all correlation coefficients were found significant at the 0.01 level.

Hair et al. (2014) indicate that validity is the extent to which a scale of measures accurately represents the concept of interest. Construct validity assesses the degree to which a scale represents and logically connects, via the underlying theory, the observed phenomenon to the construct. Convergence and discriminability was used to test construct validity in this study. Convergent and discriminant validity are both considered subcategories of construct validity (Ryu et al., 2008). Convergent validity assesses the degree to which dimensional measures of the same concept are correlated. High correlations indicate that the scale is measuring its intended construct (Nusair and Hua, 2010). According to correlation analysis among subdimensions' items results ( $r_{min}=0.408$   $p=0.01$ ;  $r_{max}=0.700$   $p=0.01$ ), a possibility of high correlation is seen. In addition to this, Sanchez et al. (2006) indicate that convergent validity also exists insofar as all the factor loadings are greater than 0.5 (Table 2). Besides discriminant validity, the degree to which conceptually similar concepts are distinct is shown. The measures of theoretically different factors should have low correlations with each other. Therefore, the low correlation is an indication of discriminant validity (Nusair and Hua, 2010). As seen in Table 3, the correlation results show ( $r_{min}=0.189$   $p=0.01$ ;  $r_{max}=0.461$   $p=0.01$ ) the low values. Thus, the memorable experience scale has both convergent and discriminant validity.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

	$\bar{X}$	$\sigma$	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. Hedonism	4.22	.53	1	.257*	.418*	.403*	.354*	.343*	.268*	-.470	1.029
2. Knowledge	4.21	.64		1	.206*	.272*	.264*	.221*	.324*	-.555	.047
3. Novelty	3.82	.73			1	.461*	.328*	.307*	.238*	-.594	.687
4. Refreshment	4.11	.64				1	.389*	.284*	.337*	-.911	2.155
5. Meaningfulness	4.06	.67					1	.231*	.257*	-.909	2.321
6. Involvement	4.20	.58						1	.189*	-.470	.007
7. Local culture	4.10	.65							1	-.579	.035

$\bar{X}$  = Arithmetic mean;  $\sigma$  = Std. deviation; \* $p < 0.001$  (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows the rank of each factor grouping by each nationality, based on their memorable tourism experiences. There are differences between the two nationalities in terms of rank order. For example, hedonism was ranked the most memorable tourism experience dimension by Turkish tourists (mean = 4.30), and the third most by British tourists (mean = 4.19). However, local culture was found to be the most memorable tourism experience dimension by British tourists (mean = 4.24). Turkish tourists reported involvement factor to be the second most memorable touristic experience, while knowing something about Didim was the third most memorable experience for Turkish tourists (mean = 4.19). British tourists notified that knowledge was the second most memorable tourism experience in a touristic tour in Didim (mean = 4.23). The least memorable tourism experience for both two nations was the same, novelty (mean for Turkish = 3.79, mean for British = 3.95). These results suggest that different attributes cause the value of tourists' experiences to be different for each respective nationality at a particular destination.

**Table 4. Ranking of Factor Groupings**

Factors	Turkish		British	
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean
Hedonism	<b>1</b>	4.30	<b>3</b>	4.19
Involvement	<b>2</b>	4.25	<b>5</b>	4.08
Knowledge	<b>3</b>	4.19	<b>2</b>	4.23
Refreshment	<b>4</b>	4.08	<b>4</b>	4.12
Meaningfulness	<b>5</b>	4.07	<b>6</b>	4.04
Local culture	<b>6</b>	3.97	<b>1</b>	4.24
Novelty	<b>7</b>	3.79	<b>7</b>	3.95

The independent statistical *t* test was applied to investigate if there had been any difference between the mean scores of the two nations (Table 5). It can be said that Turkish tourists generally found hedonism and involvement more memorable. However, local culture was the most memorable tourism experience for British tourists. Findings were also assessed separately for each nation and factor item. Accordingly, Turkish tourists found hedonism attributes to be more memorable than

British tourists. Turkish tourists tend to have new experiences and indulge in activities more than British tourists. No significant difference was recorded for finding their experience exciting between the two nationalities. Considering the involvement dimension of memorable tourism experiences, Turkish tourists are more inclined to involve themselves in touristic experiences than British tourists. According to the results, visiting a place that they wanted to go to, to do various things, and to be interested in the main activities, were more memorable for Turkish tourists than British ones. Local culture in the destination was more memorable for British tourists than Turkish ones. Accordingly, local people left an impression on British tourists. The British tourists got involved in the local culture, so they therefore found the local people friendly. According to the results, there were no significant differences among the other dimensions of memorable tourism experiences: knowledge, novelty, refreshment and meaningfulness. Wanting to know something about a destination, to try new and meaningful things and refresh themselves were equal for both nationalities.

**Table 5. Mean Differences in Turkish and British Tourists' Memorable Experiences When Visiting Turkey (t-test)**

Factor labels	Turkish	British	t value	Sig. t
<i>Hedonism</i>	4.30	4.19	4.06	<b>0.000</b>
I was thrilled about having a new experience	4.35	4.12	3.55	<b>0.000</b>
I indulged in the activities	4.41	4.01	6.63	<b>0.000</b>
I really enjoyed this tourism experience	4.40	4.26	2.28	<b>0.022</b>
I found this experience exciting	4.11	4.10	0.29	0.773
<i>Knowledge</i>	4.19	4.23	-0.88	0.382
This experience was exploratory	4.14	4.20	-1.04	0.297
I acquired knowledge with this experience	4.22	4.22	0.04	0.963
I learned new cultures	4.20	4.27	-1.25	0.211
<i>Novelty</i>	3.79	3.95	-0.75	0.453
This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience	3.72	3.70	0.29	0.770
This experience was unique	3.76	3.91	-1.91	0.056
This experience was different from previous ones	3.89	3.92	-0.34	0.733
<i>Refreshment</i>	4.08	4.12	-1.01	0.314
This experience was liberating	3.97	4.08	-1.50	0.133
I enjoyed a sense of freedom	4.10	4.16	-1.11	0.269
This experience was refreshing	4.17	4.17	0.13	0.897
<i>Meaningfulness</i>	4.07	4.04	0.72	0.471
I did something meaningful	4.17	4.06	1.72	0.085
I did something important	4.04	4.06	0.30	0.761
I learned about myself	4.02	3.98	0.50	0.617
<i>Involvement</i>	4.25	4.08	4.39	<b>0.000</b>
I visited a place where I really wanted to go	4.33	4.15	2.47	<b>0.000</b>
I enjoyed activities which I really wanted to do	4.25	4.10	3.81	<b>0.016</b>
I was interested in the main activities of this	4.17	3.99	5.19	<b>0.000</b>

tourism experience				
<i>Local culture</i>	3.97	4.24	-4.71	<b>0.000</b>
I had good impressions about the local people	3.97	4.17	-3.16	<b>0.002</b>
I closely experienced the local culture	4.04	4.16	-1.68	0.094
Local people in the destination were friendly	3.91	4.37	-6.49	<b>0.000</b>

## Discussion

This paper aimed to explore if there were any differences among the memorable tourism experiences of Turkish and British tourists visiting Didim in Turkey. Thus, this study contributes to cross-cultural experience measurements investigating two nationalities, which have not previously been the subject of empirical research. This study also makes a contribution in confirming the reliability of the memorable tourism experience scale by comparing two nationalities.

Experiences constitute added value in tourism (Lekic, et al, 2014). Therefore, they are important for companies. Pine and Gilmore (1999) stressed that companies can obtain a competitive advantage if they offer unique and unforgettable experiences to their customers. Tourists' memories are important in the choice of a destination and in shaping their expectations towards it. These memories are also effective in the construction and forming of experiences (Park and Santos, 2016). As Kim and Ritchie (2014: 323) stated: "To remain competitive in the fierce market place that characterizes international tourism, destination managers must provide their visitors with truly memorable experiences." The research findings conformably revealed that hedonism was the most memorable tourism experience for Turkish tourists, whereas local culture was the most memorable for British tourists. The findings also showed that only three of the factor variables demonstrated significant differences between the two nationalities (hedonism, involvement and local culture). Other dimensions - knowledge, novelty, refreshment and meaningfulness - failed to show any significant differences between the two.

Hedonism was found to be the most memorable tourism experience for Turkish tourists in this study. This area revealed a significant difference between the two nationalities in this regard. According to the researchers, tourism products have hedonic components. Emotion with enjoyment is also important for memorable tourism experiences (Kim, 2014). Positive emotions connected with tourism experiences are key elements of memorable tourism experiences (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Hedonism is also an important factor for British tourists' experiences but is the third most important factor. According to Kozak's (2002) study, British tourists are more likely to be pleasure-seeking with regard to the motivation for visiting Turkey than German tourists. Hence, hedonism is one of the key factors of memorable tourism experiences for British tourists, but on different levels from Turkish tourists.

Local culture is the most memorable dimension of tourism experiences for British tourists. According to the researchers (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003; Murphy, 2001), social interactions with others are one of the critical components of tourist experiences. It

can be said that local culture was the most memorable experience for the British tourists, because it was quite different from their own culture. However, Turkish tourists were not influenced by the local culture of Didim like British tourists. They saw similar cultural things to the ones they have in their own city. Lean (2012) stated that memories are not static but rather dynamic. They can be transformed or altered and linger throughout the ongoing processes of everyday life. Therefore, tourists' memorable experiences are important not only for during their travel but also after the holiday. In this context, British tourists took local culture home with them as a memorable experience.

Involvement is a significant factor for Turkish tourists. Pine and Gilmore (1999) stated that individuals who were immersed in an activity were more likely to have a memorable experience. Besides this, knowledge was found to be the second most important factor for British tourists. This finding synergises with the dimension of local culture. Learning new things such as new cultures is truly memorable for them. Finally, it can be said that there are significant differences between Turkish and British tourists. Destination authorities should focus on cultural differences for memorable tourism experiences. They need to consider hedonic factors while they are applying marketing practices to Turkish tourists for the purposes of promoting Didim. They should provide Turkish tourists with touristic activities and opportunities to learn new things. Destination authorities need to further local culture, knowledge and hedonistic factors in their marketing efforts for British tourists.

Despite its contributions, this study has various limitations that should be addressed in future papers. First, the survey instrument was conducted in Didim and between two nationalities. Other research may be conducted in different destinations and between different nationalities. Second, the research was carried out in a destination where mass tourism is popular. Further research may choose other destinations where other tourism types are dominant, such as health tourism, winter tourism or alternative tourism. Third, a questionnaire form was used to gather data from the participants. Other researchers may employ interviews with participants for deeper understanding.

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