

The Place of Challenge and Post-Travel Culture Involvement in Small Group Tourism

by

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SUMMARY

This interdisciplinary study advances the understanding of how international tourists can develop long-term interest in cultures significantly different to their own by conceptualising and empirically exploring a previously unexamined relationship between perceived challenge and post-travel culture involvement. In addition to tourism and leisure studies, anthropology, positive psychology, social psychology and education literature, this study has closely engaged with the theories of acculturation and stress, appraisal and coping. Informed by these theories, a novel conceptual framework was developed to examine potential involvement benefits of manageable stress, signified by challenge as a positive cognitive appraisal of experience as somewhat stressful, substantially effortful and personally significant. Post-travel culture involvement was approached as tourists' behavioural involvement with a host culture after travel.

The thesis critically analyses the findings from semi-structured in-depth interviews with twenty-one Australians who visited eleven countries across Europe, Asia, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa on small group, single-destination cultural tours facilitated by four Australian outbound tour operators in 2015-2016. The study focused on group travel as an underappreciated travel mode that could potentially support the relationship in question. Thematic and non-cross-sectional analysis methods were employed to examine individual concepts and illuminate contextual links between them.

The findings are presented through three distinctive chapters. The first analyses a confluence of tourist motives and establishes motivational relevance and congruence of the tours. It lays the foundations for the second chapter that discusses tourists' coping with diverse anticipated and unexpected demanding situations; their significance to the participants' personal life circumstances, self-image and self-interests; and tourist perspectives on challenge and its place in their experiences. Thus, in addition to theoretical and conceptual contributions, the study provides rich empirical insights on several truly disorienting situations, beyond contact with adversity. In particular, it highlights a complex relationship of Western tourists with religion and spirituality and argues that further attention should be afforded to touristic experiences of any destinations where religion remains a dominant aspect of everyday life. The third chapter explores post-travel culture involvement and pre-tour and on-tour sources, including moments of challenge. Mental challenge, arising from emotionally, intellectually and interculturally demanding but beneficial encounters, was found to be a prominent contributor to post-travel involvement through reading about the destinations' histories and cultural heritage, as the tourists searched for answers to

unresolved questions about themselves and their hosts. However, involvement with food and the arts on return was significantly less popular.

Beyond the role of challenge in group travel, the spectrum and the sources of post-travel culture involvement, this study reveals broader implications for understanding tourist motivations for culture learning and the mental effort they are prepared to invest into understanding other ways of thinking and living. It also illuminates tourist perspectives on cultural difference, sameness, and tolerance; and discusses how heightened concern with the latter can reduce personal relevance of intercultural encounters; and calls for further research on the ethical dilemmas faced by tourists and tour operators. The thesis concludes with recommendations for tour marketing, itinerary design, and selection and training of tour leaders.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed.....

Date.....05 February 2020.....

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.2. Background and Significance of the Study

Tourism has been widely acknowledged as an agent of change, both positive and negative, and not only by tourism scholars (Pizam, Uriely, & Reichel, 2000; Pratt & Liu, 2016; Reisinger, 1994; Thyne, Lawson, & Todd, 2006; Tomljenovic, 2010), anthropologists (Salazar, 2013; Salazar & Graburn, 2014), governments (Bloch, 2017; Edensor, 2002) and tourism businesses (Armstrong & Weiler, 2002; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003; Transformational Travel Council, 2017a) but also by tourists themselves (Cohen, 2010a; Lean, 2015; Van Winkle & Lagay, 2012). The literature typically differentiates between two broad groups of outcomes: impacts on hosts and impacts on tourists. Most research in this area, however, remains focused on the long-term impacts of tourism on the sustainability of economies (Correia, Serra, & Artal-Tur, 2017; Huang, Beeco, Hallo, & Norman, 2016), natural environments (Armstrong & Weiler, 2002; Weeden, 2001), and identities of communities (Diekmann & Smith, 2015; Wu, Wall, & Tsou, 2017) rather than on tourists' experiences of the dynamic host-guest relationship and its effects on them (Smith, Waterton, & Watson, 2012).

Indeed, Heimtun (2007, p. 135) highlights in a review of tourism theory issues that many scholars have remained preoccupied with the triple-bottom line impacts of tourism at a plethora of touristic sites, including whole communities at destinations, and that little work had been done on understanding its wider impacts beyond the 'spatial margin'. Whilst further progress has been made by the research on transformative travel (Cohen, 2010a; Hirschorn & Hefferon, 2013; Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017; Lean, 2015; Reisinger, 2013c), the literature on the endurance of tourism effects on tourists' relationship with host destinations remains scarce (Lean, 2012; Smith, 2012b; Walker & Moscardo, 2016).

Post-travel culture involvement, such as tourists' behavioural involvement with a host culture after travel, is a noticeable example of an insufficiently explored individual-level outcome of tourism¹ (Tikhonova, Kim, & Butler, 2016, 2018). Current research on culture involvement has typically focused on tourists' behaviour during travel (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Reisinger, 2013a), and other literature on individual-level outcomes has examined post-trip satisfaction, subjective well-being, positive word-of-mouth, and intentions to revisit (Carlson,

¹ An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Kim and Butler (2016, 2018). I developed the conceptual framework, based on the literature review I had conducted, and wrote the full draft of the extended abstract (2016 conference paper) that required some edits by the co-authors. The 2018 book chapter is an expanded version of the abstract. My contribution to both publications was 80%.

Rosenberger, & Rahman, 2016; Huang, Afsharifar, & van der Veen, 2016; Kastenholz, Eusébio, & Carneiro, 2013; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018). Among the few studies that have touched on post-travel behaviours that could be examined from the perspective of post-travel culture involvement are those discussing the relationship between tourists' consumption of local food during travel and post-trip sharing of food souvenirs at home (Sthapit, 2018), and between the usability and functionality of souvenirs and trip memorability (Sthapit & Björk, 2019; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Several others examine related outcomes, such as the importance of critical engagement for cross-cultural understanding (Raymond & Hall, 2008); personal changes experienced by tourists once they returned home, including, to a lesser extent, their relationship with the places visited (Grabowski, 2013; Kanning, 2013; Walker & Moscardo, 2016); and post-travel reflection more broadly as an outcome of transformational, or transformative tourism (Bosangit, Hilbert, & McCabe, 2015; Reisinger, 2013c; Robledo & Batle, 2017). Anecdotal evidence of change in perspective on other cultures and increased interest in them as a result of travel is also discussed by Kirillova et al. (2017) among other moments of epiphany framed by the authors as serendipitous transformations.

This research gap probing how culture involvement manifests itself in tourist behaviour after travel and what influences it, is surprising considering the important socio-cultural implications for the relationship between tourists and host-culture nationals, particularly in tourists' home countries. Indeed, tourists, as carriers of dominant national cultures, are likely to face the questions of accepting minority cultures that during travel functioned as dominant or host (Arends-Tóth & Vijver, 2003). Furthermore, drawing on the studies discussing the effects of participation in ethnic community events, it can also be argued that building on past cultural experiences through further self-education and cultural participation not only can support the goal for life-long learning but can also contribute to improved cross-cultural understanding; strengthened community ties; and heightened appreciation of cultural diversity in multicultural societies (Lee, Arcodia, & Lee, 2012; Savinovic, Kim, & Long, 2012).

Active involvement with another culture such as engaging with literature (Kelly, Gayo, & Carter, 2018; Stebbins, 1996), learning a language (Drozdowski, 2011) and mastering authentic crafts (Tan, Kung, & Luh, 2013) can deepen an individual's understanding through exposure to its various facets, complexities and idiosyncrasies, and through assigning personal meanings to these activities. It has also been posited that culture involvement can positively influence not only increased tolerance and improved understanding of other cultures but also one's improved ability to co-exist effectively in multicultural environments (Noble & Ang, 2018). This ability, also known as cross-cultural competence, comes down to

establishing effective communication and building and maintaining productive positive relationships with members of other cultures as a result of gaining relevant cultural knowledge and social skills (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001).

At the same time, tourists' involvement with other cultures is dependent on several conditions which it can be harder to fulfil in certain contexts. Central to the understanding of the sources of culture involvement either during or after travel is the leisure studies concept of psychological involvement as 'a psychological state of motivation, arousal, or interest between an individual and recreational activities, [and] tourist destinations' (Havitz & Demanche, 1990, p. 180). When cultural differences are significant and contact is relatively brief, it can be difficult to find personal relevance in the cultures of others (Massara & Severino, 2013; Timothy, 1998), let alone develop a level of interest in the host culture that would last 'beyond the time and space of the vacation' (Hough, 2011, p. 88; Lean, 2012). This difficulty can be partly attributed to the complexity of cultural identification that involves 'understanding of a group's values' (Rasmi, Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2014; Usborne & Taylor, 2010, pp. 884-885), sometimes different to those of tourists (Brown, 1999; Jafari & Scott, 2014; Massara & Severino, 2013), which together with beliefs and ideologies represent 'cognitive aspects of culture' (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 18).

Acculturation literature on cultural adaptation further demonstrates that contact with different systems of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours is a trying aspect of international travel, as own values are 'generally more resistant to change' (Stephenson, 2000; Ward et al., 2001, p. 108). It is, therefore, not surprising that tourists find it difficult to identify with localised meanings of cultural sites (Brown, 1999; Walker & Moscardo, 2016) and local ways of life (Kirillova et al., 2017). Furthermore, personal ties such as common histories, friendships, or family connections are a prerequisite of identification not only with the places visited (Palmer, 2005; Poria, Biran, & Reichel, 2006; Puczko, 2013) but also with cultural groups to which they belong (Graham & Howard, 2008; Massara & Severino, 2013). Consequently, the absence of these ties can affect the experience of both casual and serious cultural tourists as more and less culturally motivated groups (Stebbins, 1996, 1997a, 2007; Timothy, 2011).

This is where it is important to consider the paradox of difference that characterises cultural tourism. McKercher and Du Cros (2003) propose that the more significant cultural distance is, the more attractive a destination becomes. This observation is consistent with tourists' interest in exotic cultures and their need for novel experiences (Franklin, 2003; Lee & Crompton, 1992), particularly in cultural tourism (Kastenholz et al., 2013). Ivanovic (2008, p. 236) further argues that 'the attractiveness of cultural heritage lies in differences, not in

sameness'. At the same time, Poria (2010, p. 218) expresses a common concern that 'heritage sites and the visitors to such sites often aim to differentiate and create social borders among peoples'. By placing the emphasis on uniqueness that difference is seen to stem from, cultural tourism managers encourage consumptive tourist behaviour characterised by separating what belongs to 'us' from what belongs to 'them', and what simultaneously can be objectified and consumed in a simplified form. As Graham and Howard (2008, p. 5) note, 'recognition of otherness will help reinforce self-identity', which may, in actuality, lead to increasing the distance between the self and the other, rather than decreasing it.

Finding sameness is, therefore, paramount, as it fulfils the need for safety and comfort, as tourists are more likely to feel more at ease in a foreign environment (Relph, 1976; Robinson, 2012; Seamon & Sowers, 2008). A considerable number of tourism research papers highlight the importance of cultural similarities for destination choice and improved cross-cultural understanding, as reviewed by Ng, Lee, and Soutar (2007). According to the theory of the self (Ziller, 1990), people gravitate towards familiar objects. As they go about experiencing the world and consequently defining the picture of the self, they orient towards those features of the environment which have most meaning to them. An element of sameness is, therefore, crucial for capturing tourists' attention in an immediate encounter with the exotic.

In tourism literature, the issue of personal relevance has been addressed through the concepts of embodiment, performativity, co-creation, emotion, and cultural immersion through host-guest contact (Edensor, 1998; Mossberg, Hanefors, & Hansen, 2014; Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Richards & Wilson, 2006; Robinson, 2012), all of which are also integral to the understanding of sense of place and place attachment (Ambrosi, Marshall, & Wong, n.d.; Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Shamsuddin & Ujang, 2008). Research on the latter two concepts has primarily focused on helping tourists feel or understand the essence of the places visited, and build an emotional bond with both these places and their residents through active cognitive, emotional and sensory engagement (Biran, Poria, & Reichel, 2006; Poria, 2010; Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Waterton & Watson, 2012). It has also explored how tourists' past life experiences may intertwine with new experiences of foreign cultural realities and contribute to creating new long-lasting memories in the process (Shamsuddin & Ujang, 2008). Here, it is important to clarify that the discourse of 'helping' stems from the desire to assist already motivated tourists achieve their learning goals, rather than as a critique of tourist gazing from a higher moral ground.

Improving the quality of contact has also been identified as an effective solution. In particular, the literature on tourist-host interaction has emphasised the importance of the length and frequency of cultural participation and interaction with hosts, as well as the level of host-guest contact intimacy (Reisinger, 1994). This research has helped initiate the notion that extended forms of travel, such as backpacking and volunteer tourism, may provide better opportunities for significant immersion into the local culture, in contrast to shorter packaged holidays that offer superficial 'cocooned' experiences (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Reisinger, 2013b).

This dominant viewpoint is, however, challenged by tourism scholars who recognise the value of cultural milieu and provide examples of 'cultural moments' experienced on packaged tours, characterised by brief yet intimate experiences that may still offer significant interactions with locals (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman, 2017; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003). Moreover, more than a decade ago, Smith (2003) noted that several group tour companies had begun to offer more diverse products in response to changing demands, and it is now commonplace to see contemporary tour operators offer a variety of cultural tours that differ in group size and the number of countries visited, and offer different levels of cultural immersion. Academic literature, however, continues to present a polarised view on group travel with some authors maintaining a critical stance (Brown, 2005; Reisinger, 2013a; Salazar, 2013).

Despite these variations in the perceived effects of different forms of travel, tourism, overall, remains a predominantly temporary activity and the connections developed during travel are rarely expected to endure after people return home. In an interview with Franklin (2003), Zygmunt Bauman pointed out that despite a common interest amongst many tourists in experiencing other cultures, tourist activity is characterised by 'the tourist syndrome'. Here, long-term outcomes of tourism are diluted or lost due to the perceived temporariness of the activity. Almost a decade later, Lean (2012, p. 152) made a similar observation and posited that 'the effects of travel are often only temporary; falling by the wayside as more pertinent concerns [are] capturing one's attention upon their return'. Furthermore, evidence exists that even intimate and frequent contact provided in voluntourism programs may not be enough for tourists to 'stay connected' with the destination and its culture (Raymond & Hall, 2008, p. 537). The literature also points out the limitations of the contact hypothesis for resolving cultural stereotypes. Indeed, Tomljenovic (2010, p. 17) found that having opportunity for interaction and participation is not enough to "bring about greater understanding and mutual liking between people". Further observations on this point are offered by Walker and Moscardo (2016, p. 1256) who found that 'even with extensive, intensive, immersive and

engaging experiences it is not easy to support transformative change in tourists' such as 'sense of care of place'.

These barriers return the conversation back to effective management of cultural difference. Indeed, looking for difference may reinforce the divide between individuals and groups. Furthermore, writing about cultural differences in the times of growing tensions around immigration and the rise of nationalism globally can be construed as problematic (Markus, 2017; Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015). However, as Reisinger and Moufakkir (2015, p. 98) observe, countries with significant immigrant populations 'may no longer be called melting pots; they are better described as salad bowls', and in Australia, as a prominent example of a multicultural society, this diversity could be managed better.

According to the *National Arts Participation Survey* (Australia Council, 2017, p. 2), further referred to as the NAP survey, a significant majority of Australians continue to agree that 'multiculturalism has been good for Australia', and the *Mapping Social Cohesion* (MSC) report (Markus, 2017) references Gallup's Migrant Acceptance Index where Australia was ranked sixth out of 138 countries. However, while, overall, the dominant attitude towards immigration in Australia since 2000 has been consistently positive, the MSC report (Markus, 2017, p. 3) also offers a 'second perspective', raising concerns about 'Australia's ability to sustain the migration and social cohesion success of the post-war decades' in the light of 'the increasing geographical concentration of the overseas-born populations'.

The census data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2017a) for 2016 showed that 28% of Australia's population (including temporary entrants) were born overseas. As noted in the MSC survey (Markus, 2017, p. 1), this is 'the highest proportion among OECD countries with populations in excess of ten million', compared to '20% in Canada, 13% in the United States, and 12% in the United Kingdom'. Among the top 10 countries of birth are the UK and NZ (26%), and China, Vietnam and India (22%), and out 3,546,605 million, net overseas migration (NOM) 'accounted for 56% of [population] growth in the year to December 2016' (Markus, 2017, p. 10). The level of ethnic diversity differs significantly between urban and rural areas, as well as between Sydney and Melbourne and all other major cities. In some parts of Sydney, the percentage of people who speak a language other than English at home ranges between 34.8% and 74%, and the percentage born overseas between 44% and 57%, demonstrating that the words 'ethnic' and 'minority' do not always go hand in hand (Beer, 2009). A further major source of tension is the perceived 'radical rejectionism of Australia's secular democratic values and institutions within segments of the Muslim population' (Markus, 2017, p. 3), amidst the growing geopolitical instability, the threat of terrorism, and the controversial coverage of these and other divisive

issues in the Australian and international media (Core Data, 2016; Austin & Fozdar, 2018; Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015).

Australian national values are represented in the core civic values, including individual freedoms, equality of men and women, and peacefulness, which form part of the citizenship test, and which some Australians feel are under threat (Chisari, 2015). A combination of these fears with inclusivity and agreeableness as national characteristics (Austin & Fozdar, 2018) may explain the increase in neutral attitudes (44%) towards ethnic groups from the Middle East and North Africa, next to the average 24% holding negative opinion towards Muslims (Markus, 2017, p. 57). On the one hand, the neutral attitude could be interpreted as a transition from more negative attitudes towards a cosmopolitan mentality of 'openness to the 'Other'' (Austin & Fozdar, 2018, p. 283) and increased preference for things international (Prieur & Savage, 2015). On the other hand, as the MSC report suggests, it 'may be taken to indicate a finding that survey respondents are reluctant to disclose their true level of unease or opposition to immigrants from a number of countries' (Markus, 2017, p. 56). As the report also reveals, the views on immigration in Australia have followed a somewhat similar trajectory to the decrease in Australian tourists to the Middle East and North Africa (Tourism Research Australia [TRA], 2017b). Although these negative attitudes still represent a minority of respondents, they show that cultural diversity can be a 'cause for division', (Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015, p. 90), as well as a source of cultural capital.

As far as cultural participation in Australia is concerned, both the Australian Cultural Fields (ACF) project (Rowe & Bennett, 2018) and the NAP survey found that Australians engage predominantly with the cultures of the countries where they were born. Within the ACF project, Noble and Ang (2018, p. 303) report that Chinese, Indian, Italian, and Lebanese migrants 'indicated strong knowledge, taste and participation for items that reflected their own cultural origins', while Australians born in Australia were found to prefer cultural items representing Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia. The NAP report additionally reveals that 80% of CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) Australians engage with the arts different to their heritage or cultural backgrounds and are 'much more likely to attend First Nations arts (51%) than those not from CALD backgrounds (29%) (Australia Council, 2017, p. 52), but does not mention the rest of the population. These findings suggest that while arts appreciation levels are high (Australia Council, 2017), there is a problem with arts participation among non-CALD Australians across the board.

This literature highlights the need for further research on fostering positive intercultural contact, cross-cultural understanding and cooperation not only overseas but also at home, and on how tourism can contribute to achieving those goals. Living in a harmonious

multicultural society, understandably, requires more flexibility from its members, and the MSC report (Markus, 2017) shows that Australians today understand the importance of adjustment on both sides. It notes that 'for the majority, multiculturalism involves a two-way process of change, requiring adaptation by Australia-born and immigrant' (Markus, 2017, p. 67). This is a considerable step forward from the dominant assimilation discourse (Chisari, 2015) that speaks to the differences between assimilation and integration as two distinct acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997) and highlights the importance of acknowledging both cultural differences and similarities.

Tourism and the process of 'othering', that is of 'difference projection' (Salazar, 2013, p. 690) and stereotyping, grounded in the post-colonial critique of the former, are inextricably linked. Yet, as Seaton (2009, p. 78) observes, othering is also a universal tendency 'within human relations when like meets unlike' and 'a process that happens whenever one group first encounters an unfamiliar one'. He also argues that subconsciously undertaken cultural comparisons 'are not necessarily 'hierarchically ordered'' (Seaton, 2009, p.81). Furthermore, Robinson (2013, p. 32) notes that it is in the 'angst' of being exposed to and having to negotiate cultural differences that tourists come to experience their vulnerability and, through it, the shared humanity that brings them and their hosts together:

Cronin (2006:135) warns that, 'To remove the space of mediation, the intermediary zone of time and difficulty which is the attempt to get to know another culture and another language, is to move from the triangular space of negotiation to the binary space of opposition.

Tourism, as Robinson (2012, p. 23) also notes, is about 'testing the boundaries of our own identities'. If, broadly described, 'identity is about sameness and group membership' (Graham & Howard, 2008, p. 5), tourism research needs to look into how important it is to 'destabilise' (Picard, 2012, p. 4) international tourists' sense of identity, in order to stimulate renegotiation of their cultural identity towards finding more permanent sameness with other groups.

A growing number of scholars have, therefore, recognised the need to facilitate not only pleasant and immersive experiences but challenging ones too. As the tourism industry globally is experiencing a distinctive rise in demand for tourist experiences resulting in life-long learning and profound self-change (LittleHotelier, 2017, January 25; Robledo, 2015; Trimble, 2017, January 4), this approach seeks to fulfil tourists' needs for deep learning about others as well as themselves. What used to be a distinctive characteristic of a small segment of active adventure tourists is becoming a more common motivator. As

demonstrated by the rich post-travel interview data collected by Kanning (2013), improved awareness of the self and one's position in the world can be accompanied by changes to cultural assumptions; increased personal relevance of what was experienced; and stronger emotional connection with the place and interest in it. To understand what stimulates tourists' psychological transformation, as well as adoption of foreign cultural practices into one's "daily routine", Grabowski (2013, p. 185) turns to acculturation theory, suggesting that individual-level changes come not with any cultural contact but with experience of associated challenges as their triggers.

The observations found in existing tourism literature about the potential of demanding aspects of travel not only to promote personal growth but also to strengthen interest in the destination also find support in stress appraisal psychology informing acculturation research. As a cognitive appraisal of stress, challenge is conceptualised as an evaluation of an experience as simultaneously taxing and personally significant with considerable implications for personal growth (Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Yet, to date, this perspective on challenge has received little attention in tourism literature. Interdisciplinary research drawing on the stress, appraisal and coping theory to understanding tourism is still considerably novel (Jordan & Vogt, 2017a).

Despite negative effects of stress, some scholars have posited that manageable stress is still beneficial to tourists' learning and have linked it to significant personal gains (Furnham, 2010; Sharpley & Stone, 2009; Stebbins, 1997b), and these arguments have been revived more recently by Nawijn and Biran (2018). Although initially international sojourners may experience 'anger and denial' as they come in contact with significant cultural differences, they can eventually reappraise these difficult situations as sources of learning and positive growth (Christie & Mason 2003, p. 13). Similar ideas are shared by Moscardo (1996, p. 384) who recommends questioning of tourists' reactions 'to create conflict and ambiguity' and encouraging them to ask questions.

In addition to posing that challenging cultural experiences should be actively facilitated, the growing research on transformative travel also suggests that organised tour programs can be particularly conducive to personal transformations (Christie & Mason, 2003; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Lean, 2015; Soulard, McGehee, & Stern, 2019; Stone & Duffy, 2015). As this literature highlights the motivational arousal properties of disorienting dilemmas and cognitive dissonance, it points out the crucial role of ongoing critical reflection and dialogue, and how the social, organised and guided nature of group travel creates a favourable ground for such exchange in terms of communication within the tour group, including between the group tourists and their tour leaders.

1.3. Research Aim and Objectives

The purpose of the study is to explore a pathway to helping tourists relate to and develop long-term interest in cultures significantly different to their own. It aims to respond to the difficulties of cross-cultural contact reviewed above and to tourists' motivations for not only witnessing but also understanding different worldviews. In the light of the research gaps but also the connections observed in tourism, leisure, education and psychology literature, it aims to do so by examining the relationship between the concepts of post-travel culture involvement and challenge as a cognitive evaluation (perceived challenge), and their association with self-development, which has not been specifically studied previously. By focusing on the experiences of tourists travelling on cultural group tours (further 'group tourists'), the study also aims to address the lack of current research on group travel.

The methodology of this interdisciplinary study integrates the idea of paradigmatic bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Maxwell, 2013). Whilst qualitative, with semi-structured in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method, the thesis adopts a combination of realist and relativist perspectives. It argues that this approach supports the needs of the study to draw on prior theories and employ varying degrees of structure in sampling, data collection and analysis; facilitates interpretation of participants' retrospective recollections of their subjective experiences, reflective of who they are and constructed during the interview process; and considers multiple perspectives.

To address the study aims, the following main question and objectives have been developed:

What role does perceived challenge play in how tourists travelling on group tours engage with a previously visited culture once they return home?

- Objective 1 To explore the place of perceived challenge in group tourists' experiences
 - 1.1 To understand how challenge can manifest itself in group tour experiences
 - 1.2 To learn what tourists understand by the notion of challenge
- Objective 2 To examine the nature and sources of group tourists' engagement with a recently experienced culture after travel

- Objective 3 To identify situational and individual-level factors contributing to any regularities (similarities and differences) in the findings on the place of perceived challenge in group tourists' experiences and post-travel culture involvement, including differences in perceptions of the significance of cultural difference.

1.3. Thesis Outline

In addition to stating research gaps, the significance of addressing them, and the aim and objectives of the study, Chapter 1 was developed to provide a brief overview of the background research that had led to the themes explored in the rest of the thesis. Therefore, the other nine chapters focus on the notions of challenge and involvement, referring to other concepts only where relevant to these foci. Three literature review chapters present retrospective discussions of prior studies informing the main research question and the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 5. They are followed by Chapter 6, combining methodology with research context, and three results and discussion chapters that gradually build on one another. Rather than simply summarising key points, the conclusions to each of these chapters aim to bring the different key points together in final discussions and address their implications. The thesis is concluded with Chapter 10, offering final observations, including a statement of contributions, a discussion of directions for future research, limitations, and practical implications. The purpose of this present section is to explain the thesis structure by briefly summarising these nine chapters and how they are connected.

For a study on culturally motivated group travel during the times when the broadening meaning of culture and the scope of cultural tourism research invite questions about the status of cultural tourism as a distinctive tourism niche and a field of inquiry, it was deemed important to address these and other pertinent questions before examining the literature on involvement and challenge. Thus, one of the main aims of Chapter 2 is to appropriately position this study by discussing key issues in defining cultural tourism from scholarly and industry perspectives on both demand and supply sides. Tracing chronologically the development of the cultural tourism phenomenon and its definitions, the first section addresses the following questions: What is culture, and what is its relationship to cultural tourism? Who holds the answers to these questions; and who needs to know them, and why? By examining centrality of culture in tourist pull and push motivations, the meaning of culture learning and its relationship with mental challenge and entertainment, the second section lays the foundations for future sampling decisions and the analysis of tourist motivations later in the thesis as a key moderator of challenge appraisal. The third section

reviews more closely the state of knowledge on group travel and demonstrates the need for more research on small group tours and their relevance to this study.

In the light of the gap in research on post-travel culture involvement, Chapter 3 attempts to gain a thorough understanding of current knowledge on culture involvement during travel. Section 3.2.1 reviews tourism and leisure studies literature on psychological involvement that examines the notions of interest and personal relevance, central to this study. The research on its different facets, particularly sign value for self-expression and self-identity and centrality to lifestyle, as well as the notions of enduring and situational involvement, underpin the analysis of pre-travel sources of post-travel culture involvement in Chapter 9. This section also reveals a gap in research on behavioural involvement. Although it highlights the need to look beyond tourist studies, its key findings emphasise culture contact opportunities and the relevance of tourism literature on culture immersion and the contact hypothesis from social psychology, reviewed in Section 3.2.3. Also discussed in this chapter is the literature on destination loyalty and place attachment. This research was included in Section 3.2.2 to further understand the likelihood of tourists' enduring connection with destinations and its key antecedents. In addition to revealing an attitude-behaviour gap, the review illuminates how differences in tourists' previous travel experience and motivations can affect these outcomes. Section 3.2.3 focuses on the adaptational and experiential scholarly approaches to culture immersion; its relationship to culture involvement; and the essential contact conditions that must be met for cultural tourism to have lasting effects on tourists' involvement with host destinations. Special attention is given to degrees of immersion; the notion of quality contact, and the role of the individual tourist in determining the latter. Section 3.3 frames the acculturation perspective on culture involvement, with host culture immersion as one of its dimensions. It draws attention to the difference between acculturation and culture shock; host-guest interaction and cultural participation; variations in involvement patterns across different domains of culture; the phenomenon of acculturative stress; and the place of challenge in acculturation theory.

Following a similar structure, Chapter 4 divides up the research related to the notion of challenge into tourism literature and psychology perspectives that have received limited application when attempting to understand touristic experiences. This chapter builds on the insights gained from Chapters 2 and 3 on challenge as a dimension of leisure motivation and leisure experience and its relationship with mental and physical effort and stress. It aims to compare different approaches to the conceptualisation of challenge; review relevant experiential contexts; and understand challenge implications for culture involvement. Section 4.2 identifies that compared to the research on cultural touristic experiences, the notion of

challenge has been much more systematically examined as a dimension of challenge-skill balance in the theory of flow, adopted from positive psychology by the literature on outdoor, physically demanding adventure tourism. Whilst when referring to 'challenge', both adventure tourism and intercultural contact research imply an external source of difficulty and discomfort, the former also examines it as a cognitive evaluation of perceived difficulty. Nevertheless, despite its limitations, the literature on host-guest contact contributes valuable insights on the nuances of tourist coping with the challenges of cultural adaptation and intercultural understanding rather than physical demands requiring mental endurance. It also demonstrates how substantially effortful experiences can increase personal relevance and memorability of what is experienced, thus laying the foundation for not only personal transformations but also for positive changes in orientations towards host cultures. Section 4.3 delves deeper into the stress appraisal perspective on challenge introduced in Chapter 1 and discussed in Chapter 3, and is followed by a conclusion that the integrated theories of acculturation and stress, appraisal and coping help examine not only challenge and post-travel culture involvement in isolation but also the relationship between them. This argument is further developed in the conceptual framework in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 outlines the research design. Underpinning all methodological decisions of the study, including the choice of research context, are paradigmatic considerations, stated in the very first section. Similar to the conceptual framework chapter that challenges the notion of disciplinary silos, this chapter describes a qualitative methodology that applies both inductive (interpretivist) and deductive (postpositivist) thinking. The research context, discussed in Section 6.3, involved several decisions, one of which included narrowing down the study population to Australians. Drawing on the research comparing cultural tourism consumption patterns across cultures, it was found important to consider in the analysis the patterns in national outbound travel and cultural participation in Australia. Thus, further sampling decisions, reported in Section 6.4, deal with purposive selection of Australian tour operators and small group cultural tours, the choice of which determined the list of travel destinations and the sample of Australians who had travelled on those tours. The final section discusses methods of data analysis. Limitations and ethical issues and how they were addressed are reported throughout the chapter where relevant.

Chapter 7 describes the sampled tours to eleven destination across Europe, Asia, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, and introduces the participants by reporting the results collected with a short supplementary questionnaire on their previous travel experience, socio-demographics (age, gender, education), and travel motivations. The responses on the latter are compared with interview findings. Chapters 8 and 9 draw on

these insights, as they discuss challenge and post-travel culture involvement findings. Both chapters include sections more focused on reporting and discussing sub-sets of findings (Sections 8.2 and 8.3, and Section 9.3) and those that synthesise them.

Consistent with the conceptualisation of challenge as a stress appraisal, or positive cognitive evaluation of an experience as somewhat stressful, substantially effortful and personally significant (motivationally relevant and congruent, with implications for ego-involvement), Chapter 8 discusses how the participants appraised their contact with a range of socio-economic, cultural and political differences (external demands) and coped with them. It also discusses the sources of stress stemming from how the tours were organised and managed. This section is followed by an analysis of personal significance of those situations to the participants, or personal stakes in those experiences, including explicit desired outcomes, reported in Chapter 7 in the discussion of travel motivations. One of the objectives of the study was also to understand tourists' relationship with the notion of challenge. Because among other interview questions, relevant insights were obtained from the participants' overall evaluations of their trips in terms of perceived challenge, those findings are reported together. Thus, the chapter is closely guided by the stress, appraisal and coping process and the proposed conceptual framework that considers cumulative appraisal of the entire tour experience, as well as of isolated situations. Section 8.5 compares the experiences that were interpreted challenging with those where opportunities for challenge were minimised or overlooked. The chapter concludes with final comments on the place of challenge in group tour experiences.

Chapter 9 fulfils two purposes. Section 9.2 discusses the participants' involvement with three domains of culture and involvement activities associated with acquiring knowledge about the destinations' history and culture; food; and arts. Section 9.3 discusses possible pre-tour and on-tour sources of that involvement, as it aims to address the main research question. This is where the thesis reports on the themes shared by Chapter 8 and Chapter 9, as it combines challenge and involvement findings to discuss local causality. In addition to diverse demanding situations, including those that were found to be challenging, it considers pre-travel involvement and its drivers; identifies post-travel involvement habits; and discusses organised and unplanned moments of connection where the participants were able to bond with their hosts, including local guides.

The final chapter returns to the main question about the relationship between perceived challenge and post-travel culture involvement. Its main purpose, however, is to discuss the larger conceptual, theoretical and practical implications of this study, and directions for future research. Among other thoughts, the chapter discusses how the findings contribute to the

knowledge about the different tourism-enabled pathways to relating to different ways of thinking and living found in different cultures, as well as about the barriers to psychological and behavioural involvement. It also points out the problem with the pursuit of ideal scenarios in cultural tourism – ideal contact conditions, forms of involvement, sets of tourist motivations, tour environments, tour guides, and others – to the detriment of acknowledging important victories in the ‘sea of intolerance’ (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2005, p. 700). The chapter also reflects on the limitations of the study that emerged from data collection and analysis, including the ethical and intellectual challenges of conducting tourism research on cultural difference; the strengths and weakness of comparing diverse cultural contexts; and the difficulty of combining psychological and cultural lenses in qualitative research.

Chapter 2 Positioning Group Travel in Cultural Tourism

2.1. Introduction

As introduced in Chapter 1, 'cultural group travel' is a problematic term. It comes with the stigma of organised travel as culturally insensitive consumerism and with the ambiguity of the terms 'culture' and 'cultural tourism'. In response, this chapter aims to communicate the author's position on the relationship between cultural tourism and group travel. In Section 2.2 what cultural tourism means to different stakeholders is discussed, and the key issues associated with defining it are addressed in depth. As the literature review presented in this section demonstrates, defining cultural tourism is just as much about chronology as it is about perspective. The choice of perspective is determined by who uses the terms 'culture' and 'cultural tourism' and for which purposes. The key stakeholders whose perspectives are addressed in this section are academics, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), tourism operators, hosts (residents), and guests (tourists).

Building on the analysis of the literature, arguing that cultural tourism *is* a distinctive tourism sector, Section 2.3 reviews typologies of cultural tourists by pull and push motivations. By discussing the diversity of tourists' interests, motivations and individual characteristics, as well as within-group similarities, it further reflects on the issues of tourist heterogeneity and the increasingly omnivorous nature of their travel choices which complicate the task of defining 'cultural tourism' and explaining what makes one a cultural tourist. The review of activity-based typologies and comparison of cultural activities in Section 2.3.1 encourages further thinking about the implications of itinerary design for culture participation (involvement) and its relationship with effort as a challenge-related concept. Following the discussion of typologies based on centrality of cultural motives and frequency of cultural participation, Section 2.3.2 discusses the meaning of learning and learning about other cultures; their relationship with other core tourist motivations; and other ways of clustering tourists pursuing cultural experiences.

To conclude, Section 2.4 reviews the evolution of organised travel by discussing observations from academic and industry sources that organised group travel is no longer the domain of the homogeneous mass market tourism. In support of this observation, the literature identifies several psychological, physical, pragmatic and social reasons of travelling in organised tours, which include both its objective constraints and possibilities that come with it. A secondary analysis of operators of small group tours is also provided in this section.

2.2. Key Issues in Defining Cultural Tourism

2.2.1. Scholarly Perspectives

In addition to recent journal publications (Jovicic, 2016; Richards, 2018), at least one academic monograph or edited volume with 'cultural tourism' in its title has been regularly published in English alone (Table 2.1.) for over 20 years, demonstrating that cultural tourism is still very much a current phenomenon.

Table 2.1. Cultural tourism literature 1996 - 2016.

Year	Author(s)	Publisher	Title
2016	Smith	Routledge	Issues in cultural tourism studies
2015	Du Cros, Mckercher	Routledge	Cultural tourism
2013	Raj, Morpeth, Griffin, Kevin	CABI	Cultural tourism
2013	Smith, Richards	Routledge	The Routledge handbook of cultural tourism
2012	Smith, Waterton, Watson	Routledge	The cultural moment in tourism
2010	Richards, Munsters	CABI	Cultural tourism research methods
2008	Ivanovic	Juta	Cultural tourism
2007	Richards	Haworth Hospitality Press	Cultural tourism: Global and local perspectives
2006	Smith, Robinson	Multilingual Matters	Cultural tourism in a changing world: Politics, participation and (re)presentation
2003	Smith	Routledge	Issues in cultural tourism studies
2002	McKercher, Du Cros	Haworth Hospitality Press	Cultural tourism: The partnership between tourism and cultural heritage management
2001	Richards		Cultural attractions and European tourism
1996	Picard	Archipelago	Bali: Cultural tourism and touristic culture
1996	Richards	CABI	Cultural tourism in Europe

However, as Cetin and Bilgihan (2016), and Jovicic (2016) point out, cultural tourism remains one of the most ambiguous terms in tourism studies, and the recent review by Richards (2018) acknowledges that it is likely to be further diluted by a growing interest from multiple disciplines. Few empirical studies consider the sources of this ambiguity beyond the diversity of research needs and contexts, and the complexity of the term 'culture' (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015; Smith, 2016; Watson, Waterton, & Smith, 2012).

Du Cros and McKercher (2015, p. 4) and Martinez (2012) draw a crucial distinction between travel 'for cultural reasons', which originated in the ancient world, and post-modern labelling

of one's activity as 'cultural tourism' in the postmodern Western world. The latter is deeply rooted in two perspectives: the product perspective on culture and its commercialisation as a resource for economic development (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015), and the perspective of the preceding European heritage conservation movement of the 19th century, with a view on culture as a means to national identity construction and glorification of nations' pasts (Edensor, 2002; Salazar, 2010; Smith, 2006).

During the early 1970s, the growth in accessibility of mass 'sun-sea-sand' leisure travel caught up with the conservation and monumentalisation (assigning 'historic monument' status) of material culture in Western Europe that later spread to America and Australia (Smith, 2006). As part of this process, built heritage in the form of museums, historically important buildings and monuments became a product of tourism (Smith, 2006; Urry, 1990; Urry & Larsen, 2011). As cited by Ivanovic (2008, p. 78), ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) defined cultural tourism as follows:

... that form of tourism whose object is, among other aims, the discovery of monuments and sites. It exerts on these last a very positive effect insofar as it contributes - to satisfy its own ends - to their maintenance and protection ... (Article 3 of the ICOMOS Charter, 1976).

By 1990s, tangible cultural heritage was recognised as 'forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities' and 'an integral part of modern life' (ICOMOS, 1999, Introduction Section, para. 2). Cultural tourism, which emerged as an alternative to mass package holidays, established itself as a specialist activity of the more educated and well-off, and a form of serious leisure:

Cultural tourism-a field without a theoretical home-is treated here as a liberal arts hobby within the framework of serious leisure theory. Cultural tourism is a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological (Reisinger 1994:24). Several cultural forms such as museums, galleries, festivals, architecture, historic ruins, artistic performances, and heritage sites routinely draw tourists. The forms are expressions or contain expressions of one or more fine, popular, or folk arts, or one or more local lifestyles-folk, historical, or modern (Stebbins 1996, p. 948).

The beginnings of cultural tourism as a niche activity have been traced back to the Grand Tour pursuits for education and later for leisure by the educated European elite of

predominantly English, French and German decent which gained momentum during the late 1600s (Smith, 2006; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Keck (2010) explores these events more closely through the self-documented journeys to Egypt of three British travellers in the 19th century. As Smith (2016) notes, the elitist notions of culture carried through these journeys were influenced by the dominant idealist Hegelian thinking that imposed the idea of difference between culture and nature; the civilised and the savages; the European high culture and the primitive cultures of non-Christian natives; and high culture and everyday life. Smith (2016, p. 193) defines 'high culture' as "high' arts and culture – that is, those that were considered to be worthwhile by an elite group of people (usually white, European males)' and requiring 'high degree of cultural competence'. Today, these distinctions are echoed in such cultural tourism segments as fine arts and heritage tourism, and ethnic and indigenous tourism, and in the still existing, yet gradually eroding binary of high-low (popular) culture (Smith & Richards, 2013a). As Edensor (2016, p. xvii) comments on Western tourists' imaginaries of Rajasthan, the interest in the present has been consistently overshadowed by the allure of the past:

There is little reference to the present, the urban, the industrial, the intellectual, contemporary art and literature, the lower classes and casters, current politics and poverty, social inequalities and gender inequities, and the important histories of national, subaltern and colonial processes.

The Western origins of the concept and the phenomenon of not only cultural tourism, but tourism in general, can be additionally explained by the different meanings that Western (Crang, 1999; MacCannell, 1976) and non-Western tourists (Nguyen & Cheung, 2016; Wynn, 2007) attach to the concepts of authenticity and modernity. MacCannell (1976) attributed the fascination of the West with places belonging to pre-modern societies, distant exotic cultures, as well as romantic notions of its own past to the search for balance and stability. The fixed nature of the recorded past with its holistic knowledge of the world (Crang, 1999) continues to communicate that sense of stability in times of economic and political uncertainty, and spiritual disillusionment (Letcher, Blain, & Wallis, 2009; Mick, 2017; Robledo, 2015; Willson & Maccarthy, 2016). Chan (2006, p. 203), however, found that Chinese tourists 'desire for experiences of development to fulfil their own imaginings of and desire for 'authentic modernities'', as they 'loathe experiences of backwardness and detest nostalgia that may remind them of their own poverty before the 1990s'. Wynn's (2007) comparison of Western and Arab tourists' experiences of Egypt provides another telling example. While the former continue to go to Egypt for its pharaonic heritage, displaying strong fixation on the distant past, tourists from the Gulf states travel to experience Egypt's

contemporary culture, 'one that is grounded in the regional circulation of singers, dancers, and movie stars' (Wynn, 2007, p. 4).

Despite the gaze applied by Western tourists to other cultures, Edensor (2016) and Wynn (2007) are critical of the persistent pessimism in academic literature on Western tourism as an immoral capitalist phenomenon with 'hegemonic, Eurocentric and ethnocentric approach to the representation of the culture of 'Other' (Smith, 2016, p. 8). Smith (2012b, p. 211) also argues that the devaluation of any tourist activity and tourists' understanding of culture and culture participation 'hides the political and cultural consequences of the 'work' that tourists do, and ultimately the consequences this work has for identity and re-imagining 'self' and 'other''. The formation of the contemporary Egyptian national identity is a powerful illustration of this important identity-shaping work. As Wynn (2007, p. 17) points out, if it had not been for the fascination of European tourists with Egypt's pharaonic heritage since the 1800s, it may not have acquired the symbolic cultural significance it holds today for its citizens. In another study on international tourism in India, Bloch (2017) discusses how the anti-tourist and anti-colonial sentiments of local Hindu elites, fuelled by damaging religious nationalism and UNESCO conservation agenda, resulted in the displacement of local residents in Hampi, an important destination for Hindu pilgrimage.

The ongoing pre-occupation, particularly by anthropologists (Salazar & Graburn, 2014; Smith, 2016), with linking cultural tourism to Western tourists is problematic for three other reasons. Firstly, as Chan (2006, p. 188) notes, 'the term 'the West' is itself an ambiguous term'. Commonly applied to North American and European tourists (Salazar & Graburn, 2014; Winter, 2009; Wynn, 2007), it tends to exclude Australia, a country which despite its geographic location in the Asia Pacific region and multicultural composition remains a former British colony. Furthermore, to claim that all Europeans display similar travel behaviours to each other and to Americans is problematic, to say the least (Kay, 2009).

Secondly, the actual division of tourists and tourism into Western and non-Western should be approached critically. As Tucker and Zhang (2016) argue, the deliberate contrasting of non-Western scholarly and consumer perspectives on tourism with those of the West in our increasingly globalised world can undervalue the existence of ambiguous positions. Contrary to her original hypothesis, Kay (2009), for example, found no significant differences in cultural motivations between the tourists of four Western cultures (North America, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Ireland, and Australia) and two Asian cultures (Japan and China) but noticeable differences in motivations *between* Western tourists. With the pursuit of such divisions returns the problematic discourse of cultural difference, reinforcing the

same binary that tourists apply when comparing themselves to 'others' (Salazar & Graburn 2014).

Thirdly, while cross-cultural comparison of cultural tourism consumption patterns is an important area of research (Kay, 2009; McKercher, 2002; Whang, Yong, & Ko, 2016; Xu, 2016), it can also enforce essentialist views on ethnically, socially and economically diverse nations (Bloch, 2017; Henderson & Weisgrau, 2016; Li, Harrill, Uysal, Burnett, & Zhan, 2010; Prayag, Cohen, & Yan, 2015). Therefore, how cultural tourism is defined also depends largely on a given ontological and ethical position. All-encompassing definitions of culture and cultural tourism, despite regional variations, such as the one offered by Kluckhohn (1951, p. 86), suggest a more realist, pragmatic approach driven by whole-sector and whole-nation issues and the need for generalisations (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015; Ivanovic, 2008):

Culture consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.

On the contrary, it has been argued that the task of defining culture and cultural tourism should be the prerogative of those to whom it belongs (Collins, 2015). It has been posited that it should be more aligned with the interpretivist stand that 'there is no such thing as a 'reality' out there but only an inter-subjective agreement to pretend to the existence of such an independent-seeming reality' (Wengraf, 2001, p. 4). The recent review of cultural tourism issues by Smith (2016), however, reveals that even tourism scholars who have strong background in anthropology seem to occupy a middle-ground position. Indeed, when trying to answer the question 'What is culture?', tourism scholars do not attempt to explain the nature of culture as a superorganic entity in a metaphysical sense (Bennett, 2015). As much as tourism is a subject of numerous philosophical debates (Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011; Tribe, Dann, & Jamal, 2015), it is also a global economic industry where culture is a consumable product (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). Consequently, definitions of culture used in tourism studies, even if not openly acknowledged as such (Smith, 2016), are essentially synoptical (Goldstein, 1957), meaning that they explain what culture consists of in order to know what is to be managed.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the ambiguity of cultural tourism definitions stems from the difference in the number of cultural phenomena included. Between the rise in

popularity of cultural tourism as a specialist activity and its gradual development into a mass market in the 21st Century (Munsters & Melkert, 2015), the understanding of cultural heritage as historic monuments of various types expanded, and with it expanded the meaning of cultural tourism. In 2003, UNESCO incorporated intangible heritage in its definition of cultural heritage to acknowledge the value of living cultural practices and the underlying beliefs and values (UNESCO, 2012, para. 1), that is 'oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts'. This shift enabled regional variations of cultural tourism definitions, such as in the case of African countries where cultural assets are predominantly intangible (Lwoga & Asubisye, 2018; Smith, 2016). The renewed approach to cultural heritage reflected the understanding of culture as both a process and a product (Ivanovic, 2008; Smith, 2006) and shaped the next definitions of cultural and cultural heritage tourism (McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Richards, 2007; Timothy, 2011; Timothy & Boyd, 2006) the borders between which continued to blur.

On one hand, cultural tourism became commonly understood as tourism activity focused on experiencing tangible and intangible elements of living cultures. On the other hand, these changes also intensified the fragmentation of cultural tourism, resulting in a multitude of operational activity-based definitions and further ambiguity (McKercher, Ho, Cros, & So-Ming, 2002). Echoing Goldstein's (1957, p. 1079) argument that 'the theory of culture is a branch of speculative philosophy, while the job of theoretical anthropology is to offer the best explanation of cultural phenomena', tourism research has favoured the study of individual sub-sectors of cultural tourism. As reflected in Smith's (2003) revised typology of cultural tourism below, the term 'culture' came to incorporate a diversity of phenomena, 'as a result of the democratization of culture and the increasing convergence of culture and everyday life' (Richards, 2001a, p. 7).

To address the weaknesses of such an operational approach to defining cultural tourism, Richards (1996) developed a conceptual and a technical definition that address not only the scope of cultural phenomena but also the issue of tourist motivation to travel and the nature of tourist experience:

Conceptual definition: 'The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs' (Richards, 1996c, p. 24).

Technical definition: ‘All movements of persons to specific cultural attractions, such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama outside their normal place of residence’ (Richards, 1996c, p. 24).

Table 2.2. Typology of cultural tourism.

Source: Smith (2016, p. 17). Reproduced with permission.

Sector	Activities
Heritage sites	Archaeological sites, whole towns, monuments, museums
Performing arts venues	Theatres, concert halls, cultural centres
Visual arts	Galleries, art museums, architecture
Festivals and special events	Arts festivals, music festivals, carnivals
Religious sites	Cathedrals, temples, pilgrimage destinations
Rural environments	Villages, farms, cultural landscapes, ecomuseums
Indigenous communities and traditions	Tribal people, ethnic groups, minority cultures
Ethnic groups in cities	Chinatowns, Little Italys, Jewish quarters, Indian slums, South African townships, Brazilian favelas
Arts and crafts	Textiles, pottery, painting, sculpture
Language	Learning or practice
Gastronomy	Wine tasting, food sampling, cookery courses
Popular culture	Modern architecture, pop music, fashion, media, design
Creative activities	Painting, photography, dance

Richards in particular has been a leading contributor to conceptual discussions and empirical research on cultural tourism (Richards, 1996b, 2002; Richards, 2018; Richards, 2001b, 2007; Richards & Munsters, 2010; Richards & van der Ark, 2013; Richards & Wilson, 2006; Smith & Richards, 2013b), and these definitions continue to be widely cited by other tourism scholars (Ivanovic, 2008; Jovicic, 2016; Raj, 2013; Smith, 2016).

As the notion of culture in tourism has gradually expanded to incorporate many aspects of everyday life of ordinary people, so has the meaning of cultural tourism. In response to these changes, Richards (2001, p. 7) revised the scope of his definition, noting that culturally-motivated tourists are drawn not only to cultural attractions as products of culture but also to cultural processes, that is ‘contemporary culture or the ‘way of life’ of people or region’. The ‘whole way of life approach’ to defining culture has ‘provided the key authorizing concept for cultural studies’ (Bennett, 2015, p. 546) and also reflects a significant shift in tourists’

interests which has led tourism scholars to question the value of the very term 'cultural tourism' (Watson et al., 2012). As discussed by Smith and Richards (2013a), with the increase in perceived value of serendipitous cultural encounters with products and processes of other people's daily living, much of modern travel is essentially cultural. The difficult task of defining cultural tourism, complicated by the increasing 'omnivorousness' of tourists' motivations, is further addressed in Section 2.3 that reviews cultural tourist typologies differentiating between more and less serious cultural tourists (McKercher, 2002; Stebbins, 1996).

2.2.2. Industry Perspectives

Given the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of cultural tourism, it is particularly important to consider why it should be defined, not only as research context but also as an industry segment. Representing a very pragmatic approach to cultural tourism, Du Cros and McKercher (2015, p. 9) argue that cultural tourism, despite its fragmentation, is a distinctive product class with 'unique managerial and product development considerations'. They discuss a number of characteristics that they see as unique to cultural tourism. Firstly, they emphasise the use of cultural assets of a destination, which incorporate its tangible and intangible cultural resources. The list below combines the elements of culture that form these resources. It incorporates the notion of culture as a social phenomenon and an anthropological concept (Reisinger, 2009), and 15 most popular observable elements of culture as a tourism product (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015; Ivanovic, 2008; Ritchie & Zins, 1978):

- People (hosts)
- Social heritage and practices: history, traditions (including religious), customs, crafts, sculpture, architecture, music, painting, performing arts (dance, theatre, opera), folklore, literature
- Way of life (norms, rules and patterns of behaviour)
- Dress and appearance
- Gastronomy (food, and cooking and eating habits)
- Language and communication norms
- Values, beliefs (including religious), attitudes and perceptions
- Work and leisure habits (types of work and leisure engaged in by residents and the technology they use)
- Ways of thinking (system of knowledge, classifications, categories and learning styles)

- Symbols and meanings
- Educational system

Secondly, Du Cros and McKercher (2015, p. 12) stress that in order to be considered a cultural tourism product, an asset such as natural heritage 'must have some association with human use of meaning' or, in other words, carry some local and/or global cultural significance. Thirdly, among 19 principles underpinning all tourism, they note that 'cultural tourism products may be presented in a challenging and confronting manner but cannot be presented in an intimidating or accusatory manner' (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015, p. 106). They further highlight the time-intensive and emotionally effortful, mentally challenging nature of ideologically taxing experiences; experiences 'associated with a particularly gruesome or reprehensible experience in the past' such as 'social ills (oppression, racism and so on)'; and tourist contact with poor living conditions (Du Cros & McKercher 2015, p. 117).

However, differentiating cultural tourism from other types of tourism is more difficult than it may seem. Smith (2009) contrasts cultural tourism to safaris and wildlife tourism, experiences of natural landmarks, and beach holidays, due to the difference in primary interests. While cultural tourism is characterised by the centrality of cultural experience, i.e. the primacy of contact with other people and their culture (Richards, 2001), the other types of tourism focus on exploring the animal world and their natural habitat; the 'escapism and relaxation' of see-sun-sand holidays (Aguiló, Alegre, & Sard, 2005; Smith, MacLeod, & Robertson, 2010, p. 163); and the pursuit of solitude and introspection (Kelly, 2012; Smith, 2013). Examples include tourist expeditions to the Antarctica (Liggett, McIntosh, Thompson, Gilbert, & Storey, 2011) and remote resort island getaways (Aguiló et al., 2005). Mehmetoglu (2007, p. 658), however, posits that 'distinguishing between nature-based tourism and cultural tourism should only be considered arbitrary and for pedagogical purposes'. Indeed, as proposed by Valentine and Cassels (as cited in Tangeland and Aas (2011, p. 824), 'nature based tourism experiences (activities) can be classified into three distinct types: experiences dependent on nature, experiences enhanced by nature, and experiences in which the natural settings are supplementary.'

When comparing cultural tourism with adventure and voluntourism, distinctions blur further. The definitions of adventure tourist experiences provided by Tsaur, Lin, and Liu (2013) and Buckley (2007) highlight their outdoor, nature-focused character. As Tsaur, Lin, et al. (2013, p. 85) explain, 'adventure recreation involves outdoor activities in which participants interact with nature and purposefully pursue challenge and stress'. Not only do mountaineering and trekking experiences require the use of 'specialised equipment' (Buckley, 2007, p. 1428),

they also provide levels of risk and thrills not commonly associated with sightseeing cultural heritage experiences, and require management of very specific problems such as navigating hostile terrain (Tsaur, Lin, et al., 2013). At the same time, adventure tourism experiences can be quite heterogeneous, particularly at 'ACE (adventure, cultural and ecotourism)' destinations such as the Sagarmatha National Park in Nepal (Musa, Hall, & Higham, 2004). Differentiating between voluntourism and cultural tourism can be equally difficult. While voluntours involve a work component, not present in pure leisure travel (Brown, 2005), they are commonly perceived as much more culturally immersive than cultural sightseeing trips (Raymond & Hall, 2008). Therefore, narrow definitions can unnecessarily exclude those tourism programs which tourists choose for their cultural aspects, no matter whether those cultural activities are secondary to the program itself or not.

When questioning the need for the term 'cultural tourism', it is also necessary to consider how it is understood by the stakeholders other than those directly involved in management of cultural assets as tourist attractions. Indeed, activity-based definitions such as those applied by official tourism bodies for gathering statistical information and tourism forecasting have received substantial attention in tourism literature (Richards, 2001; Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). A *Cultural Tourism Toolkit* developed by Arts NSW (2016, p. 33) for regional communities in the state of New South Wales, Australia, is one of more recent examples. It aligns its advice and the aggregated economic value of cultural tourism with the following definitions of cultural tourists and cultural tourism:

Destination NSW's definition of a cultural tourist is a 'cultural and heritage visitor' who participates in at least one of the following activities: attend theatre, concerts or other performing arts; attend festivals, fairs, or cultural events; visit museum or art galleries; visit art, craft workshops or studios; visit historical heritage buildings, sites or monuments; experience Aboriginal art, craft and cultural display; visit an Aboriginal site or community; attend Aboriginal performance (international visitors only). Note: a visitor may also participate in other activities. Cultural tourism also includes, for example, street art experiences and the business of providing cultural tourism experiences.

However, the use of such definitions has been critiqued for inflating the size of the cultural tourism market in a given destination; concealing its heterogeneity in terms of activities, motivations and actual behaviours; and giving false hope to tourism businesses dependent on attracting highly culturally motivated tourists who, in actual fact, represent only around 2% of all cultural tourists (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). Underpinning both inbound and domestic cultural tourism promotion on national, state and local level, such definitions also

shape tourists' ideas about what it means to travel for cultural purposes, as marketers aim to differentiate cultural tourism from other tourism product offerings. Despite these issues, the toolkit clearly demonstrates the shift in tourism industry thinking from 'everyone who visits a cultural tourism attraction can be treated as serious cultural tourist' to acknowledging that 'travellers might also find themselves becoming cultural tourists incidentally' (Arts NSW, 2016, p. 5)

In addition, the perspectives of travel agents, tour wholesalers and tour operators on the meaning of culture and cultural tourism have been largely overlooked (Watson et al., 2012). By having direct contact with tourists at multiple online and offline touchpoints, these gatekeepers 'inform the initial expectations of a holiday, affect activity selection, and influence the quality of experience' (Du Cros & McKercher 2015, p. 138). Yet, Wong and McKercher (2012, p. 1362) found that 'little or no research has examined the factors that influence the construction of itineraries, other than generic recognition of the need to consider timing, pacing, route selection to avoid bottlenecks, accessibility and parking'. The literature search has also revealed no publications on how tour companies group and label their tour offerings, that is how 'culture' is used as a theme to communicate particular types of experiences and what those experiences involve.

In conclusion, future conceptualisations of cultural tourism and consequently the contextual boundaries of new research will depend on how much weight tourism scholars give to the centrality of culture in tourist activities and motivations. From here, two arguments can be constructed that revert the discussion back to the differences between mass and special interest tourism (Jovicic, 2016). The first is to consider omnivorous travel experiences as the new 'mass tourism', and anything with a close focus on one or more aspects of culture as cultural tourism. In this case, the definitions provided by Richards (1996, 2001) would be most appropriate as they emphasise the centrality of culture. The second would argue that cultural tourism of today can only be identified as a distinctive tourism activity by contrasting it with types of tourism where culture contact is practically non-existent, of which there are few. In this instance, different cultural experiences can be positioned on a continuum, as proposed by Du Cros and McKercher (2015) and Smith and Richards (2013), where fleeting encounters with street vendors, sightseeing tours and voluntourism would all be types of cultural tourism but varying in activities, motivations, degree of organisation, length of contact, and depth sought.

2.3. Typologies of Cultural Tourists

2.3.1. Segmentation by Pull Motivations

2.3.1.1. General and Specific Cultural Tourists

Although the pursuit of cultural experiences is already considered a special interest (Smith et al., 2010), in the broadest sense, tourists who ‘travel for culture’ (Smith, 2016, p. 35) have been further divided into two groups by the nature of cultural interest: general (non-specific) and special (specific) (Jovicic, 2016). The first group have general interest in experiencing other cultures (van Der Ark & Richards, 2006) and the second are interested in a particular domain of culture (Crouch, Huybers, & Oppewal, 2016; Hughes, 1996; Richards, 1996b). The differences in the understanding of these two types of interest come down to how tourism scholars conceptualise their relationship with centrality of cultural motivation and frequency of travel for culture consumption.

Beyond the discussions of omnipresence of culture, the only definitions of general cultural tourism have been found in Stebbins (1996, 2015) and Richards (1996a, 1996b, 2014, 2001b). Viewing ‘general’ cultural tourism and specialised cultural tourism as serious leisure, Stebbins (1996, 2015) defines cultural tourists as those motivated by the accumulation of broad cultural knowledge about a diversity of destinations, and by development of critical transferrable social skills, both of which are studied as ‘culture learning’ in acculturation psychology (Ward et al., 2001). He also emphasises that people who undertake this type of travel view it as a hobby that they continuously improve on with every new trip they take.

With reference to Richards (1996b, 2002, 2004), Espelt and Benito (2006), Jovicic (2016) and Ramires, Brandão, and Sousa (2018) identify general cultural tourists as occasional, incidental, and sporadic consumers of culture, only partly motivated by culture. A closer analysis of his work, however, reveals that he has made no definitive comments on the frequency of culture consumption by general tourists. In fact, Richards (2002) does not refer to the specific or general distinction at all. The only two comments that could somewhat explain the conclusions drawn by these scholars belong to his two books (Richards, 1996a, 2001b). In the first, he reports that ‘specific cultural tourists were found to be not only more frequent consumers of cultural attractions than other groups, but they had a high level of total tourism consumption’ (Richards, 1996a, p. 36). In the second, he distinguishes between ‘the culturally motivated’ visitor, who makes a conscious, mindful decision to consume culture on holiday, and the ‘culturally interested’ visitor, who may be almost an accidental

cultural tourist (Bywater, 1993)' (Richards, 2001b, p. 37). Given that 'accidental' is not the same as 'occasional' or 'sporadic', it can be argued that sporadic cultural tourists may still be potentially highly culturally motivated at the time of their occasional cultural trips. Espelt and Benito (2006), Jovicic (2016) and Ramires et al. (2018), however, suggest otherwise, thus somewhat undermining the value of general cultural tourism by contrasting it with special cultural tourism as a superior form. As for cultural motives being secondary, the table below demonstrates that it is difficult to find an explicit connection between their secondary status and general cultural interest in Richards' work. While postmodern cultural tourists tend to be motivated by several factors (Jovicic, 2016; Du Cros & McKercher, 2015), general cultural interest can still be central to a tourist experience, such as in the case of 'active generalists' (McKercher et al., 2002). Surprisingly, this possibility has not been acknowledged by the scholars citing Richards.

Table 2.3. Definitions of general interest cultural tourists by Richards.

Publication	Definition
Richards (1996a)	Culture can, however, be far more important as a general, or secondary motive for tourism (p. 39).
Richards (1996b)	A large proportion of the other cultural visitors could broadly be categorized as "general cultural tourists", who did not have a strong cultural motive for their visit (p. 271).
Richards (2001b)	Much of the current growth in the market, however, is derived from a growth in general cultural tourism, which is not directly related to cultural motivations (p. 250).
van der Ark and Richards (2006)	'...the 'general cultural tourist' who visits sites on the basis of a general interest in culture' (p. 1412).
Richards (2014)	'In broad terms, the main segments tend to relate to people who have either a general interest in culture, and who see culture as just one aspect of the destination, and those with a specific interest in culture, for who culture is the main reason for travelling to the destination' (p. 4).

As for 'specific', 'specialised' or 'special interest' cultural tourism and tourists, overall, the literature demonstrates a clear consensus. Special cultural tourism is understood as travel highly driven by a strong primary interest in a specific aspect of a given culture and habitual consumption (McKercher et al., 2002; Richards, 2001b). In regards to the size of this sector, Timothy (2011) explains, it is difficult to give an accurate estimate due to general lack of reliable data on both global and national level. While scholars agree that specific cultural tourism is an important, yet small segment (Smith et al., 2010), its size estimates vary considerably. Du Cros and McKercher (2015) estimate it to be between 2% and 6% of all cultural tourism flows with reference to McKercher's (2002) earlier research, but other research findings range between 5.6% (Vong, 2016) and 17.9% (Alazaizeh, Hallo, Backman,

Norman, & Vogel, 2016). These differences suggest that the results are dependent on the range of activities available at destination, as in the case of Alazaizeh et al.'s (2016) research on Petra, Jordan, where 89% of all visitors were highly culturally motivated, in contrast to 45.4% of this type of visitors to Hong Kong surveyed by McKercher and Du Cros (2003).

As Hughes (1996, p. 708) emphasises, 'whether a tourist trip is "cultural" should be determined by the tourist's intent and the drawing power of the art form or event, not by activity alone'. The clustering of tourists into 'general' and 'specific' is part of several cultural tourist typologies that combine the degree of intent to travel for cultural reasons (centrality of cultural motivation) with other clustering variables or use it on its own (Table 2.4.). At first observation, it may be concluded that the literature agrees on the existence of three levels of cultural intent and consequently three types of cultural tourists by the centrality of cultural motivation: primary (regular participation and central interest), incidental (infrequent participation and secondary interest) and accidental (highly infrequent participation and secondary interest).

In a study covering 19 European cities van der Ark and Richards (2006) grouped their survey respondents into three classes by measuring participation (the percentage of respondents who said that they participated in cultural activities in those cities), and attractiveness (the percentage of those who said they found those activities attractive). The first, Class 1 (infrequent visitors), were found to score low on participation and attractiveness, while Class 2 (specific visitors) and Class 3 (general visitors) both scored high on participation.

Stebbins (1996, 2015), who also examined both the degree of intent and frequency of participation, differentiates between serious leisure tourists as true cultural tourists (specialised and general) and casual leisure tourists (cultural dabblers). As mentioned earlier in Section 2.2., for serious cultural tourists, participation in cultural tourism activities is a systematically pursued hobby, whilst cultural dabblers are only occasional consumers of cultural tourism products. Finally, Silberberg (1995) only used centrality of cultural motivation for his typology.

Table 2.4. Cultural tourist typologies.

Author	Frequency of participation			Research type	Methodology
	Centrality of purpose to travel for cultural reasons				
	Primary	Incidental	Accidental		
Hughes (1996)	Primary	Incidental	Accidental	Conceptual	-
Richards (1996)	Specific	General	-	Empirical	Quantitative
van der Ark and Richards (2006)	Specific (Class 2) General (Class 3)	Infrequent (Class 1)		Empirical	Quantitative
McKercher and Du Cros (2003)	Purposeful Sightseeing	Casual	Serendipitous Incidental	Empirical	Qualitative
Stebbins (1996)	Specialised General	Cultural dabbler	-	Conceptual	-
Silberberg (1995)	Greatly motivated	In-part motivated Adjunct	Accidental	Conceptual	-

The typology developed by McKercher (2002), tested by McKercher and Du Cros (2003), and recently applied by Vong (2016) and Alazaizeh et al. (2016), is unique in that it includes depth of experience, a dimension not reflected in Table 2.4. As highly culturally motivated clusters, sightseeing tourists are differentiated from purposeful as having shallow experiences; while serendipitous and incidental tourists have low cultural motivation to travel. The former, however, are characterised by deeper experiences than the latter. As for casual tourists, they are positioned in the middle as having modest cultural motivation and shallow experiences. The typology also specifies the nature of cultural interest. Purposeful tourists are described as closely interested in museums and lesser known heritage sites; sightseeing tourists as pursuing a wide array of experiences; casual tourists as preferring conveniently located cultural attractions; and incidental and serendipitous tourists as having no clear pattern in visitation.

As mentioned in Section 2.2 and illustrated by Table 2.4, a tourist does not have to have strong cultural motivation to be considered a cultural tourist, but some scholars disagree with this viewpoint. Vong (2016) grouped casual, serendipitous, and incidental tourists as ‘non-cultural’, whilst Poria, Butler, and Airey (2003a) distinguished between ‘heritage tourists’ and ‘tourists at heritage sites’. Furthermore, whilst McKercher (2002), and McKercher and Du Cros (2003) characterise accidental tourists as ‘cultural’, McKercher et al. (2002) express a

similar reservation to Poria et al. (2003a). They observe that whilst 'many touring activities enable the tourist to experience cultural differences', cultural tourism is 'more than cultural displacement', and, therefore, 'it is necessary to discriminate between cultural tourism and touring to different cultures' (McKercher et al., 2002, p. 29).

It should also be acknowledged that these typologies are not without limitations. As demonstrated by the discussion of differences between general and specific tourists, and the relationship between the proposed tourist types in Table 2.4. and frequency of cultural participation is open to interpretation. Simplistic single-item measures are the root cause of this ambiguity, and the same is true for the measurement of the strength of motivation and depth of experience in McKercher's typology. In the first instance, he used a single-item question, from less to more learning-oriented, i.e. from 'mostly sightseeing/photography through to a chance to develop a deep understanding' (McKercher, 2002, p.34). In the second, the length of time spent visiting heritage attractions continues to be used a proxy measure of depth of experience (Alazaizeh et al., 2016; Vong, 2016), defined by McKercher (2002) as level of engagement and degree of orientation towards learning. The meaning of 'deep understanding' and 'learning' should be adequately explained, as learning is a complex term, and learning about heritage does not necessarily guarantee deep engagement with places, people and the different aspects of their culture, as will be explored further in this chapter.

2.3.1.2. Activity-based Typologies

Section 2.2 highlighted several problems associated with activity-based definitions of cultural tourism. Nevertheless, tourists' interest in specific activities has been widely studied as pull motivation and is an important subject. Pull factors, represented by a wide range of destination attributes 'whose value is seen to reside in the object of travel' (Dann, 1977, p. 186), have formed the foundation of several activity-based segmentation studies on cultural tourists (Dolnicar, 2002; Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; McKercher et al., 2002; Wickens, 2002).

As explained earlier, special cultural interest tourism has expanded its meaning from arts and heritage tourism (Hughes, 1996) to gastronomic, photography and other tourism niches and micro-niches (Novelli, 2005; Smith, 2016). The scope of heritage tourism has also broadened from visits to historically and aesthetically significant built attractions to what Smith et al. (2010, p. 97) refer as 'heritage of a wider range of people', including industrial (Kerstetter, Confer, & Bricker, 1998), and agricultural, or rural (Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; Kim & Ellis, 2015).

As illustrated by Table 2.5 and noted by Espelt and Benito (2006) and Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016), cultural tourism clusters tend to be highly research-specific, particularly in regards to participants' country of origin; the choice of destination; and clustering and profiling factors. In many ways they are also unrelated, and several papers have revealed highly selective reporting and discussion of results (McKercher et al., 2002; Dolnicar, 2002; Espelt & Benito, 2006), making it more difficult to draw informed comparisons.

Despite the limitations, however, clustering of cultural tourists by activities helps identify cross-visitation patterns and address the fragmentation issue of cultural tourism pointed out by Du Cros and McKercher (2015). McKercher et al. (2002), for example, found that tourists visiting Hong Kong religious sites had to be combined with other more internally consistent segments interested in Chinese heritage. Another benefit of activity-based segmentation is concerned with secondary attractions. By asking inbound tourists to Hong Kong which attractions, iconic (primary) or obscure (secondary) they prefer to visit first, McKercher et al. (2002, p. 41) identified that 'Cultural generalists, TST [Tsim Sha Tsui] nodal culturalists* and Sino-colonial culturalists prefer to see obscure sites first'.

In a study on rural cultural heritage tourism in South Carolina, USA, Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016) concluded that destinations lacking in distinctive primary attractions can benefit from co-promoting their tourism offerings, given that cross-visitation in cultural tourism is highly common (Smith, 2016). They also found that learning-oriented tourists whose primary interest was to visit original historic sites such as historic houses and battlefields, and built heritage sites such as museum and monuments, were also very interested in eight alternative activities which included farmers' markets, eating local foods, and attending festivals.

Some of the sociodemographic characteristics of the tourists sampled in these and previously reviewed papers are also notably similar and deserve a closer analysis. Table 2.6. below lists only those sources that provided exact results. McKercher et al. (2002), for example, included no information on the age of three clusters and no aggregated data for the entire sample. Income is not featured in the table, as different studies measured different types of income (e.g. disposable, per person, per household) and in different currencies, requiring further interpretation which was not provided by the authors.

Table 2.5. Activity-based cultural tourist clusters.

Authors	Geographic origin	Destination	Clusters	Cluster-forming factors	Cluster-profiling factors
Dolnicar (2002)	Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, UK, USA,	Austria	(1) Standard culture tour participant (2) Super active culture freak (3) Inactive culture tourist (4) Organized excursion lover (5) Event-focused (6) Individual culture explorers (7) Theatre, musical and opera lovers (8) Super lean culture tour participant (9) Organized culture tourists	Activities	Geographic origin; age; disposable income; season; organisation (independent/tour); transport mode; previous visits; sources of information; travel party; number of short vacation; trips; number of overnight stays; entrance fees per day per person; vacation cost per day per person; intention to revisit; intention to recommend
Espelt and Benito (2006)	Spain	Spain Other destinations	(1) Noncultural tourists (2) Ritual tourists (3) Interested tourists (4) Erudite tourists	Number of accessible sights; activities (number of visited sights); number of secondary sights visited; total time of visit; time spent at sights; length of itinerary; information on walking the segments of street in between intersections	Geographic origin; age; gender; previous visits; weather; congestion; travel party; presence of tour guide; information
Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016)	USA	USA	(1) Learning-oriented (2) Recreation-oriented	Motivation to visit; activities	Gender; age; education; income; geographical origin

Table 2.5. Activity-based cultural tourist clusters, continued.

McKercher et al. (2002)	Australia, NZ, USA, Canada, UK, Europe, China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia	Hong Kong	(1) Cultural generalist (2) Icon culturalist (3) Chinese heritage culturalist (4) Tsim Sha Tsui (TST) nodal culturalist (5) Colonial culturalist (6) Sino-colonial culturalist	Activities	Geographic origin; age; education; organisation (independent/tour); preferred order of visiting well-known and obscure sites; length of stay in HK; total trip duration; previous visits; motivation to visit; depth of experience; cultural difference
Wickens (2002)	UK	Greece	(1) Cultural heritage; (2) Raver (3) Shirley Valentine (4) Heliolatrous (5) Lord Byron	Motivation to visit; activities; views about host community	Previous visits; family status; accommodation type; intention to revisit

Overall, cultural tourists can be described as well-educated, moderate to high income earners, represented by a relative balance of men and women. Although it could be argued that the results are specific to the cultural heritage sector, Dolnicar (2002) and Kastenholz et al. (2013) sampled broader audiences. Furthermore, regarding gender balance, both Ramires et al. (2018) and Espelt and Benito (2006) found little variation in the gender percentages across their clusters. However, it should be acknowledged that Ramires et al. (2018) did not discriminate between specific activities and clustered their participants by the importance of destination attributes using two factors, (1) culture and leisure, and (2) value for money. The clusters formed were Cluster 1 'conventional cultural tourists' (greater value attached to Factor 1); Cluster 2 'spontaneous cultural tourists' (low value attached to both factors); and Cluster 3 'absorptive cultural tourists' (higher value attached to Factor 2). The importance of specific activities was measured separately, and the authors found that women placed more value on built heritage, socio-cultural activities, and local cruise and gastronomic experiences than men.

While cultural tourism is no longer the pursuit of the elite, higher education level appears to continue to characterise cultural tourists. At the same time, a comparison of the research findings by Ramires et al. (2018) and van der Ark and Richards (2006) highlights that knowing education alone is not sufficient for effective segmentation and should be combined with actual participation and other behavioural factors. In Ramires et al. (2018), one of the three clusters (spontaneous cultural tourists), who demonstrated low interest in cultural experiences, also had the highest percentage of people with tertiary education. Van der Ark and Richards (2006), however, measured past and current museum visits, frequency of travel abroad, and cultural expenditure, and self-assessed level of cultural capital that they treated as indicators of cultural capital. They found that Class 1 (incidental tourists) who measured low on frequency of participation and high on attractiveness were found to have the lowest levels of cultural capital compared to the high participation classes. The concept of cultural capital is credited to Bourdieu's (1984) analysis in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. There cultural capital is approached as the relationship between formal education, learning in the family, explicit and implicit cultural knowledge, natural (gained through direct experience) and academically acquired taste for high arts, and the exercise of both the knowledge and taste in ascertaining one's position in the social class hierarchy. As pointed out by Sullivan (2001) and Prieur and Savage (2015), Bourdieu (1984) never formally defined cultural capital, and empirical research drawing on his theory of social recognition has operationalised it through a range of indicators and their relationship with social status, including those used by van der Ark and Richards (2006). The use of such proxies is still somewhat problematic, particularly when cultural capital is equated to cultural

competence, since the latter implies demonstrated ability to interpret and appreciate the results of intellectual and artistic endeavours of others (Bourdieu, 1984). Nevertheless, their study highlights the limitations of relying purely on education to identify cultural tourists and introduces another concept (cultural capital) relevant to this discussion.

Table 2.6. Socio-demographic characteristics of cultural tourists by sector.

Author	Age	Gender (%) (F)	Gender (%) (M)	Tertiary education (%)	Cultural tourism sector
Dolnicar (2002)	41-49	-	-	-	Culture and city tourism
Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016)	18-29 (6.8%) 30-39 (16.3%) 40-49 (19.3%) 50-59 (20%) 60-69 (26.4%) 70+ (11.2%)	52.5	47.5	62	Rural heritage
Ramires et al. (2018)	18-25 (21.97%) 26-35 (31.90%) 36-45 (18.91%) 46-60 (19.39%) >60 (7.83%)	53.68	46.32	78.5	Urban heritage
Espelt and Benito (2006)	<18 (0.4%) 19-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 >60	44.9	55.1	-	Urban heritage
Kastenholz et al. (2013)*	37 (mean)	47.7	52.3	61.2	Cultural tourism broadly

* Percentages were not provided in the article and were calculated from the total numbers for all tourists (repeat and first time)

With regards to the age of cultural tourists, the findings vary more significantly depending on how they are presented but also on the cultural tourism sector and preferred activities. By emphasising the mean age of 37 and 38, Kastenholz et al. (2013) and Ramires et al. (2018, p. 5) suggest that the average cultural tourist and cultural heritage tourist is 'younger than others'. However, the percentages for each age group reveal a more nuanced picture. Ramires et al. (2018, p. 5), who reported both the mean and the percentages, concluded that 26-35-year-olds were 'the most represented age group' but the actual breakdown of the results by age groups shows that people aged 46+ accounted for 27% of the sample, only a

fraction smaller than the 32% of those aged 26-35 and 19% of 36-45-year-olds. In addition, the representation of different age groups in their study is very similar between the three clusters, with Cluster 2 (spontaneous cultural tourists) having only slightly higher percentage of respondents aged 18-45.

The analysis of preferred activities by age offers more specific actionable insights (Moscardo, Pearce, & Morrison, 2001). The studies by Ramires et al. (2018) and Pappalepore, Maitland, and Smith (2010) support each other's findings in that younger tourists aged 18-35 are more drawn towards more social experiences, as well as sightseeing. Espelt and Benito (2006, p 447), however, argue that it is factors other than age that determine behaviour of cultural visitors at urban spaces: length of stay, as well as 'the number of companions, previous experience (which can lead to richer and more complex behavior), and guided visits (the routes are made the most of, and greater interest is shown in the nodes)'.

Each approach, whether activity-based or socio-demographic, has its merits. Using the eight marketing segmentation criteria proposed by Morrison, Moscardo et al. (2001) found that the activity-based (activity participation) segmentation approach is robust and particularly useful for targeted competitive tourism product development and experience management, as also pointed out in Section 2.2. As for socio-demographic factors, 'demographic and geographic segmentations are much simpler in terms of statistical analysis' and are easily presented to, and used by, practitioners' (Moscardo et al., 2001, p. 32). At the same time, the authors conclude that priority should be given to segmentation by activity participation. Indeed, as Falk (2016) argues, demographic characteristics on their own say very little about the choice of activities and the nature of touristic experience.

As discussed above, different types of tourists are attracted to different activities. Therefore, it is also important to understand how those activities differ and what they have in common. As identified by Richards (2001b) and supported by other literature, special cultural interests can be further analysed using the attributes listed below:

Table 2.7. Attributes of special cultural interests.

Attribute	Dimensions	Literature
Time focus	Past (history), present (contemporary), future	Richards (2001b)
Primary cultural focus	High, folk and popular culture	Lee and Bai (2016); Smith and Richards (2013a)
	Tangible and intangible heritage	UNESCO (2012)
Function	Education, entertainment, edutainment	Packer and Ballantyne (2004)
Primary form of consumption	Products and processes as 'active transmission of elements of the living culture, or culture as way of life'	Diekmann and Smith (2015); Ivanovic (2008); Richards (2001b, p. 23)
Nature of cultural participation	Passive (observation) or active participation	Pine and Gilmore (1998); Pizam and Fleischer (2005)
	Formal or informal participation	Smith (2016); Tan et al. (2013)
	Culture contact (high/low)	Régi (2013), Reisinger (2013a)
	Skill development	Richards and Wilson (2006)

Determining which attributes characterise which cultural tourism sectors and activities (Table 1.2.), however, is not a straightforward task. Function, for example, is highly dependent on what people choose to gain from the experience (push motivation), and, as noted by Du Cros and McKercher (2015, p. 107), 'often edutainment is the desired outcome rather than education'. Furthermore, even though some cultural attractions and activities such as museums have a stronger educational focus than, for example, performed heritage (Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016), Richards (2001a, p. 24) clarifies 'that the formerly distinct categories of attraction are increasingly disappearing'. As the industry responds to a growing demand for experiential and creative tourism, more attention is given to the playfulness (Smith, 2016), participation (Bourdeau, Gravari-Barbas, & Robinson, 2016; Davis & Smeds, 2016; Larsen & Meged, 2013), emotional involvement (Poria, 2013) and co-creation (Mossberg et al., 2014) aspects of the tourist experience.

Active/passive participation, high/low contact and skill development form another group of debatable examples. Cultural heritage tourism, including visits to religious sites, and the high culture activities of arts tourism are commonly associated with passive consumption of cultural products of the past and low contact, i.e. limited to no opportunities for intimate

contact with local residents (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2012; Reisinger, 2013a). To assess participatory characteristics of 34 tourist activities, Pizam and Fleischer (2005) classified each as either active or passive depending on how conducive they thought those activities were to skill development and application of physical effort. Consequently, 'attending cultural and arts festivals, going to the opera, ballet and theater' (Pizam & Fleischer, 2005, p. 12) were labelled as passive, in contrast to dynamic outdoor recreation activities such as wilderness hiking. Opportunities for skill development and problem-solving have also been thoroughly discussed in-depth in application to creative tourism (Horvath, 2013; Richards & Wilson, 2006; Tan et al., 2013). In Taiwan, Tan et al. (2013) identified six areas which address all three of these attributes (contact, participation, skill development) through workshop, classes and whole creative tours: food culture, life education, natural ecology, interior decoration, historic arts and handicraft culture, and typical creative cultural tourism activities. They found that 'safe challenge' manifested in 'creative activities with 'controlled risk' which are 'challenging and exciting but safe' is a key dimension of creative experiences (Tan et al., 2013, p. 167), resembling the notion of 'safe success' discussed by Kane and Zink (2004) in the context of kayaking trips and packaged mountaineering tourists in Pomfret (2012).

More broadly, active participation has been strongly linked to contact with intangible cultural heritage due to its more interactive nature (Munsters & Melkert, 2015). In addition to being part of creative tourism through historic arts and crafts, intangible cultural heritage is the primary focus of the following sectors: traditional and popular performing arts (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007); festivals and special events (Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; Lee, Kyle, & Scott, 2012); indigenous and ethnic tourism (Collins, 2015; Wu et al., 2017); and popular culture tourism (Lee & Bai, 2016). Indigenous and ethnic tourism in particular are commonly anticipated to centre more on intimate (high) contact with local minority groups outside or 'within the tourists' own society' and their way of life as opposed to cultural products (Smith, 2016, p. 126).

The examples above illustrate that cultural tourism is fragmented for a reason. Different sub-sectors vary considerably in terms of the types of activities which require different managerial considerations. Interestingly, however, when the diversity of activities within each of the sectors is acknowledged and touristic experiences are examined holistically (Kane & Zink, 2004), three conclusions can be drawn. The table below outlines those conclusions and provides summaries of the examples discussed further.

Table 2.8. Relationship between cultural tourism sectors and activities.

Conclusion	Examples	Sector by Smith (2016)
Conclusion 1: The same sector can have activities which differ significantly in their attributes	Protected archaeological site (e.g. Parthenon) versus an interactive open-air museum (e.g. Sovereign Hill)	Heritage tourism
Conclusion 2: The same activity can be assigned to different dimensions of the same attribute	Culture contact and participation in creative activities (e.g. photography)	Creative tourism
	Active participation in visiting religious heritage sites	Heritage tourism
	Culture contact in visits to indigenous communities	Indigenous tourism
Conclusion 3: The divisions between the sectors become quite blurred, and 'not always possible or indeed useful' (Smith, 2016, p. 17).	Performed heritage (music, dance, festivals, and arts and crafts)	Performing arts; festivals and special events; rural tourism; indigenous and ethnic tourism; arts and crafts
	Language and gastronomy tourism in relation to other sectors	Any sector

Whilst a visit to the Athenian Acropolis in Greece typically involves a walk around this large archaeological site (Rakić & Chambers, 2012) a visit to an open-air museum, such as Sovereign Hill which has been framed as a 'living' museum of the Goldrush period in Ballarat, Australia may be considerably different (Huang, Weiler, & Assaker, 2015). Unlike the educational but largely sightseeing experiences at the Acropolis, Sovereign Hill involves a wide spectrum of activities, facilitating immersive participative experiences of the local ways of life of its historic period, including dressing up in the costumes of the era; enjoying a meal; and learning a craft (SovereignHill, n.d.).

Culture contact is another example of how when examined more closely, the activities within the same sectors of Smith's (2016) typology are characterised by different dimensions of the same attribute. The motivation of creative tourists for self-development through skill building may not always necessarily align with high culture contact, that is the interest in getting know the locals, their way of life, and the products and processes of their cultural activities as such. From one perspective, cultural knowledge and skills are acquired through interaction with locals and participation in their cultural practices (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2012; Tan et al., 2013). However, from an alternative perspective, creative tourism remains an ambiguous

sector, as far as culture consumption (contact and participation) is concerned. Activities such as photography, undertaken at semi-professional to professional level, can be expected to be rather solitary and consequently involving little interaction with people from other cultures, other than with the tour companions and tour guides. However, such trips can also be about photographing local residents in situ, and, therefore, requiring seeking permission and building rapport through intimate interaction (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003).

Moreover, the concepts of co-creation and performativity (Edensor, 1998; Richards & Wilson, 2006) that assign higher agency to tourists in terms of how they choose to spend their time, also have important implications for classifying special cultural interests. A visit to a religious heritage site is a typical item on many sightseeing itineraries, associated with passive secular appreciation of their historic and artistic significance and aesthetic beauty (Hughes, Bond, & Ballantyne, 2013; Nolan & Nolan, 1992). Yet, Hughes et al. (2013) refer to empirical research indicating that many visitors to religious sites display a mix of behaviours and motivations which cannot be clearly described as secular or pilgrim (spiritual).

Therefore, whether someone moves rapidly and without apparent interest at a deeper level through a church or temple or stops to light up a candle or an incense stick may be a matter of personal choice as opposed to itinerary-related constraints. Similarly, high contact and active tourist participation in indigenous and ethnic tourism are highly situational, not only in terms of the tourists' behavioural choices but the highly controlled and often staged nature of the cultural experiences (Régi, 2013). In addition, it also depends on how tourism scholars interpret 'high' and 'low contact', i.e. whether it is expected to involve extended direct interaction with 'the other' or if mingling amongst the residents at a festival is also accepted as a people-centred experiences.

Lastly, the notion of 'performed heritage' used by Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016, p. 1397) as involving 'music, dance, festivals, and arts and crafts', and language and gastronomy (food) tourism sectors demonstrate how difficult it can be to assign some activities to only one sector. The former activities can fall under performing arts; festivals and special events; rural environments; indigenous and ethnic tourism; arts and crafts; and even gastronomy. As for language and gastronomy tourism, while they are prominent special interests (Drozdowski, 2011; Grasseni, 2014; Kennett, 2002; Kim & Ellis, 2015; Kim & Iwashita, 2016), language learning, particularly informal, and food tourism experiences can also be part of any of the above-mentioned sectors, as demonstrated by Huang, Beeco, et al. (2016).

In conclusion, as Smith (2016) and Richards (2001a, p. 25) point out, any typology of cultural tourism attractions and consequently special cultural tourism interests should be approached as 'a dynamic field within which cultural attractions may position themselves than as a fixed

classification'. Tourism researchers and practitioners should, therefore, be mindful of placing tourists into different activity-based clusters. Moreover, when applying existing cultural tourist typologies, it is important to remember that while pattern-seeking can be helpful for tourism planning and management, it can also come at the cost of recognising individual idiosyncrasies in tourist behaviour. In addition, when assigning different attributes to activities, more attention should be given to those activities and attractions and their attributes that may not be immediately associated with a given special interest. Moreover, the outcome of this task ultimately depends on the experience context and tourists' intent, i.e. what they want to get out of a particular experience. Finally, the examples above also illustrate how important it is to consider any given tourist experience in its entirety, that is all activities, formal (organised) and informal (unplanned), rather than focus purely on the generally organised, core activities, such as those listed by Smith (2016).

2.3.2. Segmentation by Push Motivations

Tourists may also vary by the intrinsic benefits they expect to gain from engaging in various activities. Iso-Ahola (1982) proposed the existence of two motivational forces encompassing all these benefits: seeking and escaping. According to Pearce and Lee's (2005) findings and the studies on responsible tourism, voluntourism and backpackers where their TCP (Travel Career Pattern) Scale has been partially adopted (Lee & Yen, 2015; Mody, Day, Sydnor, Jaffe, & Lehto, 2014; Paris & Teye, 2010; Weaver, 2015), escape, relationship-seeking (being with family and friends), self-development (host-site involvement and personal development), and novelty represent the core of tourist motivation in general. As shown in Table 2.9., these factors are consistent with the four key dimensions of leisure motivation examined by Ryan and Glendon (1998) and the key factors characterising motivation of specifically cultural tourists.

As the literature review revealed, cultural tourists are mainly motivated by seeking: novelty, entertainment, sightseeing, learning about other cultures (education) and personal development (Kastenholz et al., 2013; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Poria, 2013; Richards, 2007; Stebbins, 1996; Packer, 2004; Packer & Ballantyne, 2004; Timothy, 2011). The results of the importance of escape and relationship-seeking are less definitive. Packer and Ballantyne (2004) found that individuals seeking cognitive engagement prioritise opportunities for mental stimulation over restoration and social exchange. However, it is necessary to point out that their study examined specifically museum experiences, and that they excluded tour groups and families from the sample.

Table 2.9. Core dimensions of tourist motivation.

TCP Scale (Pearce & Lee, 2005)	Leisure Motivation Scale (Ryan & Glendon, 1998)	Cultural tourism studies
Escape	Stimulus-avoidance	(inconclusive)
Relationship-seeking	Social	(inconclusive)
Self-development (personal development)	Competence-mastery (achieving, mastering, challenging, and competing)	Personal development
Novelty	Intellectual (learning, exploring, discovering, thought or imagining).	Novelty Entertainment Sightseeing
Self-development (host-site involvement)		Learning about other cultures (education)

With reference to the study by Weaver et al. (2001), Ramires et al. (2018, p. 3) note, for example, that ‘a large number of heritage tourists go beyond purely cultural motivations, to engage in social activities and mingling with the locals in the destination’. Furthermore, the meaning of the escape factor plays a crucial role. In Pearce and Lee (2005) this factor was combined with relaxation and labelled ‘escape/relax’. The authors included three items communicating stimulus-avoidance (resting and relaxing; giving my mind a rest; and not worrying about time) and four items implying a relationship with stress or daily routine, but not necessarily with avoidance of stimulation (getting away from everyday psychological stress/pressure; getting away from the usual demands of life; getting away from everyday physical stress/pressure; being away from daily routine). Lastly, as Iso-Ahola (1982, p. 260) observed, tourist motivation is ‘dynamic in character’ and can vary depending on the context and on when tourists are asked about their motives, before or after travel.

Identification of motivation factors has been the subject of both quantitative and qualitative enquiry, although both approaches have their relative limitations. Quantitative studies fail to factor in variation in motivation depending on specific experience context (Huang & Hsu, 2009). Qualitative studies, while being somewhat more context specific, do not, as such, define the meaning of ‘education’, ‘entertainment’, ‘culture’ and ‘learning about another

culture' (Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2013; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003). This limitation also applies to some quantitative cultural tourism research (Kastenholz et al., 2013). Thus, the way they are used in the literature, the entertainment, novelty and sightseeing factors listed in Table 2.9. could well be combined under 'entertainment' or 'novelty' as umbrella terms. While entertainment is not featured as a standalone factor in the TCP Scale, it is represented in the items belonging to novelty, host-site involvement and stimulation factors through its association with fun, play, pleasure, enjoyment and excitement, which are all important aspects of experiencing other cultures (McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Packer & Ballantyne 2004; Poria, 2013; Stebbins 1996).

The literature is also characterised by a certain inconsistency in conceptualisation and measurement of learning itself, which has implications for interpreting the alignment between the motivational factors from the three sets of literature listed in Table 2.9. Although tourist motivation has been extensively researched since the 1970s (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1982), future research should carefully consider the differences and similarities between such motivations as educational learning for enrichment of knowledge (Kastenholz et al., 2013; Packer, 2004); learning as self-development (Pearce & Lee, 2005), self-actualisation (Stebbins, 1996), self-fulfilment (Packer & Ballantyne, 2004) and personal growth (McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Pearce & Packer, 2013); learning as host-culture involvement (Pearce & Lee 2005); and learning as entertainment (Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012; Packer & Ballantyne, 2004). Therefore, not only can the desire to learn about and experience other cultures imply different understandings of what culture involves but can also be driven by any of the key motives listed in Table 2.9.

Although Falk et al. (2012, p. 912) point out that 'learning and education are implicit' in motivation for personal development, self-actualisation and host-site involvement, their conceptual framework of learning in travel highlights some of the differences between these types of learning in terms of goals and outcomes. Using Aristotle's work as a foundation, they differentiate between learning as development of practical skills (techne); learning as acquisition of knowledge (episteme); and learning as search for practical wisdom (phronesis). Further within each of these types of learning they identify examples of intentional (active) and unintentional (passive) learning. While the authors do not discuss this explicitly, the learning outcomes included in the framework can be further grouped into self- and others-related.

It appears that the knowledge aspect of learning is concerned with what Ryan and Glendon (1998, p. 175) refer to as 'discovering new places and things' under the intellectual motive; and Pearce and Lee (2005) as 'learning new things' and 'developing my knowledge of the

area' under the self-development (host-site involvement) factor. The examples of practical wisdom provided by Falk et al. (2012, p. 917) address both motivation for personal development (e.g. self-awareness) and for enhanced understanding of others (e.g. 'consciously learning about sustainable and ethical behaviours and cultural perspectives'), also found in other literature (Table 2.9.). As for learning of practical skills, such as those examined by Pearce and Foster (2007), it is driven by motivation for competence-mastery and is focused on the self.

Through the notion of intentionality, Falk et al.'s (2012) paper also acknowledges the relationship between learning and effort, closely examined by Packer (2006) and Packer and Ballantyne (2004, pp. 57-58). Both studies identified two types of learning: enjoyable and effortful (challenging, adventurous, competitive and risky). Drawing on the correlation analysis between 'learning as enjoyable' and 'learning as effortful' with investment of mental effort, the authors concluded that visitors to educational leisure sites such as museums and art galleries, and those on guided heritage/history tours are more likely to invest mental effort into their learning when the experience appears to be effortless. They also found that the 'learning and discovery' factor correlated strongly with 'passive enjoyment' indicating a preference for learning as entertainment, or edutainment, all indicative of casual cultural tourism under the serious leisure perspective (Stebbins, 2015). Given that effort is essential to the purposeful search for the mastery of physical and cognitive skills mentioned in Falk et al.'s (2012) framework, Packer and Ballantyne's (2004) findings may be specific to the type of learning environment and learning experience examined in their study.

Further research into the relationship between mental effort and type of learning goal (outcome); motivation for intellectual challenge; and motivation for personal development may provide additional insights. Intellectual challenge was identified by Ryan and Glendon (1998) as a limitation of the Leisure Motivation Scale they used, which was also partially adopted by Packer (2004). Both studies used 'challenge my abilities' indiscriminately of how this item could have been interpreted (physical or mental) by their participants: in Ryan and Glendon (1998) under the 'competence-mastery' factor and in Packer (2004) under the personal self-fulfilment factor. As acknowledged by Barnett (2005), who also used a measure of challenge as a dimension of leisure experience that did not refer to any specific abilities or activities, the multi-faceted nature of challenge, particularly in regards to its physical and mental aspects, requires further research.

In addition, Packer (2004) found that the 'learning and discovery' motivation factor, which included items addressing acquisition of knowledge, had the weakest correlation with 'personal self-fulfilment'. The qualitative stage of her research revealed, however, that

although 92% of interviewees out of 52 agreed that to them learning was about acquisition of information, a considerable number still saw learning as 'personal change': 60% as 'finding new ways to look at things' and 35% as about 'becoming a better person'. Therefore, it is worth exploring how these two motives ('learning and discovery' and 'personal self-fulfilment') relate to the search for practical wisdom and development of practical skills, including such 'tourism skills' as language and interpersonal communication (Andersson, 2007; Pearce & Foster, 2007).

As far as empirically tested typologies of tourists by push motivations (benefits sought) are concerned, although they are not specifically based on cultural tourists, they are still useful for understanding the place of cultural motives in tourist motivation. Ryan and Glendon's (1998) cluster analysis of packaged holiday tourists, for example, demonstrates that this market is more heterogeneous and includes more tourists motivated by intellectual stimulation than is commonly anticipated in the literature. They found that nine out of 11 clusters of British tourists, excluding 'mental relaxers' and 'noisy socializers', measured high on the intellectual factor. Furthermore, for six clusters the differences in the mean scores for cultural attractions (history, culture, locals) and the destination attribute referring to opportunities to get away were not significant. The six clusters included a mix of tourist types, from those scoring high on relaxation (unimaginative relaxers, relaxed discoverers, positive holidaytakers) to those who assigned medium importance to this factor (friendly discoverers, competent intellectuals, intellectual active isolates). As for the difference in the interest in natural attractions (scenery) and cultural attractions, although the means scores for the former were consistently higher, it was also within the same range. Overall, the results illustrate the omnivorousness of tourist motivation, both in terms of interests, and push motivation for relaxation and stimulation.

Pearce and Lee (2005) organised their respondents in two large clusters by previous international travel experience (high and low). Most tourists in each cluster were found to be more strongly motivated by different dimensions of the self-development motive: the high experience cluster by host-site involvement and the low experience cluster by personal development. The latter also measured higher on such higher order needs as stimulation and self-actualization, and placed more emphasis on security, nostalgia, romance and recognition.

In regard to cultural tourists, Poria (2013) and Falk (2016) proposed two typologies that incorporate some push and pull motives and differentiate between similar sets of clusters. Poria (2013) identified four types of heritage experiences and four corresponding types of cultural heritage tourists whose visits are driven by one of the four 'musts': see, feel, learn

and evolve. To the exception of the 'must feel' experiences that intersect with multiple motives, the other interests align with one of the main motivation factors mentioned above (sightseeing, learning and personal development). Falk's (2016) visitor types include experience seekers, explorers, professionals/hobbyists, rechargers, facilitators, respectful pilgrims and affinity seekers. The first two strongly resemble those who are described by Poria (2013, p. 348) as attracted by 'must see iconic sights' and who 'must learn about the site and its various historical facets', demonstrating general curiosity. The next two, while distinctive from each other, share similar characteristics with Poria's (2013) 'must evolve' types: exploration of one's identity through the visit (professionals/hobbyists) and motivation for self-change (rechargers). According to Falk (2016, p. 81), 'professionals/hobbyists' bond with sites through personal or professional interests, and 'rechargers' 'seek to have a contemplative, spiritual or restorative experience' which can result in personal transformation. As for 'affinity seekers' and 'respectful pilgrims', although the latter appears to be a highly context-specific type, both display similarity with 'must feel' tourists. In respect to Falk's (2016) 'facilitators', scholarly views vary. Falk (2016, p. 80) identifies 'facilitators' as a distinctive group of 'socially motivated' museum visitors who help their friends and family to gain the most from the experience. However, Packer (2004) and Packer and Ballantyne (2002) reported that visitors to culturally educational settings such as museums and art galleries are more interested in solitary than shared learning experiences. Future empirical research may also explore the place of challenge (both skills and knowledge-related) in the motivations of the tourist clusters discussed by Poria (2013) and Falk (2016), and more specifically, on the differences between the sets of clusters.

When discussing push motivations, it is also important to consider individual differences between tourists. Among the tourist typologies discussed in this section, only Ryan and Glendon (1998), and Pearce and Lee (2005) examined the role of sociodemographic characteristics. Ryan and Glendon (1998, p. 180) found that in their clusters differences in age, gender, family status and income were 'not strongly marked'. In particular, gender was found to be an insignificant variable, a result consistent with the relative gender balance discussed previously in Section 2.3.1 and also found by Pearce and Lee (2005). In regards to age, selective reporting of results by Ryan and Glendon (1998) makes it difficult to draw comparisons with other literature findings. Pearce and Lee (2005), however, did provide the percentages of respondents for each of the four age brackets used in the paper. The proportion of tourists aged 26-40 was found to be very similar for high (38%) and low (41%) experience clusters, and relatively close to the results obtained by Ramires et al. (2018). The main age differences between high and low experience clusters were found in the percentages of respondents aged over 41 (54% vs 18%), and under 26 (6.1% vs 39%).

These results significantly increase the gap between the two clusters in the number of respondents aged up to 40, making it 80% for the low experience group and 44% for the high experience group.

As for psychographic factors, personality and need for cognition, could be useful in explaining a person's relationship with mental effort. As reported by Packer and Ballantyne (2002, p. 190), 'the *need for cognition* scale was developed by Cacioppo and Petty (1982) to measure individual differences in the tendency to engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive endeavors', and found 'art gallery visitors having a higher need for cognition than either museum or aquarium visitors'. Regarding personality, existing literature provides ample evidence that degree of intrinsic motivation can vary across individuals depending on personality (Iwasaki & Mannell, 1999; Keller & Bless, 2008; Weissinger & Iso-Ahola, 1984). In addition, Weissinger and Bandalos (1995, p. 384) note that the tendency to desire challenge, i.e. 'leisure experiences that stretch one's limits and provide novel stimuli' is, in fact, a characteristic of what Csikszentmihalyi (1975) described as 'autotelic personality'. It is necessary to add here, however, that the challenge factor in Weissinger and Bandalos (1995) included only two items: one skill-related item ('I feel good when my leisure time activities challenge my skills') and one non-specific item ('I like a challenge in my leisure time').

As acknowledged by Falk et al. (2012, p. 913), the different interpretations of learning found in tourism literature stem from the complex psychology of human learning and its 'many counter-intuitive components and activities'. The definition of learning they derive from their literature review is consistent with the understandings of learning found in other sources on adult learning (Mezirow, 1991) and learning in tourism (Moscardo, 1996; Van Winkle & Backman, 2011), and is underpinned by the cognitivist and constructivist perspectives on learning (Stewart, 2012). From these perspectives learning is understood as a situated (context-dependent) and social (involving dialogue) process of constructing meaning and not mere thinking and knowledge acquisition. Thinking, that is 'associating, differentiating, imagining and referring' (Mezirow, 1991, p. 12) is essential to learning but the essence of learning goes beyond that. It involves making meaningful interpretations of new experiences by drawing on the past ones 'to understand and, to a degree, predict and control the future' (Falk et al., 2012, p. 914); in other words, to solve future problems. Moreover, these interpretations are framed and consequently limited by that past knowledge and experience, and to gain a new perspective, uninhibited by prior learning, those limitations must be overcome through conscious reflection, i.e. mental effort (Mezirow, 1991). This expanded understanding of learning is discussed by Falk (2016, p. 74) in relation to entry narratives in

museum visitation which 'are likely to be self-reinforcing, directing both learning, behaviour and perceptions of satisfaction', and which distinguish 'mindless' learning from 'mindful' (Moscardo, 1996). In the light of this knowledge, Packer's (2006, p. 339) argument that 'any learning is transformative because change is part of what we commonly understand learning to be' is another generalisation which does not hold up against specific empirical problems. As Stone and Duffy (2015, p. 211) point out, 'travel experiences are not inherently transformative'.

Effort is integral to motivation for personal development with its focus on self and change. As Mezirow (1991, p. 14) poses, 'the intensity with which one wants to do something' or 'the line of action in which learning occurs' and 'the self-image of the learner' are essential contexts for learning. Therefore, given that educational leisure is generally not expected to be effortful (Falk et al.; 2012, Packer, 2004), to have a better understanding of the relationship between learning about another culture, entertainment and effort, it is necessary to address the following questions:

- When do tourists *do* expect their learning to be mentally challenging (effortful)?
- What types of learning outcomes (skills, knowledge, practical wisdom/enhanced understanding of oneself and others) do tourists seek when they say they are interested in learning about other cultures?
- What are the implications of incorporating intellectual challenges into touristic experiences which are *not* expected to be effortful by tourists?

Finally, it is important to consider two ideas that emerge from cognition and outcome-focused literature. The first one is Poria's (2013) cluster of 'must feel' tourists. Although the differences between them and the 'must evolve' cluster are somewhat blurred, as both look for a deeply personal connection with a site, the 'must feel' group emphasises the importance of affect in learning and its interrelatedness with cognition. As observed by Van Winkle and Lagay (2012, p. 352) in a phenomenological analysis of tourists' statements about what learning means to them, unplanned 'affective reflection guided by emotions' plays an important part in tourists' learning experiences. Indeed, as noted by Falk and Dierking (2000, p. 18) and supported by Oatley, Parrott, Smith, and Watts (2011) and Gonzalez (2012), 'all learning, even of the most logic topic, involves emotion, just as emotions virtually always involve cognition'. The second idea emphasises the intrinsic satisfaction gained by tourists from 'learning for fun', simply from engaging in the learning process itself without any specific goals in mind (Packer, 2006, p. 341; Van Winkle & Lagay, 2012).

2.4. Cultural Group Tourism

2.4.1. The Evolution of Organised Travel

According to UNWTO (2017), international tourist arrivals grew by 50 times, from 25 million in 1950 to 1,235 million in 2016, with 'leisure, recreation and holiday' tourists accounting for 53%, followed by 'VFR, health, religion, other' (27%), 'business and professional' (13%) and 'not specified' (7%). In regards to modes of travel, it has been 45 years since Cohen's (1972) widely-cited paper distinguishing between the institutionalised (package) and the individual mass tourist, and the explorer and the drifter as two non-institutionalised (self-arranged) types in the order of increased desire to immerse in unfamiliar environments. The paper saw the organised mass tourist and the drifter as the two extremes of the novelty (strangeness) – familiarity continuum, with culture immersion understood as a fixed role. The mass market, often discussed interchangeably with packaged holidays or the organised travel market, has contributed to the above-mentioned growth but also has become significantly differentiated. With these changes the academic discourse around organised travel from the West has also started to shift (Espelt & Benito, 2006; Robinson & Novelli, 2005; Smith et al., 2010; Torres, 2015). Yet, the evidence of this shift is still sporadic, missing a systematic comprehensive review of the earlier debates in view of the current market situation (Vainikka, 2013), and is dominated by conceptual discussions (Lee & Wilkins, 2017).

Recent studies on the differences in travel modes rely on the literature published up to the 1990s (Chang, Wall, & Chang, 2008; Mehmetoglu, 2006), and Wong and McKercher (2012) found no literature on construction of tour itineraries post-2001. The lack of contemporary literature on organised travel could suggest that despite the change in the discourse from deterministic to flexible (Vainikka, 2013), the 'fundamental pessimism' about people travelling in organised groups still persists, with some exceptions (Kane & Zink, 2004; Larsen & Meged, 2013; Wynn, 2007, p. 13).

According to Vainikka's (2013) conceptual review, mass travel experienced the harshest critique in 1960s and 70s, with the growth of all-inclusive (AI) enclave packages to holiday resorts in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, and packaged tours around Europe (Boorstin, 1964; Cohen, 1972). A typical AI package, which remains a popular FIT (fully independent travel) option, includes accommodation, transportation, meals, and occasionally sightseeing (Farmaki, Georgiou, & Christou, 2017; Sirakaya-Turk, Nyaupane, & Uysal, 2014). Those that include sightseeing are also known as 'sun-plus' holidays (Enoch, 1996). Early package tours differed from AI packages and day tours in terms of them being group travel (travel in groups) in the presence of a guide (escort) for full or partial duration of an extended trip (Armstrong & Weiler, 2002; Wong & McKercher, 2012). Both types of package

holidays (AI and group tours) were characterised by isolation from the local community; standardised service offerings, directing revenue away from the destinations and to overseas investors; commoditised staged and risk free experiences; and overall rigid packaging promoting passive mass consumption by the culturally insensitive and illiterate, low-middle class workers (Farmaki et al., 2017; Jovicic, 2016; Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2014; Vainikka, 2013). Since the 1980s it has often been defined in opposition to such types of 'alternative' tourism as ecotourism, voluntourism, and responsible tourism (Holland, 2012; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003; Krippendorf, 1987), known as 'considerate to the local, economically friendly and non-commercial' and with 'a meaningful ideology' (Vainikka, 2013, p. 274).

As Vainikka (2013) notes, the arguments against this highly deterministic discourse started to emerge in the 1990s (Enoch, 1996; Pearce, 1982a; Sharpley, 2000). This marked the beginning of the shift towards more flexible, constructive, and pragmatic discourse. Indeed, research on alternative tourists has become more critical of their motivations and behaviours, demonstrating that these types of travel can be just as intrusive, shallow and orchestrated through maps, guide books, on-site tours and signage as organised mass travel (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003; Larsen, Øgaard, & Brun, 2011; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Wilson, Fisher, & Moore, 2008). In a study on Thailand, Kontogeorgopoulos (2003) found that depending on the proactiveness of tour leaders, travelling in the infamous 'environmental bubble' as part of a tour group can result in much more culturally sensitive interaction between tourists and hosts, compared to the behaviour of some backpackers and not-so-responsible adventure travellers. Chang and Chang (2008) found, for example, that Taiwanese domestic package tourists were more concerned with culture and authenticity than independent tourists who saw greater value in other interests. Compared with the study by Rasmi et al. (2014), where tourists interested in independent activities scored low on host-culture involvement, this finding may indicate that in some cases independent tourists are less likely to seek culture immersion than some literature suggests (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Reisinger, 2013a).

Here, it is important to briefly reflect on the fact that much of the earlier critique was around Western tourists, and that outbound Chinese tourism, for example, has followed the same, if time-lagged, trajectory. Today, Chinese backpackers remain an emerging market (Chen, Bao, & Huang, 2014). It has been posited that this market has partially grown in response to the negative images created by their package-focused fellow citizens, in particular those associated with risk-averse activities on pre-arranged holidays (Chang & Chang, 2008; Lee & Wilkins, 2017). Cultural idiosyncrasies are one explanation of why Chinese and South

Korean tourists are commonly perceived as 'mass tourists' (Cheng, Wu, Yen, & Chen, 2016; Wong & Lau, 2001). Lee and Wilkins (2017) found that Korean tourists avoid interactions with locals, including with service providers. As the authors explain, this is likely due to the cultural differences in relation to conflict management: 'members of collectivistic cultures tend to make greater efforts to avoid conflict than members of individualistic cultures' (Lee & Wilkins, 2017, p. 26). Such avoidance of outside social interaction has not been raised as an issue in the literature on Western tourists.

Indeed, much of the research discussing group-based travel and the propensity to travel in groups, published in the last decade, is based on Asian domestic and outbound tourists and international students as members of collectivist cultures (Lee & King, 2016). In contrast, earlier literature on group tourists, particularly of the 1990s and early 2000s, examines Western tourists travelling on package holidays of the mass product type discussed earlier. The research by Kay (2009) and Meng (2010), however, points out the limitations of such cultural determinism and the influence of travellers' individual backgrounds and shared socio-economic and political circumstances. More recent tourism literature also attempts to go beyond the stereotypical notions of tourists travelling in groups as Cohen's (1972) institutionalised tourists and focus on the pragmatics (constraints and possibilities) of group travel. This literature examines four interrelated groups of reasons why someone may prefer an externally arranged extended tour over independent travel: psychological; physical (including infrastructural); pragmatic (including financial); and social. In relation to the terminology, 'package tour' and 'group tour' (or just 'tour') appear to be used interchangeably.

As conceptualised by Mossberg et al. (2014) and demonstrated by Hansen and Mossberg (2017), tour guides play a critical part in facilitating deep immersive experiences by performing two sets of roles, basic and 'guide-plus' roles. The former, also referred to as 'instrumental' (Cheng et al., 2016; Cohen, 1985), involve 'problem solving (Schmidt, 1979), care taking (Fine & Speer, 1985) and the provision of a safe and secure context' (Hansen & Mossberg, 2016, p. 4). The latter are 'mediatory' and 'interpretative' roles (Cheng et al., 2016; Jonasson & Scherle, 2012) cover storytelling (interpreting and cultural mediation); social mediation within a tour group; and instructing, i.e. 'facilitating tourist interaction with an activity and its objects' (Hansen & Mossberg, 2017, p. 262). A large component of the 'guide-plus' roles is encouraging tourists to reflect on and discuss their experiences with the guide and other group members. Hansen and Mossberg's (2017, p. 262) findings support Ham's (2013) foundational work on interpretation and tour guiding and demonstrate that tourists cannot fully engage with an activity unless both 'a protective and thematic frame' of

experiencing is established. Effective performance of these roles is particularly critical for tour guides who act as tour leaders/directors/managers, escorting group tours for their duration (Poynter, 1993). Mancini (2001, p. 6) offers a vivid summary of the multiple roles they must juggle:

A tour manager – a person who manages a group’s movement over a multi-day tour – is part psychologist, ombudsman, diplomat, scout leader, flight attendant, entertainer, news reporter, restaurant critic, efficiency expert and orator. In certain situations tour managers may even be expected to be translators, detectives, mind readers, and miracle workers.

Tour leaders are tour operators’ key assets (Cheng et al., 2016; Torres, 2015; Walker & Moscardo, 2016). Torres (2015) discusses how tour leaders exercise significant influence on which optional activities their passengers take up. Salazar (2013) and Enoch (1996, p. 601) discuss how ‘up-market’ tour operators offering specialist holidays emphasise the academic credentials and travel experience of their guides to attract those customers ‘who choose a package tour because they feel they will “learn” more from a tour which is being guided by an expert in the history of art, architecture, or wine-growing, for example, than they could on a private touring vacation’. A quick review of the websites of modern tour operators reveals that profiles of tour guides are provided by a wide range of companies. Many fit Richard et al.’s (2001) description of high-end specialist tour operators focusing on ‘high culture’ (Alumni Travel, 2016; ASA Cultural Tours, 2019). However, there are also midrange companies such as On the Go Tours (2018c) which offer a variety of experiences, from niche culinary tours to omnivorous ‘beach & culture’ holidays that include relaxation days at the end of cultural programs (On the Go Tours, 2018a) and attract both cultural and ‘non-cultural’ consumers’ (Richards et al., 2001, p. 84).

Cheng et al. (2016) examined the relationship between tour leader attachment experienced by group tourists from Asia and customer commitment and customer citizenship behaviours. They found that attachment (how much group tourists like the tour leader) results in ‘cooperation and advocacy’ behaviours during and after tour such as ‘recommendations, feedback, and assistance to other customers in the future’, as well as in the intention to purchase again with the same company (Cheng et al., 2016, p. 653). Interested in the sources of such influences, Tsaur, Wu, Yen, and Wu (2014) researched tour guide charisma, whilst Wong and Lee (2012) explored their leadership styles, also in the context of outbound group travel from Asia. If tour guides are able to influence their customers’ choice of activities and the nature of their participation in them, it is likely that they are also able to encourage them to travel outside of their comfort zone in terms of both destinations and

travel styles. Jonasson and Scherle (2012, p. 60) write, 'a rule of thumb is: the more intensively the group relates to the guide, the greater his influence on intercultural encounters will be, and it is these that determine the success of the holiday trip'.

Moreover, while criticising organised (mass) tourists for preferring the 'bubble', it is important to discriminate between the sources of discomfort, their relative importance and their impact on the touristic experience for different people. Perceived safety and risks can vary between first-time and repeat travellers (Karamustafa, Fuchs, & Reichel, 2013); more and less experienced travellers (Enoch, 1996); men and women (Brown & Osman, 2017; Chiang & Jogaratnam, 2006; Lloyd & Little, 2010), and younger and senior travellers (Bauer, 2012; Kazeminia, Del Chiappa, & Jafari, 2015), with implications for destination choice in all of these instances. For senior tourists in particular, physical issues around health risks and mobility, and the need for companionship due to losing a life partner have been found to be the main travel constraints which can be effectively minimised by participating in group tours (Enoch, 1996; Kazeminia et al., 2015). Overreliance of researchers on these factors, however, can result in reinforcement of stereotypes related to chronological and physical age, and in overlooking people's increasing longevity, socio-psychological characteristics, including cognitive age, and the heterogeneity of the seniors travel market (Alén, Losada, & de Carlos, 2017; González, Rodríguez, Miranda, & Cervantes, 2009; Hung & Lu, 2016; Le Serre, Weber, Legohérel, & Errajaa, 2017; Patterson, 2002; Patterson & Pan, 2007).

Another group of reasons deals more with various efficiencies (pragmatic factors) rather than staying within the comfort zone or concerns for physical well-being (Lue, Crompton, & Fesenmaier, 1993; Oppermann, 1995; Yang, Hui-Min, & Ryan, 2009). As noted by Enoch (1996), Andersson (2007) and Buckley and Mossaz (2016), some group travellers are well-educated, 'cash-rich, time-poor' professionals who prefer to delegate travel planning to travel agents and tour operators. This decision may also but does not always have to be driven by the benefit of 'visiting the largest number of sites on a trip of a given duration' (Enoch, 1996, p. 601). Furthermore, as found by Espelt and Benito (2006), tourists make the most of their visit in the presence of a guide, in terms of physical space covered and time spent at sites. Today, the packages offering 'an 11-day tour through six countries in Europe' and called 'absurd' by Enoch (1996, p. 609) have become known as Top-Deck and Contiki-type tours (Wilson et al., 2008). These tours are still about the same exhausting itineraries, endless partying and superficial cultural experiences attracting the 'drinking buddies' type of young tourists in their early 20s (Enoch, 1996; Torres, 2015, p. 840). However, as Wilson et al. (2008, pp. 123-124) note, these tours are great introductions to 'the mechanics of travelling'

for those who are 'fresh off the boat' and have the potential to become what Kane and Zink (2004, p. 342) call 'markers in serious leisure career'.

It must also be acknowledged that Top Deck and Contiki today offer a variety of tours from 'discoverer'-type ('see it all, do it all') tours such as *European Discovery* (9 countries, 12 days) to 'in-depth explorer' trips 'for the culturally curious' with 'less travel time, more time in a single region' such as *Vietnam Experience* (1 country, 12 days) (Contiki, 2018). Such tours appeal more to 'the mature group' of still young travellers in their early 30s (Torres, 2015). Furthermore, the words 'immersive insider experiences', not featured in tour operator descriptions examined by Enoch (1996), are now the first to come up not only in itinerary and company descriptions but also in business names (Insider Journeys, 2017; Cultural Immersion, 2017). This change reflects the democratisation of tourists' cultural interests towards more intimate meaningful interaction with hosts and their ways of life.

The organised travel market remains incredibly diverse. In regards to the total trip duration and number of overnight stays mentioned above, the industry differentiates between city escapes (1-3 days), short stays/breaks (3-8 days) and tours with an average minimum length of 5-8 days, with some trips reaching 60 days (On the Go Tours, 2018b), depending on the company. When it comes to evaluating the quality of experiences in terms of the depth of experiences, these appear to be important factors (Dolnicar, 2002; Enoch, 1996; Espelt & Benito, 2006; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003). The literature, however, does not explain what is the optimal length of stay. Whilst Jovicic (2016) believes that 2-3 days is not enough to fully appreciate Paris, and instead proposes 10 days, alternatively, Cetin and Bilgihan (2016, p. 142) decided during their sampling that more than one day was enough to 'accumulate enough information' in order to discuss one's cultural experience.

As noted by McKercher and Lew (2004, p. 44), 'some people will choose to do and see as much as possible, while others will do fewer things, but spend more time doing them'. An extended trip duration may increase the breadth of a tour in terms of how many places and domains of culture can be potentially experienced, but the length of stay at specific stops can still be short and lacking in genuine immersion. Therefore, both breadth and depth appear to be equally important, especially if breadth is to be perceived as richness, that is experiencing the complexity of culture through exposure to its multiple elements. Here it is also necessary to consider tourists' country of origin and perceived physical distance as a possible reason for selecting more fast-paced itineraries with little free time (Enoch, 1996).

Despite the fact that the effects of length of stay are yet to be firmly established, availability of free time is one key benefit that is more likely to come with extended travel. In particular,

free (leisure) time not only means time to rest and reflect, but it also adds a very important element of flexibility. Smith (1994, p. 590) observes that freedom of choice is an important element of any tourist experience, permitting 'potential for happy surprises and spontaneity' that make experiences more enjoyable. As she explains further, together with the functional elements such as the place itself and the service, freedom of choice prepares the tourist for 'physical, intellectual, and/or emotional involvement'. This argument is supported by Moscardo (1996), Van Winkel and Lagay (2012), and Packer (2006, p. 338) who found it to be a 'defining characteristic' of learning for their participants. Whilst the tours of 1990s were not particularly flexible (Enoch, 1996), many contemporary tour operators emphasise not only free mornings and evenings but free days throughout their itineraries, providing opportunities to 'sample Europe's gastronomic delights on your own' (Cosmos, n.d.); to choose from a range of optional activities (Trafalgar, n.d.); and to add tour extensions for independent but pre-arranged travel on tailored packages (On the Go Tours, n.d.).

As discussed earlier, tourists' choice of itineraries will be influenced by pragmatic considerations such as efficiency and cost (Enoch, 1996), but also by the nature and the number of benefits sought. Lue et al. (1993) proposed a typology of pleasure travel patterns by the number of destinations and benefits, consisting of four quadrants:

- Specialisation (a single benefit from a single destination)
- Benefit diversification (multiple benefits from a single destination)
- Destination diversification (a single benefit from multiple destinations)
- Mixed strategies (multiple benefits from multiple destinations)

Other factors include 'travel mobility in relation to the use of transportation modes' and 'spatial configuration of destinations' (Yang et al., 2009, p. 122). Despite this variety of possible itineraries, however, once the tour has commenced, changing its main structure in terms of the main stops on tourist demand can prove difficult. In addition to satisfying their customers, tour operators have contractual and ethical obligations towards the accommodation, transport, activity and other types of suppliers they partner with when constructing tour programs (Schwartz & Font, 2009; Smith, 1988; Weeden, 2001). Other important considerations include thematic linkages between different stops, as well as the need to accommodate different interests in the tour group (Lue et al., 1993). This is where adequate amount of free time can help soften the rigidity associated with pre-set itinerary patterns.

In addition to the considerations discussed above, the literature identifies two more pragmatic reasons for purchasing group tours. One is that people may not have the

necessary technical skills and/or equipment to pursue a special interest such as photography (Novelli, 2005). The other has to do with 'reduced risk of unexpected costs' and overall cost-efficiency as tour operators purchase hotel rooms, meals, transport and activity participation and entrance fees at wholesale prices (Enoch, 1996; Farmaki et al., 2017, p. 485). Tour prices, however, can still vary quite significantly between and within companies as they offer different cost levels such as budget, midrange or 'affordable luxury', and high-end luxury (Buckley & Mossaz, 2016; Enoch, 1996) which often imply different levels of promised cultural immersion, as in the case of Contiki above.

Finally, social reasons for travelling on organised tours, namely spending time in the company of like-minded travel companions, have been identified by Kazeminia et al. (2015) and Enoch (1996). For some travellers it is about joining their friends and family; for others, it is finding companionship in 'safe strangers' (Kazeminia et al., 2015, p. 88). In relation to the latter, Torres (2015) also found traveller compatibility to be important in tours targeted at the younger market seeking quality social experiences due to its heterogeneity. In addition to the push and pull motives reviewed in Section 2.3, the more banal but much less frequently discussed factor is the influence of travel companions on both the purchase decision and the actual experience. These influencers can be friends and family but can also be met on tour (Torres, 2015; Wong & Kwong, 2004).

Cultural tourism has become a mass type of travel (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015; Jovicic, 2016) but although mass-ness still applies in terms of tourist numbers and its negative impacts, customers see the difference between 'mass' and 'mainstream' (Robinson & Novelli, 2005; Vainikka, 2013). In 'the postmodern times in which the individuality is valued over the idea of mass' (Vainikka, 2013, p. 268; Richards & Wilson, 2006), they demand unique, tailored, authentic quality experiences, offering 'safe challenges' and freedom of choice. Businesses are increasingly competing on quality, making long-term relationships based on trust and customer loyalty their first priority and price a secondary consideration (Buckley & Mossaz, 2016, p. 136; Cheng et al., 2016; Kazeminia et al., 2015; Robinson & Novelli, 2005). However, organised travel remains surprising under-researched, and the small group tourism movement in particular, which has emerged in response to the problems of mass tourism, deserves further enquiry.

2.4.2. Small Group Travel

Adventure travel companies (Buckley, 2007; Holland, 2012; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003) and those identifying as ethical (responsible) operators (Weeden, 2001) have now been offering small group tours for considerable time. However, as a widespread phenomenon, small

group travel started gaining popularity only recently (Burns, 2013; Lenhart, 2014), and is now steadily growing (ETBTravelNews, 2016; Friedland, 2017). As communicated by the collective name of such tours, great emphasis is placed on the group size when differentiating this type of tours from mass coach tourism, i.e. travel in larger groups on big coaches, known for its high volume, low margins and negative impacts on destinations (Becken, 2005; Weeden, 2001). Travelling Made Easy (2015), an Australian small group tour specialist offers a table comparing its group size and inclusions to eight other tour companies the content of which was copied into Table 2.10. The text accompanying the table on their website emphasises how groups larger than 6-10 passengers spend less time at sights, as more time is required for the group to get on and off the bus; and how individual preferences for meals and unscheduled stops cannot be accommodated.

As demonstrated in Table 2.11, travelling in small groups has been linked to several interrelated benefits for tourists and local communities. Intrepid Travel and Peregrine (as part of the same Intrepid Group), and Explore Worldwide were selected as examples based on the references to them in relevant academic literature (Holland, 2012; Knight & Cottrell, 2016; Wheeler, 1993; Williams & Soutar, 2005) and the fact that together with Travelling Made Easy and Tauck, they came up on the first page of Google Search for 'small group tours'. In summary, direct tourist-related benefits cover the quality of the tour experience in terms of comfort and service; tourists' freedom to construct their own experiences; social interaction; depth and breadth of cultural insights; and level of fulfilment. In some cases (e.g. Intrepid Travel, Peregrine, Explore Worldwide), these are also accompanied by a range of responsible tourism actions satisfying the following responsible tourism guidelines which address the concerns of the local communities, as summarised by Holland (2012, p. 120):

- Protect the environment – its flora, fauna and landscapes.
- Respect local cultures – traditions, religions and built heritage.
- Benefit local communities – both economically and socially.
- Conserve natural resources – from office to destination.
- Minimize pollution – arising from noise, waste disposal and congestion.

Table 2.10. Comparison of tour operators.

Source: Travelling Made Easy (2015). Reproduced with permission.

Tour company	Maximum group size	Transport	Accommodation	Australian owned & operated	Arrival & departure transfers	Meals	Tipping	Airfares included	Sightseeing
Travelling Made Easy	10	Luxury Mini Bus/SUV	3-4+ Star plus Historic Inns	Yes	Included	Most Meals	Included	Yes	Included
Bunnik Tours	20	Large Coach	3-4+ Star	Yes	Included	Breakfast, some Lunches and some Dinners	Included	Yes	Major sights included plus optional tours at additional cost
Scenic Tours	40	Large Coach	5 Star	Yes	Included	Breakfast and some Dinners	Included	On some tours	Included
APT	40	Large Coach	5 Star	Yes	Included	Breakfast, some Lunches and some Dinners	Included	On some tours	Included
Globus	44	Large Coach	4+ Star	No	Included at designated times only	Breakfast and some Dinners	Not included	No	Major sights included plus optional tours at additional cost
Insight	38	Large Coach	4+ Star	No	Included at designated times only	Breakfast and some Dinners	Included for restaurant, hotel staff & porters	No	Major sights included plus optional tours at additional cost
Trafalgar	45	Large Coach	4+ Star	No	Included at designated times only	Breakfast and some Dinners	Included for restaurant, hotel staff & porters	No	Major sights included plus optional tours at additional cost
Albatross	30	Large Coach	3-4+ Star	No	Not Available	Breakfast and some Dinners	Included for driver and guide only	No	Included
Cosmos	51	Large Coach	3+ Star	No	Included at designated times only	Breakfast and some Dinners	Not included	No	Major sights included plus optional tours at additional cost

In other words, as far as destinations are concerned, what is communicated by tour operators as benefits can be both actual improvements to the lives of local people and lighter footprints (i.e. reduction in negative impacts from tourism) compared to large tour groups. As for tourists, in addition to a chance to give back, they are promised value for money; smaller and more comfortable buses; personalised service by expert local guides; unique experiences with opportunities for intimate contact with authentic cultures at off-the-beaten-track places where large coaches cannot get; slower pace (more overnight stays); and lasting friendships.

It should also be noted that the companies reviewed in Table 2.11. position themselves as operators of purely small group tours, while some operators offer small group tours as a distinct product type, among many, and, therefore, may not have detailed responsible travel policies in place. In regards to group size, although tour operators seem to agree that it should not exceed 30 passengers, a full consensus on optimal small group size is yet to be reached, and the academic literature has not caught up with this growing phenomenon. Weeden (2001, p. 146) found that the UK tour operators surveyed in her study displayed stronger agreement on fair treatment of staff; clear, truthful promotion; and engaging the services on locally-owned organisations than on tour group size, with suggested numbers ranging between 5 and 30. In the context of day ecotours, Armstrong and Weiler (2002) distinguished between small groups (10 passengers or less), medium (10-20), and large (20 and more). In more recent studies on adventure tours, the numbers range between 16 and 22 (Holland, 2012), and 6 and 20 (Buckley, 2007), while Smith et al. (2010, p. 164) advise that small group size is typically 10-15 tourists. In the absence of a clear consensus in the literature, an analysis of a more representative number of businesses is required to establish an accepted industry average or standard.

Table 2.11. Benefits of small group tourism.

Source	Benefits	Small group size
Weeden (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced negative social impact and disturbance to host communities' way of life; • Reduced stress on natural environment 	5-30
Kontogeorgopoulos (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xanadu Expeditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding friends • Getting close to the people and culture of a region • Experiencing the real Asia – warts and all • Avalon Adventures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of individual attention • Unusual and authentic experiences • Expert guides • Flexibility • Responsible approach 	9 (average) 16 (maximum)
Shackell (2016, May 5) for Intrepid Travel (n.d.-a, n.d.-b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money and efficiency (more inclusions) • Balance of independence, planned activities and mixing with others • Visiting unexpected places and pushing boundaries • Insider knowledge of local guides and contribution to local employment • Responsible travel actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real life experiences which promote cross-cultural understanding. • Using public transport (where possible). • Staying in smaller-scale locally owned accommodation (where possible). • Buying locally • Minimising plastic waste (where possible). • Careful management of limited energy and water resources. • Avoiding the exploitation of the vulnerable – including women, children, animals and endangered species. 	1-16
Explore Worldwide (n.d.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Free time • Eating locally • Staying in smaller, family-run hotels • Visiting less accessible places • Meeting people and experiencing authentic local life • Reduced impact on the environment • Forming lifelong friendships 	14-16 (average)

Table 2.11. Benefits of small group tourism, continued.

Source	Benefits	Small group size
Peregrine (2016, May 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert local leaders (guides) • More adventurous experiences • Out-of-the-way destinations and original highlights • Value for money • Responsible travel actions (see Intrepid Travel) 	10 (average)
Travelling Made Easy (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of one on one time with your Tour Director to ask questions and learn; • Finding friends for life; • Staying a little longer and seeing more; • Discovering the real essence of the countries visited • Flexibility in choice of stops, activities and meals • Value for money (more inclusions) 	6-10
Tauck (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insider access and unique exclusive experiences • More opportunities to chat with fascinating residents • Balance of worlds' highlights and off-the-beaten track gems • Spending more one-on-one time with industry's best tour directors and local guides • Camaraderie and flexibility 	20-25

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter chronologically reviewed the changes in perspectives on cultural tourism and organised travel from Europe in the 1600s to the emergence of small group tours under a decade ago, and their growing popularity today as the new alternative to mass tourism. The key issues in defining cultural tourism revolve around Anglo-Western centrism in tourism theory (Wijesinghe, Moura & Bouchon, 2019; Winter, 2009), and the need to consider the differences in the cultural interests and experiences of Western and non-Western tourists; the power imbalance between former colonisers and the colonised, as well as between nation states and marginalised groups (Smith, 2016); and the issues of scope in explaining tourist motivation and the meaning of the term 'culture' (Goldstein, 1957; Ivanovic, 2008), linked to the other two.

The chapter identified three approaches to defining cultural tourists: based on tourist activities; activities and motivation; and the one that argues that the elements of cultural tourism defined by the other two approaches can be found in all travel. Activity-based definitions, popular among destination marketing organisations and used in several

academic publications, provide a highly diluted notion of cultural tourism. They indiscriminately consider those who participate in what officially are accepted as cultural activities as cultural tourists, and the list is becoming more inclusive as the industry gradually accepts a broader notion of culture, incorporating the life of ordinary people. The hybrid approach identifies which activities are considered cultural; emphasises centrality of learning about other cultures to tourist motivation; and is yet to be adopted by tourism practitioners. An adoption of this approach would significantly reduce the size of the cultural tourism market as currently reported by the industry. The lack of clarity around what learning means in this context and the shifts in tourists' interests towards popular culture, everyday life, and generally more omnivorous experiences gave rise to the third approach. As observed by Smith (2016), Du Cros and McKercher (2015), Smith and Richards (2013a), and Jovicic (2016, p. 608), 'the average cultural tourist looks for a mix of cultural activities, relaxation and entertainment'.

Capturing the essence of all cultural tourism in a single definition may be an unattainable goal simply because of the nature of all tourism activity. As Edensor (2016, p. xvi) observes, 'tourism is situated, multiple, dynamic, and lacks any essential or overarching quality. It changes continually and is a site of contestation, generating a host of competing discourses and practices about place, identity and culture'. Definitional approaches to understanding social phenomena aim to extract their essence and establish objectivity (Goldstein, 1957), while whether or not an experience is culture-focused depends on the individual as much as it does on the itinerary (Smith, 2016). That is why it may be more accurate to talk about motivations for cultural tourism rather than motivations of cultural tourists, unless it is highly culturally motivated tourists who are the research focus.

On one hand, the third approach can appeal to those tour companies who wish to gain a share of the cultural tourism market without having to design culture-themed tours. On the other hand, both academic and industry sources demonstrate that cultural tourism is a distinctive tourism sector, and culturally-themed tours are a distinctive product type in the mind of tour companies and their customers.

In a commercial sense, cultural tourism is a distinctive product, even though objectively every aspect of people's collective and personal past and present is part of their culture. Therefore, it is only logical to combine the many sectors of tourism where culture is central to the tourist experience under 'cultural tourism' as an umbrella term, as it helps the industry differentiate these product offerings from others. After all, by using 'cultural' as a modifier is how tour wholesalers, operators and agencies communicate the centrality of culture to their products, whether it is to appeal to a general or a specialist cultural interest. Culture,

however, consists of many elements. Furthermore, how narrow or broad is one's notion of culture depends on their previous life experiences, including travel, and their cultural capital. These notions can be notably different from what the locals value, how they identify themselves, and what they want to be known for versus what sells (Tomaseli, 2012). Moreover, the richness of one's cultural tourism experience will depend on how many regions and stopovers are included, as well as how well minority cultures are integrated into the national culture narrative communicated through written and oral interpretation.

Learning about other cultures can also take on many different forms and can have a different relationship with the other four core themes explored in the literature: effort, entertainment, intellectual and physical challenge, and safety. A clear understanding of what learning means for cultural tourists; where they are ready to put in physical and mental and how much effort, 'that is how deeply the presented information is processed' (Packer & Ballantyne 2004, p. 57); and what types of rewards they seek are all the questions important for effectively managing touristic experiences of significant cultural difference. In other words, the answers to these questions are critical for understanding the relationship between chosen activities; the type of learning sought by tourists; and the outcomes of their experiences.

As the literature review reveals, learning enhanced by the presence of a tour guide is one of the reasons for travelling in group tours. Other reasons are summarised in the table below.

Table 2.12. Reasons for travelling on group tours.

Category	Reasons
Psychological	Minimising the discomforts of contact with cultural differences Need for familiarity General need to feel safe from harm
Physical	Health related concerns and actual constraints
Pragmatic	Time efficiency (saving time on planning, and making the most of travel due to short leave, geographical distance, and limited opportunities to travel) Tourism infrastructure, including availability of transport (accessibility) Lack of technical skills and equipment Cost-efficiency (packaged wholesale price)
Social	Companionship Socialising (sharing interests and making new friends) Spending time with family and friends

As Smith and Richards (2013, p. 4) observe in relation to the social nature of cultural travel, 'culture is increasingly consumed not for its own sake' and 'value is found in with whom it is shared, when and where'. In group travel delivering this social value lies at its core. While it has been firmly established that relationship seeking is one of the core motivational factors for all tourists, the literature review highlights that social interaction is central to travel in tours, compared to its relative importance for museum and art gallery visits. Effective within-group communication between tourists, and between tourists and tour guides has been found to be a significant advantage of group travel over independent, as it can influence tourists' activity participation, learning outcomes and future travel intentions. In particular, group tour leader performance has been linked to tourists' desire for immersive experiences, providing the tour leaders succeed at several 'guide-plus' roles around cultural and social mediation, in addition to basic care-taking.

Expertise of tour guides; opportunities for cultural immersion; and the promised depth of cultural insights are among many characteristics used by tour companies to differentiate between different tour programs. Others include tour length; number of overnight stays; itinerary patterns varying by number of countries, regions and smaller stopovers, as well as by their order and specific inclusions addressing different tourist interests and benefits sought; tour cost; amount of free time; and optional activities. The role of the first three factors is still debatable since much depends on tourist motivation to engage but also the contested question of depth versus breadth of a tour program. The degree of flexibility, however, is emphasised as a critical factor. It responds to tourists' need for freedom of choice, found in optional activities, and in chances to wander off on one's own, or to do nothing at all and reflect on the trip, all carrying opportunities to problem solve and experience unplanned surprises. As defined by Vainikka (2013, p. 275) and demonstrated by the discussion above, 'in flexible discourse, mass tourism is seen as a loose umbrella term for or a multidimensional combination of many different popular and large-scale forms of tourism with diverse characteristics'. Among this diversity, small group tours emerge as the middle ground between cultural tourism as an activity driven by deep interest in learning about other cultures and the negative stereotypical notions of group tourism as unsustainable travel of the masses.

Chapter 3 Culture Involvement

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced the gap in literature on post-travel culture involvement, supported by the observations that tourists are rarely able to develop strong connections with places that can compete with the demands of daily routine. Given this knowledge, this chapter reviews the literature that can help understand the three main components of post-travel culture involvement: psychological bonding between people and places as its antecedent; behavioural examples of tourists attempting to maintain that bond; and cultural participation.

The first component is represented by the literature on psychological involvement; attitudinal and conative dimensions of destination loyalty; and place attachment in Section 3.2. The second is covered in the same section by the literature on repeat travel as a behavioural measure of destination loyalty. The literature on the third component discusses the concept of immersion from three perspectives founded in tourism studies, social psychology and cross-cultural psychology: culture immersion as participation in cultural activities during travel, the contact hypothesis, and experiential tourism in Section 3.2.3, and acculturation in Section 3.3. Therefore, although the chapter is divided into two main parts by discipline, that is tourism and leisure studies, and cross-cultural psychology due to the specific concepts and often distinctive research contexts examined in each, they are closely connected and inform one another. The concept of immersion links the two, as a term used interchangeably with involvement in some tourism research and a dimension of acculturation.

More specifically, Section 3.2.1 examines the facets and types of psychological involvement and the state of literature on behavioural involvement. It is followed by a review of tourism literature on destination loyalty as an outcome of psychological involvement, and more closely on repeat travel in Section 3.2.2, as well as the concept of place attachment that emerges from the review as one of the antecedents of repeat travel and an outcome of psychological involvement. Section 3.2.3 draws on tourism and psychology research to understand what form culture immersion in tourism can take, including active and passive participation; under which circumstances (contact conditions); and which other factors influence tourist participation in cultural activities². The final Section 3.3. reviews the place of

² An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Kim and Butler (2016, 2018). I developed the conceptual framework, based on the literature review I had conducted, and wrote the full draft of the extended abstract (2016 conference paper) that required some edits by the co-authors. The 2018 book chapter is an expanded version of the abstract. My contribution to both publications was 80%.

involvement and immersion in acculturation theories, followed by an analysis of acculturation models, also incorporating several contact conditions.

3.2. Tourism and Leisure Studies Perspectives

3.2.1. Involvement

In addition to freedom of choice, discussed in Chapter 2, the concept of involvement occupies a prominent position as a key component of the tourist experience (Hou, Lin, & Morais, 2005; Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Kim, 2012; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Smith, 1994). It was adopted by tourism studies from leisure and recreation research (Kyle & Chick, 2004; McIntyre & Pigram, 1992), and is most commonly understood as a 'sense of engagement' with an activity (Smith, 1994, p. 590): a strong interest grounded in the perception of the activity's personal relevance or personal importance (Hou et al., 2005; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Shen, Guo, & Wu, 2012). Psychological involvement has been found to predict place attachment (Gross & Brown, 2008; Hou et al., 2005), perceived value of destination experience (Prebensen, Woo, Chen, & Uysal, 2013), intention to recommend (Cevdet Altunel & Erkut, 2015), loyalty to attractions (Shen et al., 2012) and destinations (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), and the state of flow as the state of feeling completely immersed into a leisure activity (Havitz & Mannell, 2005; Smith, 1994).

Although, as discussed further, psychological involvement is a multifaceted concept, it is no coincidence that most studies have focused on the relevance/interest/importance dimension in their definitions (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). As found by Havitz and Dimanche (1997, p. 260), this dimension received 'the strongest support in leisure contexts'. In tourism research, the focus of involvement on activities versus objects is also distinctive from the consumer behaviour literature that originally introduced the concept of involvement with consumer products to other disciplines (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997). Examples of slight variations in involvement definitions used in cultural tourism publications are provided in Table 3.1.

In regards to the other facets (dimensions) of involvement, Cevdet Altunel and Erkut (2015, p. 214) note that 'the involvement construct has been operationalized in several ways, and there is no standardized instrument for its measurement'. These variations can be explained by the differences in patterns of involvement according to activities, products and individual characteristics (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), as well as by limitations in all of the currently known involvement instruments. Gross and Brown (2008, p. 1148), for example, made an unexpected finding about the insignificant role of the self-expression facet in the food and wine tourism context, noting that 'respondents did not conceive their tourism experiences as

channels for expressing themselves'. Havitz and Dimanche (1997, p. 266) also observed how the relative importance of different facets is context-dependent, making 'an individual's involvement with golf maybe primarily hedonic; with running, utilitarian (e.g. fitness-related); with live theatre, symbolic; and with travel, social'.

Table 3.1. Definitions of involvement in cultural tourism.

Author(s)	Context	Definition
Hou et al. (2005, p. 222)	Cultural tourism, Taiwan	The long-term importance an activity has to an individual
Cevdet Altunel and Erkut (2015, p. 214)	Cultural tourism, Turkey	'A person's perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests' by Zaichkowsky (1985, p. 342)
Shen et al. (2012, p. 105)	Cultural tourism, China	The level of importance, interest, or enjoyment attached to a certain tour or leisure activity of the tourists
Kantanen and Tikkanen (2006, p. 102)	Cultural tourism, Finland	Degree of personal relevance, which is the function of the extent to which the product (or cultural attraction) is perceived to help to achieve consequences and values, that are important to the consumer
Gross and Brown (2008, p. 1141)	Food and wine, Australia	Perceived personal importance and/or interest consumers attach to the acquisition, consumption, and disposition of a good, service, or an idea

Nevertheless, as reviewed by Havitz and Dimanche (1997), and Gross and Brown (2008), and seen in Table 3.2., the facets of attraction (importance and pleasure), sign (self-expression and self-identity), and centrality (to lifestyle) have been consistently used in a range of contexts (consumer behaviour, leisure, recreation, tourism), as most representative of enduring involvement. The meaning of each facet is provided in Table 3.3. Although these studies primarily measure importance and pleasure separately, it is not uncommon for them to be observed simultaneously (Dimanche, Havitz, & Howard, 1991; Gross & Brown, 2008; Havitz & Dimanche, 1997). The same is true for the sign facet, originally proposed by Laurent and Kapferer (1985), implying both self-expression (Gross & Brown, 2008; Hou et al., 2005; Kyle & Chick, 2004) and self-identity (Cevdet Altunel & Erkut, 2015; Prebensen et al., 2013). Risk probability and risk consequence have remained largely unsupported, particularly as they continue to be 'plagued with reliability problems' (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997, p. 266). Moreover, their inherence even to adventure experiences has been a subject of debate due to the diverse nature of risk and the original conceptualisations of risk tied to the consumer decision-making process rather than perceived harm from actual activity

participation (Kyle, Absher, Norman, Hammitt, & Jodice, 2007). As for social bonding and identity affirmation, these facets were inductively identified by Kyle and Chick (2004) and were later confirmed in Kyle et al. (2007) to comprise a modified involvement scale which shares the attraction, centrality and identity expression facets with the frequently adopted Consumer Involvement Profile (CIP) scale by Laurent and Kapferer (1985). Kyle et al. (2007, p. 403) separated 'the locus of the activity within the context of the individual's lifestyle' from the role of social ties which until then were measured as one 'centrality to lifestyle' factor. They also proposed that sign value (i.e. 'the cognitive connection between the self and the leisure experience') ought to be considered in terms of two components: *identity affirmation* and *identity expression*' (Kyle et al., 2007, p. 405).

In addition to involvement facets, tourism literature refers to enduring (Hou et al., 2005), emotional (Kim, 2012), and personal (Prayag & Ryan, 2012) involvement. Whilst these papers do refer to the same concept, consumer behaviour literature does point out some important distinctions between these types of involvement. First, as Laurent and Kapferer (1985, p. 42) clarify, all involvement is personal if the involvement object or activity 'is perceived as the sign of oneself'; therefore, to argue if something is or is not personal, tourism researchers should pay specific attention to the sign facet, as done by Gross and Brown (2008). Furthermore, Laurent and Kapferer (1985, p. 42) quote Baudrillard who argued that 'there is involvement only when there is sign'. Second, the definitions and facets used in the tourism publications reviewed above all address enduring (ego) involvement as a state of high and stable interest which stems from high perceived importance, pleasure, sign and centrality to lifestyle. Much less has been written in tourist studies on situational involvement as 'temporary feelings of heightened involvement that accompany a particular situation' (Havitz & Mannell, 2005, p. 155). Third, while, indeed, involvement literature differentiates between emotional and rational (devoid of affect and pleasure) involvement (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985), the primary interest of the tourism industry and tourism researchers is creation of highly emotionally involving and consequently memorable experiences (Robinson & Picard, 2012).

Table 3.2. Facets of involvement (1).

Author	Context	Attraction	Sign	Centrality	Risk probability	Risk consequence	Social bonding	Identity affirmation	Identity expression
Laurent & Kapferer (1985)	Consumers	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Dimanche et al. (1991)	Recreation, Tourism	✓	✓		✓	✓			
McIntyre & Pilgram (1992)	Recreation	✓	✓	✓					
Moore & Graefe (1994)	Recreation	✓	✓	✓					
Bricker & Kersetter (2000)	Recreation	✓	✓	✓					
Kyle & Chick (2004)	Leisure		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Hou et al. (2005)	Cultural tourism	✓	✓	✓					
Kyle et al. (2007)	Recreation	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Gross & Brown (2008)	Cultural tourism	✓	✓	✓					
Prebensen et al. (2012)	Nature-based tourism		✓		✓				
Shen et al. (2012)	Cultural tourism	✓							
Prayag et al. (2012)	Resort tourism	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Cevdet Altunel & Erkut (2015)	Cultural tourism		✓		✓				

Table 3.3. Facets of involvement (2).

Facet	Meaning
Attraction (importance and pleasure)	'Perceived importance of an activity or product and pleasure derived from participation or use' (Gross & Brown, 2008, p. 1141) where 'importance' refers to the congruence between an individual's goals and how well a given activity or product meets those goals (Kyle et al., 2007, p. 401) and 'pleasure' is understood as 'the hedonic value of the product' (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985, p. 43)
Sign	<p>Congruence between the perceived identity of the product and the individual's own identity (Kyle et al., 2007, p. 402)</p> <p>The symbolic or sign value attributed by the consumer to the product, its purchase, or its consumption (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985, p. 43)</p>
Centrality (to lifestyle)	The extent to which participants' social networks revolve around an activity, and whether participants' lifestyles are meaningfully impacted by their participation (Gross & Brown, 2008, p. 1141)
Risk probability	Perceived probability of making a poor purchase choice (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985, p. 43)
Risk consequence	Perceived importance of negative consequences in case of poor choice (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985, p. 43)
Social bonding	The extent to which their enduring involvement is driven by their social ties (Kyle et al. 2007, p. 403)
Identity affirmation	Examines the degree to which leisure provides opportunities to affirm the self to the self (Kyle et al., 2007, p. 405)
Identity expression	The extent to which leisure provides opportunities to express the self to others (Kyle et al., 2007, p. 405)

Behavioural involvement is a more recently developed sub-construct and is defined by indicators of frequency, duration and amount of involvement (Crompton, Kim, & Scott, 1997), including time spent on a given activity and information search behaviour prior to travel (Cai, Feng, & Breiter, 2004; Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2010). The behavioural approach to involvement is also evident in research on the importance assigned to maximising opportunities for contact with local people and in the nature of relevant tourist activities (Brown, 2013; Buddhahumbhitak, 2010; Raymond & Hall, 2008), addressed in more detail in the next section of this chapter on culture immersion. As far as post-travel behavioural involvement is concerned, the literature on destination loyalty as the outcome of psychological involvement provides a few additional insights complementing the limited research on post-travel culture involvement discussed in Chapter 1. In particular, what is of most interest here is repeat visitation as a behavioural measure of destination loyalty (McKercher & Tse, 2012) and its antecedents.

3.2.2. Destination Loyalty and Place Attachment

Although the nature of behavioural culture involvement during repeat travel can vary from intensified consumerism and limited cultural exploration (Lau & McKercher, 2004) to residential tourism and blending with the locals (Correia et al., 2017; Wickens, 2002), repeat travel does provide opportunities for continued involvement. However, whilst the literature on attitudinal (destination advocacy) and conative (intentions to recommend and revisit) measures of destination loyalty is abundant and consistently uses revisit intentions as a proxy measure for repeat visitation (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), the actual evidence of repeat travel among international tourists is scarce. Among the few papers that analyse the attitudes and behaviours of repeat international tourists (Caldeira & Kastenholz, 2018; Lau & McKercher, 2004) is research on spending patterns (Alegre & Cladera, 2010) and visit frequency (Tsiotsou, 2006), and several more studies into the determinants of repeat travel (Alegre & Cladera, 2006; Assaf, Barros, & Machado, 2013; Chi, 2012; Correia et al., 2017; do Valle, Correia, & Rebelo, 2008; Kastenholz et al., 2013; Mechinda, Serirat, & Gulid, 2009; Oppermann, 2000; Weaver & Lawton, 2011). This gap in the literature is consistent with McKercher and Tse's (2012, p. 672) review who discovered that out of 50 articles found on Google Scholar and published between 2000 and 2011, only 'two focused on actual repeat visitation rates'. Based on aggregated secondary data for Hong Kong and New Zealand as destinations and 30 origin markets, they also found no significant correlation between intention to return and actual repeat visits.

Moniz (2012, p. 505) defines repeat tourists as 'generally those who are satisfied with the destination (Kozak, 2001), are insensitive to price (Alegre and Juaneda, 2006), are familiar and comfortable with the destination and who have a positive image towards the destination (Milman and Pizam, 1995; Hong et al, 2009)'. In addition to overall satisfaction (Alegre & Cladera, 2006; Chi, 2012; do Valle et al., 2008), the literature discusses several other important findings. As found by Chang, Gibson, and Sisson (2013), Mechinda et al. (2009), Kastenholz et al. (2013), and Weaver and Lawton (2011, p. 342), 'repeat visitors are far more likely to be local residents'. The greater involvement and place attachment displayed by domestic tourists has been explained by close cultural ties and consequently stronger place identity, i.e. self and cultural identification with the place (Hou et al., 2005; Poria et al., 2006). Another key factor influencing the profile and numbers of repeat tourists is geographical distance. Using secondary data on pleasure tourists' arrivals for Hong Kong, New Zealand, UK, Malta, Mauritius and South Africa, McKercher and Guillet (2011, p. 123) found that the majority were 'first-time visitors, with the proportion of first-time visitors increasing with distance'. In the case of European pleasure travel destinations such as Portugal (Assaf et al., 2013; Correia et al., 2017), geographical proximity explains the repeat visitation rates among Europeans as high as up to 19 visits on average. These numbers illustrate the habitual and risk averse nature of most repeat travel, as noted by Oppermann (1999, 2000), when it does occur.

Previous travel experiences and travel motivations have additionally been found to play a critical role and have been used to explain future choice of destinations for both repeat and first-time travel (Crouch et al., 2016; do Valle et al., 2008; Oppermann, 2000), and the differences in movements in urban spaces between first-time and repeat tourists (Caldeira & Kastenholz, 2018). The literature also mentions that the difference in motivation for escape and relaxation versus stimulation may be explained by how much mental stimulation people experience in their daily lives before they travel (Oppermann, 2000). Therefore, future research may also want to investigate the link between the level of stimulation experienced during past travel and future destination choice.

Regarding motivation, the literature observes that tourists strongly motivated by entertainment, pleasure and relaxation in the company of family and friends are much more likely to return than culturally motivated tourists, even if geographical distances may be significant (Correia et al., 2017; do Valle et al., 2008; Kastenholz et al., 2013). Cultural tourists in general are characterised by high novelty seeking which has been found to have negative influence on behavioural loyalty (Mechinda et al., 2009). According to Kastenholz et al. (2013, p. 354), purposeful cultural tourists are least likely to return, compared to casual,

'because they are driven by a strong interest in enlarging their horizons by visiting always new and different places, shortly by novelty. It is important to clarify, however, that novelty-seeking applies to destinations but not the types of experiences. Preference towards specific experiences depends on past travel experience and persists over time (Crouch et al., 2016).

Given the differences in loyalty between residents and international tourists, the literature draws attention to the findings that highlight the importance of strengthening tourists' place attachment. More commonly, place attachment has been conceptualised as consisting of two dimensions: place identity, mentioned above, and place dependence (Hou et al., 2005; Mechinda et al., 2009; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The latter is defined as 'the collection of social and physical resources meeting visitors' specific activity needs and representing the unique qualities of a place' (Hou et al., 2005, p. 223). Thus, these resources not only determine functional attachment to a place but also construct the unique sense of any given place which contributes to emotional place attachment (Shamsuddin & Ujang, 2008). Cultural festival studies identify two more dimensions, affective attachment and social bonding (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012; Xu, 2016), where the first one is viewed separately from the cognitive dimension of place identity, and the second one has been borrowed from involvement research (Kyle & Chick, 2004). While this approach appears to be more nuanced, in essence it communicates the same structure of place attachment as consisting of interrelated cognitive, affective, functional and social components.

In particular, the literature emphasises the influence of social interaction on place attachment (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012) and on emotional solidarity between the locals and tourists (Woosnam, 2011; Woosnam, Norman, & Ying, 2009), and the latter on place attachment (Ribeiro, Woosnam, Pinto, & Silva, 2018). It also discusses the importance of increasing social identity and encouraging feelings of ownership and stewardship for stronger place identity (Chang et al., 2013). As found by Kastenholz et al. (2013, p. 352), repeat cultural tourists are strongly attracted by 'immaterial culture and the enjoyable atmosphere of the destination'. A similar conclusion has been drawn by Correia et al. (2017, p. 809) about the pleasure visitors to Portugal whose 'involvement with the destination relies mostly on social (family and friends) and emotional (leisure) features of the trip'. The role of the residents in this process is examined by Woosnam et al. (2009) and Woosnam (2011) whose research highlights how important it is that the locals demonstrate willingness to engage in more personal and extended conversations with tourists beyond the usual superficial financial exchanges. They found that it is the casual interactions between local business owners and their tourism customers that often lead to bringing the two groups closer together, especially when they return to the same destination. As for the place dependence dimension of place

attachment, tourism practitioners interested in increasing repeat visitation should be mindful of the 'goal-achievement' factor. Once an individual's goal to experience a particular activity has been fulfilled, their dependence on that place may decrease, and with it their intention to return to the destination (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012). This change, however, may also be impacted by novelty seeking.

In regards to socio-demographic characteristics, the literature review reveals that the results on the impacts of age, gender, and education, on destination loyalty are inconclusive and that statistical significance of these and other socio-demographic factors remains limited (Assaf et al., 2013; Correia et al., 2017). Indeed, it has been posited that further research on repeat visitation is required to make informed generalisations about the actual importance of these factors (Thompson, 1989). The one observation discussed at length in several studies concerns the phenomenon of residential tourism in Europe among seniors (Correia et al., 2017; Hough, 2011; Wickens, 2002).

3.2.3. Immersion

Tourism discussions of culture involvement are drawn predominantly from qualitative research on backpackers, lifestyle travellers, and voluntourists, and their experiences of culture immersion during travel (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Cohen, 2010a; Sin, 2009). Although this literature is mainly interested in experiences of personal growth and self-identity transformations, it does discuss both host-guest interaction and tourists' behavioural involvement with culture (Muzaini, 2006; Pearce & Foster, 2007). The term immersion is used interchangeably with 'involvement' in the meaning of active interaction with locals and participation in their social and cultural life (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Chen & Chen, 2011; Mkono, 2013).

Reisinger (2013a, p. 45) suggests that together with these three types of tourism, independent adventure and cultural heritage tourists represent travel of superior cultural depth, compared to mass package tourism. Due to longer stays, flexibility of travel plans and tourists' strong motivation to immerse, Reisinger (2013a), Jansson (2007) and Brown (2013) insist that independent travel supports a much higher degree of participation in the life of and interaction with local people. Consequently, they argue, such tourists are more likely to immerse into host cultures. Although tourism researchers acknowledge an existence of degrees of immersion using Cohen's (1972) novelty-familiarity continuum, culture immersion/involvement is essentially understood as adoption of another culture achieved by the drifter-type of tourist (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Reisinger, 2013a).

In relation to the conditions of contact, cultural immersion is characterised by tourists' co-creation (or co-production) of their own experiences (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Mkono, 2013; Mossberg et al., 2014; Puczko, 2013), and existential authenticity of sensing and doing (Mkono, 2013). Brown (2005) and Jansson (2007) also link immersion to objective authenticity, i.e. experiencing places in their original unchanged form. This is framed in the context of experiencing the back regions of host destinations 'closed to audiences and outsiders' (MacCannell, 1973, p. 590) and revealing what life is like behind the tourism curtain, as well as in relation to 'being on the same level as the locals' (Jansson, 2007, p. 17). These conditions create the ideal immersive experience driven by 'desires to understand the local society and culture' (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010, p. 139) and a willingness to adjust to their norms and values (Brown, 2013). Through such immersive, i.e. participative, interactive, authentic and creative encounters, tourists' experiences of the foreign become highly personal and consequently meaningful, despite cultural differences (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). As a result, independent tourists can be expected to connect with hosts and their culture 'in a more profound way' than mass tourists travelling in organised groups (Brown, 2005, p. 488).

This literature is underpinned by the contact hypothesis developed in social psychology (Reisinger, 1994, 2013c; Tomljenovic, 2010). Its main premise posits that interactions between individuals of different cultural groups can enhance cross-cultural understanding and increase empathy by removing negative cultural stereotypes and minimising prejudice, providing a number of contact conditions are fulfilled (Amir & Garti, 1977; Pearce, 1982b; Pizam et al., 2000). The five essential characteristics of successful host-guest contact include: (1) equal socio-economic status of contact participants; (2) intergroup cooperation in the (3) pursuit of common goals; (4) authority support; and (5) intimate contact (Amir, 1969; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Pizam et al., 2000; Pratt & Liu, 2016). Although the widely cited meta-analysis study by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) concentrated on the initial four essential conditions proposed by Allport (1954), intimate, or intense contact is clearly differentiated from the facilitating (non-essential) conditions.

As demonstrated by the discussion leading up to this point, the quality of tourist-host contact, be that referred to as depth, intimacy or intensity, is a central issue in tourism literature. Given that, as Fan et al. (2017, p. 358) note, tourism involves a 'special form of cross-cultural contact' where the first four conditions cannot always be effectively met (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Tomljenovic, 2010; Woosnam, 2011), it is not surprising that the tourism literature on tourists' attitudes towards hosts is particularly concerned with intimacy and frequency of interaction with hosts as a possibly more manageable factor. Similar to the

broader tourism literature, however, intercultural contact research does not clearly explain what intimate (intense) contact means and how it can be measured. In early social psychology literature, knowledge about intimate contact was developed from studying people of different races working together and constructing neighbour relationships (Amir, 1969). Since then, rural context (Pizam et al., 2000) and building friendships (Pettigrew, 1998) have been used to differentiate intimate from casual (superficial) interaction, but the research has not advanced beyond descriptive statements. One such indirect description can be found in Pizam, Jafari, and Milman (1991, p. 53) who reported that in their study 'the escorted tour provided only a limited opportunity to interact with the Soviet people and form significant opinions on their feelings, wants and needs, satisfactions and dissatisfactions, political beliefs, etc'.

Tomljenovic's (2010) study supports the findings by van Dick et al. (2004), noting that the importance of contact is a key determinant of prejudice reduction. She found that 'contact was more intense among those motivated by a desire to learn about new people and places and interact with locals', regardless of whether they were independent or group tourists (Tomljenovic, 2010, p. 24). These results are consistent with the earlier discussed destination loyalty findings on the importance of motivation, and social interaction between hosts and guests for enduring involvement (Correia et al., 2017; Kastenholz et al., 2013). It is no coincidence that the measurement scale for host-site involvement developed by Pearce and Lee (2005, p. 235) includes both 'meeting the locals' and 'developing my knowledge of the area'. As observed in Ryan and Glendon's (1998) study, which also used these items, they did not overlap in the minds of tourists and were assigned different importance. In their study, all tourist clusters, except two ('friendly discoverers' and 'intellectual active isolates') were more interested in the locals than history and culture as destination attributes. Besides motivation, other factors emphasised by Tomljenovic (2010, p. 26) are pre-travel knowledge of the destination; personality characteristics, including tolerance for ambiguity and extroversion, and pre-travel 'socio-cultural attitudes (ethnocentrism, prejudice or nationalist versus cosmopolitanism, intercultural tolerance and international orientation)'. The latter group of factors ('initial intergroup attitudes') has been treated as an essential individual-level contact condition by Pizam et al. (1991) and Pizam et al. (2000).

It is true that organised travel has several restrictions discussed in Chapter 2, and that positive changes in tourists' genuine understanding may well be only 'small islands of integration in a sea of intolerance' (Dixon et al. 2005, p. 700). Indeed, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that the effect of leisure travel on intercultural attitude change is significantly

smaller than of recreational and educational settings. The argument that tourists can change their attitudes becomes even less convincing when the limitations of the contact hypothesis research are examined. In addition to the data reporting issues discussed by Pettigrew et al. (2011), Dixon et al. (2005) point out the vast number of contact conditions that can hardly be met all at the same time in any given real-life contact situation, superficial or more substantial.

However, research on tourists' socio-cultural attitudes remains too limited to provide an adequate outlook. The few papers published in the past decade (Fan et al., 2017; Pratt & Liu, 2016; Thyne et al., 2006; Tomljenovic, 2010) review the same research produced in 1990s and early 2000s. Out of 515 publications analysed by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006), only nine papers concentrated on tourism and none had been published post-2000. Many of the earlier publications reporting negative or neutral outcomes experienced by work and travel tourists (Pizam et al., 2000; Uriely & Reichel, 2000), and those travelling between neighbouring countries with a long history of hostility (Anastasopoulos, 1992; Pizam et al., 1991). Moreover, as reviewed by Tomljenovic (2010, p. 18), 'there has been a tendency to draw inferences about travel in general from a narrowly defined traveller population, such as mass organized tourists', which has become incredibly diverse, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The attitudes of locals towards tourists also play a big part in the outcomes of culture contact. The cultural meta-analysis conducted by Kende, Phalet, Noortgate, Kara, and Fischer (2018) showed that in the articles previously reviewed by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) contact was a stronger predictor of reduction in prejudice in the cultures which scored higher in egalitarianism and lower on hierarchy. The literature review by Moufakkir (2011) illustrates that the host gaze is context dependent, and that residents can have different attitudes towards tourists from different countries. He also discusses how tourism workers can have a more negative gaze than the residents employed outside the industry.

The literature also reveals several methodological problems. Attitudes towards hosts and attitude towards their homeland are used as measures of cross-cultural understanding, while Reisinger and Moufakkir (2015) reference the research showing that cultural misunderstanding can persist despite positive attitudes towards a country as a tourist destination. The literature also fails to differentiate between attitudes to hosts and attitudes to their culture (Dixon et al., 2005). For example, Tomljenovic (2010) interchangeably refers to attitudes to hosts as attitudes to their culture and Thyne et al. (2006) even substitute references to culture with nationality. Pettigrew et al. (2011, p. 275), however, found that 'liking' the host group does not necessarily resolve cultural stereotypes about that group: "we may come to like the outgroup even while our stereotypes of the outgroup persist".

Furthermore, attitudes to specific aspects of the cultures in question are not measured, and neither are degrees of involvement with various domains of culture.

These limitations are also true for the International Tourism Role scale developed by Mo, Howard, and Havitz (1993) that was designed to test Cohen's (1972) tourist typology. The single item used to measure cultural adaptation in this scale does not discriminate between various activities and essentially offers a very narrow interpretation of such a complex construct (Churchill, 1979). Besides Mo et al.'s (1993) attitudinal social contact scale, the Cultural Contact Scale (CCS) is the only one found to date that has attempted to 'measure different levels of tourists' interest and involvement in a foreign culture' (Gnoth & Zins, 2013, p. 743). Although the CCS requires further validation, the instrument is a valuable contribution to future conceptualisations of cultural immersion. It differentiates between the interest in interaction with local people and participation in specific cultural activities; and assesses preferences for 'different facets of exposure, interaction and integration' (Gnoth & Zins, 2013, p. 741).

In view of the role of social interaction between tourists and hosts, Jansson (2007, p. 16) offers a thought-provoking departure from the essential contact conditions discussed up to this point, particularly from intimate interaction with hosts and encourages to engage with a more inclusive understanding of culture immersion which considers the interest in hosts' history and the place they inhabit:

The immersive attitude corresponds basically to the notion of cosmopolitan mobility, discussed by Ulf Hannerz (1990). In a subsequent account Lash and Urry (1994) state a number of cosmopolitan travel motifs, among them 'a curiosity about places, peoples, cultures and their historical and anthropological roots'; 'an openness toward and appreciation of cultural differences', and 'an aspiration to understand the relative place of one's own society and culture in a broader global framework' (quoted in Thompson and Tambyah, 1999: 239). The immersive attitude is accordingly most likely to be found in more intellectual groupings with a desire to understand the social and cultural realities beyond the ordinary tourist destinations, or perhaps the back regions of these destinations (cf. MacCannell, 1976/1999).

How active tourists' involvement with host culture should be, that is how much participation and interaction it should include for an experience for it to be considered genuinely immersive, remains a point of debate. The limitations of the contact approach to involvement and immersion are revealed when applying the experiential tourism perspective. It differentiates between active and passive immersion (Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007; Smith,

2006; Williams, 2006), drawing on the framework of the four realms of consumer experience: entertainment, educational, aesthetic and escapist (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). In this framework, immersion and participation are conceptualised as two intersecting but separate continuums, unlike in the previously reviewed literature where immersion is equalled to participation. Experience immersion is conceptualised by Pine and Gilmore (1998, p. 101) as 'connection, or environmental relationship, that unites customers with the event or performance', while participation reflects the degree to which individuals are involved in co-creating their experiences. Thus, passive participation can result in aesthetically immersive experiences when tourists form a psychological bond with a cultural heritage attraction (Oh et al., 2007). The bond is formed through sensing and being, not necessarily physically engaging in destination activities and mingling with locals (Oh et al., 2007). As a result, it leads to passive appreciation.

Williams (2006) illustrates how immersive experiences can be accompanied by both active and passive participation, and how it is possible to differentiate between escapist experiences of 'doing' and aesthetic experiences of 'being', both types involving immersion. The immersive experiences of independent travellers discussed earlier, based around active interaction with locals and participation in their life, in many ways represent the escapist realm. Such experiences are very similar to those of Cohen's (1972, p. 168) drifter type who 'tries to live the way the people he visits live, and to share their shelter, foods, and habits, keeping only the most basic and essential of his old customs'. Cohen's theory, however, has been applied to emphasise the extremes of the socio-cultural immersion continuum, rather than understand what happens in the middle (Tomljenovic, 2010).

Furthermore, Pine and Gilmore (1998) interpret educational and entertainment experiences as absorptive but not immersive. The absorption-immersion axis is separate to the participation continuum, representing the two ends of the 'connection' continuum. According to Pine and Gilmore's (1998) framework, activities such as attendance of music and film festivals which are considered as immerse in other research (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010) are characterised by passive participation and absorption, rather than immersion. In summary, not all immersive experiences that forge a connection have to involve active participation, just as not all experiences that involve active participation necessarily form a bond.

3.3. Cross-Cultural Psychology Perspective

Culture involvement and immersion are also subjects of acculturation psychology that draws on the theories of stress and coping, culture learning and social identity (Sam & Berry,

2006), and culture shock (Ward et al., 2001). Acculturation research typically resides in the larger field of cross-cultural psychology and examines how behavioural and attitudinal orientations towards host cultures in terms of host culture immersion and home culture maintenance change in response to a number of situational factors and depending on the individual characteristics of sojourners (Sam, 2006).

As Ward et al. (2001, p. 45) explain, acculturation is used 'as a replacement for the term 'culture shock''. The latter is attributed to Oberg (1960, p. 142) who defined it as 'the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse'. Although Oberg (1960) acknowledged degrees of culture shock, over time the term became increasingly associated with medical research on more severe stress, depression and loss (Ward et al., 2001). Today, culture shock has no one single academic definition and can mean anything from strain to surprise (Furnham, 2010). To free the discussions of intercultural contact from the legacy of early culture shock conceptualisations, psychology research on cultural adaptation has adopted acculturation as the preferred term. It implies both positive and negative contact outcomes and an individual's active role in the adjustment process (Berry, 2006; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2013).

In tourism studies, culture shock has also been revised in favour of less negatively charged concepts. Hottola (2004) proposed to reconceptualise culture shock in favour of 'culture confusion'. Drawing on empirical research, he argues that in today's globalised world of increasingly hybridised cultures very few tourists encounter significant cultural differences. Moufakkir (2013) takes the discussion one step back and introduces the idea of 'culture unrest' to explore different types of culture shock that people in multicultural societies experience as they meet ethnic minorities before they travel. Despite the change in terminology, however, he goes on to apply with minor modifications the U-curve of culture shock formed by its four stages (euphoria, disillusionment, hostility, adaptation, assimilation), which 'has been declared inconclusive and outdated' according to the evidence cited by Hottola (2004).

Cross-cultural psychologists identify tourists as one of the three main groups of sojourners, together with international students and expatriates (Ward, 2008; Ward et al., 2001). Sojourners are studied as short-term travellers who are able to acculturate, i.e. experience change in their 'affective, behavioural and cognitive repertoires' as they adapt to cultures of the destinations they visit (Bochner, 2006, p. 182). As mentioned earlier, the research on tourists' adjustment to cultural differences has been limited and dedicated to backpacker experiences due to the length of cultural contact (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Hottola, 2004). Indeed, Stephenson (2000) points out that cognitive change in cultural identity which results

in adopting host values and beliefs is the most significant level of acculturation, preceded by changes in behaviour and attitudes. It requires continuous nature of contact, and is more likely to occur during longer-term sojourn (Osland & Osland, 2005). Nevertheless, Sam (2006) argues that duration of acculturation contact can be as short as twenty-four hours.

In acculturation theory, for change in cultural orientations to occur, an individual must face difficulties of cross-cultural adaptation that involve experience of manageable stress. In the process of coping with stress, once it is evaluated as a threat or a challenge, coping strategies are applied to deal with the situation (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). As van der Zee and van Oudenhoven (2013, p. 931) explain, 'intercultural situations include both threatening features (loss of control, inconveniences, uncertainty, identity threat) and challenging aspects (exoticism, adventure, interesting encounters)'. The basic strategies applied by sojourners are the four acculturation strategies: two adaptive, i.e. integration and assimilation, and two maladaptive, i.e. separation and marginalisation (Berry, 1997). The differentiation between this range of adaptation strategies is one of the advantages of the bidimensional structure of acculturation. The strategies are differentiated on two dimensions: host culture immersion, or seeking participation in the visited culture, and home culture maintenance, or holding on to practices of one's own culture (Berry, 2006b; Rasmi et al., 2014). In acculturation research the term 'immersion' is also used interchangeably with 'involvement' to communicate participation in culture-specific activities (Rasmi et al., 2014; Stephenson, 2000).

The four strategies are identified by using combined scores of for host culture immersion and home culture maintenance. In other words, coping response involves attitudinal and behavioural decisions along these two dimensions. These decisions and their combinations (acculturation strategies) have been approached as short-term outcomes, and the long-term outcomes traditionally studied in acculturation research are grouped under psychological and socio-cultural adaptation resulting from extended contact (Bochner, 1982; Safdar, Calvez, & Lewis, 2012; Sam, 2006; Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006)

While both assimilation and integration involve positive attitudes to host culture immersion/involvement, only integration is (1) characterised by the salience of both host and home culture; and (2) has been found to be a preferred strategy by sojourners (Ward, 2008), including tourists (Rasmi et al., 2014). Measurement of both dimensions makes it possible to explore how this particular strategy is achieved but also what causes tourists to marginalize: to lose interest in both maintenance and immersion, and be 'more interested in experiences and independent activities than interacting and identifying with members of either their home or host culture' (Rasmi et al., 2014, p. 317). Furthermore, acculturation theory differentiates

between sojourner interaction with hosts and participation in host culture, and between degrees of culture immersion across different domains (elements) of culture (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004). Among them various daily life domains such as learning the language; eating and cooking traditional food; 'staying informed about current affairs' by engaging with the media domain; choices around clothing and recreational activities, entertainment, music, religion; and acquisition of knowledge about the country's history and culture (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004; Paulhus, 2013; Stephenson, 2000; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The literature also differentiates between private ('social-emotional and value-related') and public ('functional, utilitarian and public') domains: the former including 'family and child-rearing practices, amount and ways of social contacts, cultural habits and pride, marriage and sexuality, celebrations and food, leisure activities, and decency', and the latter 'society and social security, education, open-mindedness and mentality, freedom and independence, communication style, and gender-role differences' (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004, p. 26).

The acculturation approach to the primacy of contact for deep cultural engagement also appears to be more flexible than the one held by proponents of the contact theory. While contact is viewed as a building block of cultural adaptation in acculturation literature, Sam (2006, p. 14) suggests that "perhaps, the issues of "how long" or "continuous" contact in themselves are not as important as the resulting change following the contact".

Table 3.4. Moderators of individual-level acculturation.

Individual level variables	Situational level variables	
	Prior to contact	During contact
Age, gender, education	Social, political, economic and cultural characteristics of society of origin	Contact length, amount and quality
Migration motivation, expectations		Social support
Cultural distance (language, religion, values, identity)		Acculturation strategies
Personality		Other coping strategies
Pre-acculturation (training and experience, cultural knowledge)		Societal attitudes
		Social, political, economic and cultural characteristics of society of settlement

The two most widely applied models of acculturation belong to Berry (1997) and Ward et al. (2001): the acculturative stress framework and the ABC (Affect, Behaviour, Cognition) model of acculturation which incorporates Berry's approach, as well as other theories. Depending on whether or not the stress presented by the demands of intercultural contact is manageable, travellers choose one of the four bidimensional acculturation strategies mentioned earlier. When demands are too high, they decide to separate or marginalise, and

when stress is manageable, assimilation or integration occurs. The level of acculturation is further moderated by many situational and individual-level factors listed in Table 3.4.

In summary, acculturation research shows that a change towards increased host-culture involvement can be stimulated by facing difficulties of cross-cultural adaptation that involve experience of manageable stress with which an individual can cope. As explored further in more detail, manageable stress functions as a critical component of what is known as 'challenge'.

3.4. Conclusion

Limited examples of repeat travel found in the research on destination loyalty, and the small size of the effect of travel on the change in travellers' intercultural attitudes found in the literature on intergroup contact support the concerns noted earlier about the potential of tourism to generate long-lasting outcomes. They also support the observations made in Chapter 1 that domestic visitors are more likely to develop place attachment, as they establish personal relevance through shared cultural heritage. In addition, geographical proximity has been found to be a key pragmatic determinant of repeat travel. Most importantly, this literature indicates that between McKercher's (2002) purposeful cultural tourists discussed in Chapter 2 and tourists greatly valuing entertainment, relaxation and social interaction, the former are less likely to return as their desire to learn more increases novelty-seeking and thinking about new places to visit. More evidence is required, however, as this research does not consider the hobbyist, serious leisure perspective on cultural tourists. According to it, specific cultural interests should, on the contrary, result in seeking repeat contact if not with the same sites, then with other regions and sites within the same destinations, as tourists seek to advance their knowledge. Furthermore, the study by Caldeira and Kastenholz (2018) supports earlier research that while first-time visitors are more interested in sightseeing, repeat visitors come back to enjoy the atmosphere of a place at their own pace, once 'must-see' attractions have been visited. In addition, McKercher (2002) differentiates between sightseeing tourists and the search for deeper learning by purposeful cultural tourists. The analysis of Poria's (2013) typology in Chapter 2, however, suggests that the boundaries between 'must see' and 'must learn' tourist clusters can be blurred.

Nevertheless, the literature provides several insights into the conditions that have been found to strengthen the connection between tourists and places, creating favourable ground for post-travel culture involvement. Involvement literature deepens the understanding of centrality (importance) of a touristic activity to an individual beyond motivation to travel. It

emphasises the role of symbolic (sign) value of a place to a person's self-identity and social identity, and the importance of alignment of touristic activities with a person's lifestyle and interests in daily life. It also demonstrates that involvement overall and the relative importance of its facets varies by the nature of activity. The one exception is the facet of importance (aka relevance, interest) itself, often equalled to involvement as a whole. This finding is supported by acculturation research, showing that the decision to immerse (participate) can vary for different culture-specific activities. Considering that the likelihood of cultural adaptation also varies by the level of difficulty, from attitudinal change to behaviours and values, fostering tourists' appreciation for cultural differences can start with behaviour as a more accessible level, and activities that better align with tourists' daily life. Food, for example, is one element of culture that spans multiple segments of cultural tourism, as identified in Chapter 2. The literature on the types of involvement offers another important conclusion for understanding post-travel involvement. Strong involvement depends not only on how well a tour or a single visit resonate with a person's pre-travel (enduring) interests but also on how well they are able to facilitate situational involvement, i.e. help tourists gain new ones.

The literature reviewed in this chapter also provides additional insights into the crucial role of the social aspect of travel, discussed in Chapter 2. In addition to highlighting the importance of interaction between tourists travelling together, the literature on place attachment and emotional solidarity between locals and tourists draws attention to the proactiveness of locals in engaging with tourists. Consistent with the importance of building friendships, social psychology research on intercultural contact emphasises that the quality of contact depends on the socio-cultural attitudes of locals towards tourists from different countries. In the acculturation models reviewed in Section 3.3, these attitudes are referred to as societal attitudes of the society of settlement. As Woosnam et al. (2009) and Fan et al. (2017) conclude, however, in tourism studies the affective relationship aspect of the tourist-host social contact is still yet to receive the attention it deserves, despite the wealth of research on resident attitudes towards tourism development and the host gaze (Moufakkir, 2011).

Tourists' attitudes also play an important role. Since both intergroup contact literature and acculturation psychology research have identified a difference between attitudes to hosts and to host culture, future research should consider the following questions:

- Do positive attitudes towards the host nation mean strong interest in different aspects of its culture?
- Does mere 'liking' hosts through close interaction lead to culture appreciation and involvement?

- What kinds of attitudes are 'most amenable to change' (Tomljenovic, 2010, p. 22)?

Regarding personal relevance of foreign cultural objects, practices, values and beliefs, the literature on cultural immersion in independent travel suggests a different pathway to finding that connection than reliance on cultural ties. It emphasises the importance for tourists to be active co-creators of their experiences rather than passive observers in order to gain valuable cultural insights. The experiential tourism perspective on immersion complements this literature by arguing that passive (sensory and emotional appreciation) is equally important, as not all cultural activities involve an element of 'doing'.

Overall, the literature demonstrates a consensus on several questions except for contact length, frequency (amount) and quality, and the place of stress and pleasure in touristic experiences. The tourism literature reviewed in Section 3.2. places great emphasis on intimate interaction between tourists and hosts. While these studies identify a number of important conditions for quality contact, they fail to offer a clear explanation as to how quality contact can be effectively evaluated. Out of the two parameters that can be objectively quantified, frequency of participation is yet to receive a reliable measure. As for the length of contact, the literature in this chapter was not able to provide a definitive answer as to what optimal length and frequency should be. Moreover, acculturation psychologists attach little importance to them altogether and emphasise other factors.

When discussing contact quality, it is necessary to consider the issues of physical access to some regions and the importance of cultural translation and mediation that can only be provided by friends among the residents, experienced travel companions, or tour guides. Given that the findings from the contact literature in social psychology suggest that out of the five essential contact conditions, tourism can only effectively address intimate contact, these are very important considerations. Social support has also been found a key moderator of acculturation (adaptation) success, but when adequate support is not available, tourists must rely on their own skills and coping resources, determined by previous travel experience, and personality characteristics. These individual-level factors influence one's relationship with perceived risks, and in the language of acculturation research, with perceived stress and challenge. Regarding the latter, acculturation research finds manageable stress a necessary component for change in cultural orientations. This seems to go against the emphasis on pleasure and entertainment in the literature on museum visitors reviewed in Chapter 2, and is explored further in Chapter 4, since pleasure has also been found to be a key facet of involvement.

As for socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender and education), these have been found to influence perceptions of cultural difference in both tourism and acculturation literature but have received little attention in the tourism research on involvement, destination loyalty and place attachment. As argued by Dixon et al. (2005), and demonstrated by Tomljenovic (2010), the parameters of quality contact, as the cornerstone issues for culture involvement during and after travel, ultimately reside within the individual. They should be determined by the learning outcomes and not so much predicated by travel arrangements, as implied by the critics of organised travel (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Reisinger, 2013a). Drawing on Chapter 2, it should also be added that qualitative assessment of the depth, intensity and authenticity of tourist-host contact can also be made by guides and local residents, the former being the experts in cultural mediation and the latter having insider knowledge. All other considerations mentioned above are important evaluation dimensions that can be measured quantitatively, providing multi-item scales are used and the data is complemented by qualitatively gathered insights. Currently, in addition to the issues with frequency of participation, qualitative studies on the motivation of tourists seeking cultural experiences use very narrow conceptualisations of cultural motives, relying on single-item measures. Cultural tourism research can benefit from the comprehensive TCP scale of tourist motivation by Pearce and Lee (2005) and the Cultural Contact Scale by Gnoth and Zins (2013) that have so far received limited application in cultural tourism literature. Before these scales are applied, however, more qualitative research is required which can clarify what different tourists mean by 'learning about other cultures'.

Chapter 4 The Notion of Challenge

4.1. Introduction

In addition to its proposed relationship with post-travel culture involvement, challenge has emerged as an important concept in tourism literature more broadly. So far it has been established that challenge is a dimension of leisure motivation (Ryan & Glendon, 1998), leisure experience (Barnett, 2005), creative tourist experience (Tan et al., 2013), and adventure tourist experience (Kane & Zink, 2004), and that challenge-seeking is a personality characteristic (Weissinger & Bandalos, 1995). The literature review has also revealed that the intellectual aspects of challenge are the least understood, compared to physical abilities and skills, and are viewed as something effortful that should be overcome, conquered, and resolved to feel a sense of achievement.

The purpose of this chapter is to further explore the scholarly meanings of challenge and its essence by undertaking a comprehensive review of the relevant literature addressing this concept. Special attention is given to identifying the underlying theories and those which could be useful for the purpose of this research but have not yet received wide-spread application in tourism research. In particular, the chapter examines predictors and outcomes of challenge, and its place in the cultural tourist experiences.

The chapter sub-themes reflect two main approaches to the conceptualisation of challenge: as an external source of discomfort, from the perspective of tourism and leisure studies, and a cognitive appraisal in psychology literature³. The chapter starts with a review of adventure tourism research on physical challenge, as a more thoroughly researched dimension of this concept. This literature draws on the theory of flow to understand conditions for feeling optimally challenged. The next section examines the more fragmented literature on cultural experiences, lacking in theoretical grounding and definitions of challenge. There various cultural factors are referred to as 'challenges' and are discussed as sources of psychological and, to some extent also physical discomfort, in relation to stress, cognitive dissonance, perspective transformation, and memorable experiences. The final section concludes the chapter with a summary of key findings, drawing connections between the insights from

³ An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Kim and Butler (2016, 2018). I developed the conceptual framework, based on the literature review I had conducted, and wrote the full draft of the extended abstract (2016 conference paper) that required some edits by the co-authors. The 2018 book chapter is an expanded version of the abstract. My contribution to both publications was 80%.

different research areas and noting implications for understanding the relationship between challenge and culture involvement.

4.2. Challenge as External Source of Physical and Psychological Discomfort

4.2.1. Adventure Tourism Experiences and The Theory of Flow

The physical dimension of challenge has received substantial attention in adventure tourism literature (Williams & Soutar, 2005; Varley, 2006), underpinned by the ideas of challenge-skill balance and intrinsic motivation, central to the flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Initially developed with recreational rock climbing in mind (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), it has been since applied to other goal-driven leisure activities such as white-water rafting (Wu & Liang, 2011) and more recently mountaineering tours. The latter is another risky and physically strenuous outdoor pursuit involving other adventure activities such as climbing, trekking, hiking, and skiing (Mu & Nepal, 2016; Pomfret, 2006, 2012; Tsaur, Yen, & Hsiao, 2013).

The theory of flow (or optimal experience) forms the foundation of positive psychology, 'a science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions' (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 279). On the individual level, it advances the knowledge about the 'aspects of the human condition that lead to happiness, fulfilment, and flourishing' (Alex Linley, Joseph, Harrington, & Wood, 2006, p. 5). As an ideal outcome of an experience, flow has been defined as 'a psychological state in which the person feels simultaneously cognitively efficient, motivated, and happy' (Moneta & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 277): in other words, optimally challenged. As conceptualised by Csikszentmihalyi (1975) and confirmed empirically by Engeser and Rheinberg (2008), for someone to enter this state, nine conditions have to be met.

The tourism literature, however, places the biggest emphasis on the balance of challenge as perceived task difficulty with skill relevant to the task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Depending on the combined score for the challenge-skill (or difficulty-skill) balance construct, researchers can differentiate between anxiety, boredom, apathy and flow (Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008; Haworth & Evans, 1995). The other eight conditions, as summarised by Tsaur, Yen, et al. (2013, p. 362), are 'merging of action and awareness, clear goals, unambiguous feedback, concentration on the task at hand, sense of control, loss of self-consciousness, transformation of time and the autotelic experience'. As demonstrated by the Flow Short Scale (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008), the concept of flow implies immersion into an activity, or as Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987, p. 325) put it, the study of a 'man in play'.

It is characterised by unawareness of time and the need to 'switch off all self-related thoughts' (Peifer, 2012, p. 148), particularly while enduring great physical demands (Pomfret, 2012; Mu & Nepal, 2016). Sense of control is another key characteristic, differentiating between distress (Mu & Nepal, 2016) and positive stress, or eustress (Peifer, 2012), and risk as 'challenge' or as 'danger' (Pomfret, 2006).

In terms of outcomes, the flow state has been linked to 'the ultimate intrinsic "reward" of feeling exhilarated' (Pomfret, 2012, p. 150), personal growth, enhanced performance, and sense of deep intrinsic satisfaction (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Peifer, 2012). Furthermore, it has been hypothesised that 'individuals experiencing flow are more motivated to carry out further (learning) activities, and in order to experience flow again, they will set themselves more challenging tasks' (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008, p. 160). Empirical research, however, has shown that firstly, challenge-skill balance is a weak predictor of flow, and that other moderating factors must be taken into consideration; and secondly, that flow does not always result in the above-mentioned outcomes.

As found by Jones, Hollenhorst, and Perna (2003), challenge-skill balance failed to predict flow indicators in their study, supporting the finding about its small effect size in Moneta and Csikszentmihalyi (1996). This limitation of earlier flow theorisations was further explored by Engeser and Rheinberg (2008) who undertook three experimental studies on University students that supported their hypotheses. As the studies demonstrated, flow can be achieved through the balance of skill and challenge, but when the perceived personal importance of the consequences (outcomes) of engaging in the activity is low. If the perceived importance of succeeding or failing is high, then for flow to occur, skill should be lower than challenge (difficulty). Interestingly, the boredom state is also characterised by skills exceeding the perceived difficulty (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008; Haworth & Evans, 1995) and, depending on the circumstances and personal characteristics, can indicate either a stressful and aversive or a relaxing situation (Moneta, 2012). What these developments in the theory of flow mean for interpreting adventure and other tourism research findings is explained below.

When Pomfret's (2012, p. 151) participants reported that they were pushed mentally 'outside of their comfort zone' and 'beyond their limits', and 'really struggled with the down climb and getting to the bottom again', it could be argued that the psychological and physical challenges more likely exceeded their abilities at the time than were balanced out. Furthermore, given that flow is also known as 'the smooth performance state' (Engeser & Rheinberg, 2008, p. 160) and that, according to Pomfret (2012), it appears similar to the peak experience state characterised by effortlessness, it is unlikely that her participants

experienced flow under those particularly demanding circumstances. This analysis of flow research also suggests an alternative interpretation of the moments when Pomfret's (2012) interviewees had enjoyed easy walks on the same mountaineering trips. In Pomfret's (2012, p. 152) view, 'flow was absent from these experiences', because it should be characterised by high challenge. It could also be suggested, however, that those leisurely walks were the actual flow experiences where the low challenge and the high participants' skills were well balanced. This is when quantitative measurement of both perceived difficulty and skill is necessary to validate qualitative inferences. The literature review also raises the question whether the perceived effortlessness of the educational leisure activities, discussed in Chapter 2 (Packer, 2004, 2006), was because the visitors did not connect those activities with any critical personal outcomes. Alternatively, if they did, the perceived effortlessness can be explained by the combination of low challenge and high skill.

Regarding the outcomes of flow, Varley (2006, p. 184) writes, 'Csikszentmihalyi (2000) Martin and Priest (1986) and Mortlock (1984) all acknowledge the fact that there appears to be far greater opportunity for deep, lasting personal development and reflection as a result of misadventure, or 'the bad trip'. This observation is supported by Pomfret's (2012) study whereby two respondents spoke of experiencing fear under perilous circumstances. However, both respondents still managed to frame these experiences as beneficial retrospectively. Indeed, as she notes, 'a majority of respondents seemed to appreciate their mountaineering achievements more post-completion and after a period of reflection' (Pomfret, 2012, p. 151), suggesting a reappraisal of a negative experience (Peifer, 2012).

As reviewed by Varley (2006), the concept of misadventure was originally introduced into the outdoor adventure tourism research by Mortlock in the *Adventure Alternative* as the fourth level of adventure, following the stages of play, adventure and frontier adventure. These stages were later adopted by Martin and Priest to develop the Adventure Experience Paradigm underpinning Pomfret's (2006, 2012) research, and were renamed as (1) exploration and experimentation, (2) adventure, (3) peak adventure, and (4) misadventure. On one end of this continuum, the latter stage is represented by situations where challenge (task difficulty) significantly exceeds one's current competence, inducing temporary or permanent negative affect, and potentially causing significant physical harm or death. On the other end, the stage of play is described by Varley (2006, p. 175) as follows:

The person is operating well below their capabilities; minimal involvement in terms of emotions, skill, mental control and concentration. No fear of physical harm – responses to the experience may range from 'pleasant' and 'fun' to 'boring' and 'a waste of time.

As reviewed by Pomfret (2006, p. 119), it is only adventure, peak (frontier) adventure, and misadventure that result in actual skill development and personal growth 'as the level of risk rises and/or competence declines'. The contrast between play and the other three stages is also addressed in discussions of true and commodified adventure (Varley, 2006), and hard and soft adventure (Patterson & Pan, 2007; Williams & Soutar, 2005). As summarised by Varley (2006), the core elements of true or 'original adventure' experiences are exposure to real risks; personal responsibility for managing those risks; uncertainty about the experience outcomes; and commitment to sticking with the activity. The latter resembles activity importance in Engeser and Rheinberg (2008). These hard adventure elements are also consistent with Tsaur, Lin, et al.'s (2013) and Little's (2002) understanding of the essence of adventure experience. In particular, Little (2002) emphasises the importance of surprise, control over the situation, and opportunity for problem-solving. Interestingly, these elements are also incorporated into the items of the stimulation motivation factor in the TCP scale by Pearce and Lee (2005), discussed in Chapter 2.

While the literature agrees on the key elements of hard adventure, there are different perspectives on their place in organised adventure tours and particularly in cultural tours, described as soft adventures by tour operators (EscapeTravel, 2015, February, 5). Junker (2015, May 31, para. 2) provides an overview of such trips from 'from cycling trips that include cooking classes and wine tastings, to outback explorations where every safari tent has its own en suite bathroom'. Varley (2006) argues that these commodified 'adventure-flavoured' experiences do not provide the adequate environment for meeting these important conditions as they shift the responsibility for managing any risks from tourists to guides. Although tour operators endeavour to do so, they may also aim 'to ensure that tourists enjoy an adrenalin-fuelled experience while concurrently reducing the level of actual risk involved' and are not deprived of the opportunities to think for themselves and make their own decisions (Pomfret, 2012, p. 146).

In tourism literature, soft adventure is associated with low involvement activities, generally requiring minimal effort, but still more demanding than 'passive activities such as sightseeing' (Patterson & Pan, 2007, p. 26). The term is commonly used to refer to outdoor activities such as 'bush walking, hiking, horse riding, canoeing and snorkeling' (Williams & Soutar, 2005, p. 250). However, Williams and Soutar (2005, p. 250) also note that 'soft adventure tourism involves interrupting the routines of daily living with episodes of uncertainty, insecurity, newness, novelty and perceived risk'. Pomfret's (2012) findings also illustrate this point and show that an activity can be perceived as challenging (difficult) even when it is not seen as necessarily risky.

Discussing the relative importance of actual risks, the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA, 2017) surveyed 1017 American subscribers to the Outside Magazine and found that the focus on high risks and physical exertion has significantly decreased since 2005 in favour of such motivations as 'broadened perspective' and 'cultural understanding'. These findings are consistent with the observations made by Williams and Soutar (2005) and Weber (2001, p. 363) that 'both risk and insight seeking have to be present, in varying degrees, for an adventure to take place'.

People need to feel physically safe to open up to unexpected surprises that can challenge them physically and mentally (Robinson, 2012). As Cohen (1972, p. 166) observed, 'many of today's tourists are able to enjoy the experience of change and novelty only from a strong base of familiarity, which enables them to feel secure enough to enjoy the strangeness of what they experience'. Therefore, it is critical that tour operators set appropriate challenges, or triggers of adequate difficulty. First of all, as discussed in Chapter 2, some people are more strongly drawn to intellectually challenging activities than others. Reflecting on the differences in personal perceptions of adventure, Weber (2001) argues against the exclusivity which characterises the interpretations of adventure tourism that favour recreational activities undertaken by independent travellers (Varley, 2006). Using overland and cultural tours as examples, Weber (2001) points out that some tourists are more interested in exploring the cultural aspects of places that can test their sociocultural competence, as well as their self-image. Furthermore, travelling in groups presents intrapersonal challenges of its own around communication and collaboration with travel companions (Tsaur, Lin, et al., 2013). Secondly, in addition to achievement seeking and failure avoidance, motivation and autotelic personality, people also differ in their tendency to worry regardless of whether the risks are perceived or actual (Larsen, Brun, & Øgaard, 2009). Finally, previous travel experience also moderates perceptions of task difficulty, explaining why individuals with more experience have a more positive view on risk as a welcomed challenge (Williams & Soutar, 2005).

4.2.2. Transformative and Memorable Cultural Experiences

Discourse on challenging experiences in the context of intercultural contact can be found in the wider literature on difficult, demanding, uncomfortable and confusing experiences, and less commonly in the studies directly referring to challenge. By analysing interviews with 25 cultural tourists who travelled to Istanbul, Cetin and Bilgihan (2016, p. 148) found challenge to be a key determinant of the cultural tourist experience for their participants, together with 'social interaction, local authentic clues, service, culture/heritage'. Through examples of specific situations, the authors explain it as aspects of travel that are characterised by

uncertainty and risk; that trigger a broad spectrum of positive and negative emotions; and are seen 'as part of the experience' (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016, p. 147).

Indeed, cultural tourism exposes people to a number of demands of intercultural contact that utilise their mental and physical resources. By testing tourists' 'perceptions of self and own culture' (Chang, et al., 2012; Hirschorn & Hefferon, 2013, p. 285; Picard, 2012; Sin, 2009), international travel can result in feelings of 'social awkwardness and physical discomfort' (Stebbins, 1997, p. 450); cognitive dissonance (Christie & Mason, 2003); disorientation (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Furnham, 2010; Reisinger, 2013a); and struggle (Crossley, 2012b; Sin, 2009).

The objects of these feelings can be any of the elements of culture reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3. In Cetin and Bilgihan (2016, p. 147), the challenge factors named by the day-visitors to Istanbul included 'shopping, traffic, noise, transportation, safety and security, crowded, tourist traps, norms and rules, language, chaos, parking, lack of standards, washing closets and taxi drivers'. These factors represent an intersection of the physical dimensions of place with intangible elements of culture, manifested in the differences in communication and social norms, living standards and practices. In particular, linguistic challenges are fundamental to tourist-host encounters. As Cohen and Cooper (1986, p. 534) summarise, language barriers influence tourists' 'choice of prospective destinations, their preparations for a trip, the scope and content of their interaction with the locals, and the quality of their experience'. While differences in language and the need to cope with them may bring excitement, they can also present a barrier to cultural immersion, frequency and quality of host-guest interaction, and ultimately to cross-cultural understanding (Buddhabhumbhitak, 2010; Chang, Chen, Huang & Yuan, 2012; Tomljenovic, 2010). Furthermore, anticipated difficulties with communication during travel can be a cause of pre-travel anxiety and impact tourists' ability to cope with other differences (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006). At the same time, the degree of difficulty presented by linguistic differences and how well tourists' can cope with them can vary quite substantially for different groups of tourists, depending on their own language skills, cultural background, and attitudes to travel. In research on European tourists' attitudes to contact with foreign languages in hotel interactions, Goethals (2016) and de Carlos, Alén, Pérez-González and Figueroa (2019) found that German tourists assign much less significance to hotel staff speaking their language than Italian, French and Spanish guests. Goethals (2016, p. 237) also reviews the literature demonstrating that, rightly or wrongly, for English-speaking tourists knowing a foreign language 'rarely is crucial for successful traveling...explain[ing] why they do not

spontaneously mention language-related (hereinafter, LR) experiences in their travel diaries (Lawson & Jaworski, 2007).

In addition, sojourners can be challenged by the contact with foreign values and life philosophies (Brown & Osman, 2017; Kirillova et al., 2017), as well as such value-laden place meanings as sacredness and national pride (Edensor, 1998; Rakić & Chambers, 2012). A prominent group of examples includes differences in religious beliefs and practices and in attitudes to religion. The research by He, Park, and Roehl (2013) and Poria, Butler, and Airey (2003b, p. 341) has shown that tourist religiosity, or 'the strength of religious beliefs', and religious affiliation play an important role in visitation patterns, risks perceptions and emotional involvement. These factors can drive tourists' interest in religious sites but also explain cognitive distance between hosts and tourists from societies where the place of religion is notably different (Brown & Osman, 2017; Jafari & Scott, 2014). In addition, the literature discusses differences in attitudes to different religions such as Islam and Hinduism (Sharifpour, Walters & Ritchie, 2014; Zara, 2015). Dark tourism experiences can also be particularly emotionally traumatic as they deal with the subjects of 'death, suffering, violence or disaster' (Sharma & Rickly, 2018; Sharpley & Stone, 2009, p. 4), further complicated by affiliation with religion (Kirillova et al., 2017; Zara, 2015). Although the risk aspect of cultural experiences does not hold the same prominence as it does for adventure tourism, perceived psychological risks around the contact with foreign cultures, as well as tourist worries about health, terrorism and unstable political situations, have received substantial attention in international pleasure travel research (He et al., 2013; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Larsen et al., 2009).

Challenge as an external factor, can be associated with some degree of stress. The negative effects of stress are examined in culture shock studies which highlight such undesirable outcomes as 'psychological, emotional and physical disturbance' (Brown & Holloway, 2008, p. 45) that impede adaptation and strengthen negative attitudes towards hosts (Hottola, 2004). Nevertheless, Furnham (2010, p. 87) observes that culture shock and the disorientation that comes with it 'is a ubiquitous and a normal stage in any acculturative adaptive process that all 'travellers' experience'.

Further on the benefits of stress, Stebbins (1997b, p. 450) suggests, the investment of 'substantial personal effort' and the above-mentioned psychological costs associated with serious cultural tourism are balanced out by such benefits as 'self-actualisation, self-enrichment, feelings of accomplishment, and others'. In dark tourism, these benefits can involve realisations of the value and meaning of life and living, and moral lessons (Kang, Scott, Lee, & Ballantyne, 2012; Sharpley & Stone, 2009). The associated personal growth

that comes with spiritual and intellectual development can involve enhanced intercultural competence and self-efficacy, and gaining such positive human qualities as tolerance and cultural sensitivity (Brown, 2009; Milstein, 2005; Stone & Duffy, 2015), and can lead to memorable tourism experiences (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016; Horvath, 2013). In a broader travel context, Robinson (2013, p. 32) draws attention to the importance of initial discomfort of “breaking free” of familiar behaviours which can be achieved by engaging in such casual activities as reading a menu in a foreign language or catching public transport to the nearest attraction.

The process of effortful ‘critical engagement with the experience’ (Raymond & Hall, 2008, p. 532) is central to the growing area of transformative (transformational) travel (Lean, 2012, 2015; Reisinger, 2013c; Robledo & Batle, 2017; Souldard et al., 2019). Although Pearce and Packer (2013) question the usefulness of Festinger’s (1957) cognitive dissonance theory in comparison to positive psychology, the former underpins a significant section of the literature that draws on the transformative learning theory (TLT) (Mezirow, 1990). Stone and Duffy (2015) identified seven papers on cross-cultural travel of tourists, tourism educators and students; four on volunteer tourism; and three on tour guides, operators, and interpretation. Whilst still in its ‘infancy’ (Stone & Duffy, 2015, p. 204), as more recently reviewed by Coghlan and Weiler (2018), TLT currently offers the most robust foundation for the study of transformative experiences. This research advocates for deliberate facilitation of cognitive dissonance and disorienting dilemmas to engage tourists in questioning their cultural assumptions and responses to foreign cultural realities, and to stimulate change in their attitudes and behaviours (Chang et al., 2012; Christie & Mason, 2003; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Stone & Duffy, 2015).

Cognitive dissonance is a perceived mismatch or conflict between an action, event or an experience, and one’s current belief system (Orams, 1994), and is the core of a disorienting dilemma. As Christie and Mason (2003, p. 5) explain, referring to Festinger, ‘the existence of dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable, and hence this will motivate a person to reduce it and attempt to achieve consonance’. Triggers of cognitive dissonance can be both external and internal. External triggers are found among ‘confronting new stimuli’ (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018, p. 570), common ones being contact with the adversity of others (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018; Raymond & Hall, 2008), and ‘peripheral’ triggers (Chang et al., 2012, p. 238), such as those listed by Cetin and Bilgihan (2016). Internal triggers include recognition of undesirable personal traits (Stone & Duffy, 2015), and realisations of ‘something missing in his or her life’ (Reisinger, 2013b, p. 18). Examples of internal triggers are offered by Chang et al. (2012) and Bell, Gibson, Tarrant, Perry, and Stoner (2016) whose Taiwanese and

American participants were faced with own ethnocentrism through contact with foreign ways of living.

In order for the dissonance to result in perspective transformation, a person must go through the ten steps listed below (Mezirow, 1991, p. 168) and must be committed to learning and changing in the first place (Christie & Mason, 2003; Robledo & Batle, 2017). In tourism literature (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Stone & Duffy, 2015), the second step has been modified to exclude the reference to 'feelings of guilt and shame', as that type of self-examination is specific to the empirical research on the college students returning from an interruption in their study from which the steps were originally derived:

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination
3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural and psychic assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning of a course of action
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

Soulard et al. (2019) conducted a study on 37 transformative tourism organisations, the composition of which suggests that majority are located in North America. Indeed, as far as tour operators are concerned, the US has experienced a rise of adventure tourism companies offering transformational tours (LittleHotelier, 2017, January 25; Trimble, 2017, January 4). Two of these companies, Muddy Shoes Adventures (MSA) and Evergreen Tours, jointly established the Transformational Travel Council (TTC) to encourage more tour operators to revise their current itineraries and join 'the transformational travel movement' (Transformational Travel Council, 2017b). For the founders of the TTC, 'transformational travel (or TT) is any travel experience that empowers people to make meaningful, lasting changes in their life' (Transformational Travel Council, 2017a). Although the links to Mezirow's (1991) work are not acknowledged on the TTC website, the process applied by these companies strongly resembles the TLT framework as it addresses the following three stages:

1. Departure: pre-travel preparation for transformation which involves the clarification one's travel purpose
2. Initiation: the importance of working through a challenging situation or situations, with assisted reflection and dialogue; and
3. Return: reintegration into society with assisted post-travel debriefing.

To align with these stages, MSA (2017) tours include pre-and post-travel coaching sessions, and pre-allocated time for reflective one-one and group discussions on multiple days during the tours. As Richards (2014) notes, transformational travel is a logical development in the history of tourism which reflects positive changes in the mindsets of postmodern travellers.

However, as a new research field, it is also not without limitations. Few studies on transformative travel provide specific expanded examples of cognitive dissonance, particularly in relation to differences in values. As far as the research on transformational tourism is concerned, until recently (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018; Kirillova et al., 2017; Walker & Moscardo, 2016), much of it has been conceptual. The lack of examples could be explained by the fact that 'opportunities for disorienting dilemmas are more limited in short-term programs' (Behnke, Seo, & Miller, 2014, p. 280), but also by the attitude-behaviour gap, characterising much of tourism research, interested in what prompts tourists to act on what they have learnt during travel (Ardoin et al., 2015; Coghlan & Weiler, 2018; Orams, 1994). Furthermore, while the stages of transformation have been delineated, it is an ongoing 'individualized process', best explored through qualitative inquiry but highly dependent on the participants' self-awareness (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018, p. 569). In addition, the consensus on what can be considered as transformative change and, consequently, how long it takes for it to manifest is yet to be reached. Stone and Duffy (2015), Walker and Moscardo (2016), and Coghlan and Weiler (2018) share the view that transformation is a multi-step process, resulting in radical and enduring change, while Kirillova et al. (2017) hold a less discriminating perspective.

In regards to the industry practices, Souldard et al. (2019) show that many travel companies were created as early as in 1970s and by now have developed into transformative tourism providers in name and in programs. While the authors selected organisations that reported opportunities for interactions 'designed to be enriching for both participants and residents' (Souldard et al., 2019, p. 95), they did not differentiate in the results between the providers of adventure travel, cultural travel, volunteering and study programs, and drew most of the quotes from the interviews with study abroad and volunteering trips. A brief analysis of MSA's tour itineraries, however, supports Jansson's (2007) observation that the adventurous attitude to travel does not always align with the immersive one. Their transformational tour

programs were found to have a heavy focus on nature-based activities and self-discovery in terms of clarifying a pathway in life, rather than revising one's relationship with and understanding of other cultures (MSA, 2017). Nevertheless, these are notable industry developments that demonstrate how the concepts of transformation and transformative learning can be applied not only in study abroad and other structured educational trips but also in organised leisure tourism.

Outside the qualitative examinations of transformational travel experiences (Bell et al., 2016; Brown, 2009; Chang et al., 2012; Robledo & Batle, 2017), the link between challenging (demanding) touristic experiences, emotional connection and memory has also been raised in the literature on memorable tourist experiences (MTE). By analysing the answers of tourism management students to structured open-ended questions, Horvath (2013, p. 49) identified the following dimensions of the memorable tourist experience: mental process of meaning making, i.e. 'psychological journey that consists of transformation, absorption and thus, value creation'; physical challenges enabled by sensory experiences; complexity of the experience; and an element of surprise. Kim et al. (2012, p. 15) define challenge as 'an experience that demands physical and/or mental ability' but increases the meaningfulness of what is experienced. Despite the challenge theme being featured in their literature review and content analysis findings, however, it was not clear if the authors included it in the testing of the final questionnaire, as it was not discussed anywhere else in the paper.

Another, qualitative study was conducted by Tung and Ritchie (2011). Drawing on Csikszentmihalyi (1990), the authors analysed interviews with 208 Canadians about their previous travel experiences. From that research challenge emerged as a source of only physical demand and a stimulant of improvement of physical abilities. Using grounded theory approach, they positioned the theme of challenge as a sub-dimension of 'consequentiality', a dimension of MTE understood as 'some sort of personally perceived importance from the outcome of the trip' (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1379). Whilst physical challenge emerged as distinctive from the other three sub-dimensions (social relationships, intellectual development, and self-discovery), the participants still discussed perspective-changing experiences. While they made no references to intellectual challenge, Tung and Ritchie (2011, p. 1379) found 'many references such as learning the history, local culture, way-of-life, natural physiography, and language of the destination', which they construed as indicators of intellectual development. Given that motivation, vacation type and destination were not incorporated into these studies, future research should not only investigate the place of intellectual and physical challenges in different tourism contexts but also compare their effect on self-development and host-culture involvement outcomes.

To summarise, tourists may need to apply effort at some point during their travel if they are to experience any positive transformations and associated deep intrinsic satisfaction (Falk et al., 2012; Stebbins, 1996). At the same time, balancing tourists' search for fun, surprise, exploration, freedom of choice and naturally unfolding experience with learning through reflection is a difficult task. There is a need for certain inducement of outcomes on the part of the guides when tourists either may not have enough time or lack in awareness to arrive at the desired learning lessons themselves (Moscardo, 1996). As a counterargument, van Winkle and Lagay's (2012) study offers an important reminder that not all reflection requires external support. What they do not discuss, however, is that the likelihood of someone reflecting on their experience without external support depends on their need for cognition, and their commitment to learning and personal transformation. Certainly, moments of reflection do not have to be pre-planned, as it is done by MSA (2017), but the intention to reflect, or at the very least the general openness to reflection at some point in travel should be present.

4.3. Challenge as Cognitive Appraisal

As highlighted in Chapter 3, difficult stressful cultural encounters and their positive change outcomes related to involvement with host cultures are also explored in acculturation psychology (Berry, 1997). The relationship between acculturative changes and stress is underpinned by the work of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) on stress, appraisal and coping, and their transactional model of stress. This research was later incorporated by Lazarus (1990) into the CMR (cognitive-motivational-relational) theory of emotion and adaptation to 'provide more categories of reaction' (Lazarus, 1993, p. 12). Both theories position cognitive appraisal as a process mediating the relationship between a stressful situation and its outcomes where challenge is one of possible stress appraisals.

Cognitive appraisal is the domain of cognitive appraisal theories developed by Lazarus (1966), Roseman (1984), Ellsworth and Smith (1988), Frijda (1993), and Scherer (1993). These scholars share the understanding of cognitive appraisal as an evaluation of an experience in terms of personal significance, i.e. its relationship with the individual's goals and its potential outcomes and differentiate it from the characteristics of a given situation, or situational appraisals. As acknowledged by Ellsworth and Scherer (2003), and Smith and Kirby (2011), this distinction is attributed to the work of Lazarus (1966) who conceptualised appraisal as consisting of two complementing interrelated processes, i.e. primary and secondary. The function of primary appraisal is to evaluate life events in terms of their significance for an individual's well-being and outcomes of those events as desired by an individual (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Nicholls, Polman, & Levy, 2012; Peacock & Wong,

1990). In other words, it answers the question 'Am I in trouble or being benefited, now or in the future, and in what way?' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 31). Secondary appraisals moderate the degree of perceived threat or challenge by assessing coping resources and coping options (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Drawing on the work of Folkman and Lazarus (1985, 1988) and their Ways of Coping Scale, the literature differentiates between two coping functions, problem-focused and emotion-focused, and eight coping strategies: confrontative coping, distancing, self-control (or self-isolation), seeking social support (including seeking additional information), accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance (or tension-reduction, including wishful thinking), planful problem-solving, and positive reappraisal (including emphasising the positive) (Berry, 2006c; Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005; Matheny, Aycock, Pugh, Curlette, & Silva Cannella, 1986; Schuster, Hammitt, & Moore, 2006; Ward et al., 2001). By definition, problem-focused coping is behavioural and is, therefore, more likely to be found in planful problem-solving and confrontative coping that involves standing one's ground and getting others 'to change his or her mind' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988, p. 468). Besides the 'efforts to alter the situation' (Folkman et al., 1986, p. 572), it can also be directed at 'changing one's self' (Schuster et al., 2006, p. 100). In its turn, emotion-focused coping is attitudinal, directed towards 'a change in the subjective meaning' of the stressor in 'less psychologically distressing terms' (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005, p. 53), and involving distancing, self-control, accepting responsibility, and positive reappraisal. However, Folkman and Lazarus (1985) emphasise that their 'conceptual preference is to assume that any act or thought can have more than one coping function depending on the psychological context in which it occurs'(p. 468), and seeking social support in particular.

For tourism research, the application of cognitive appraisal theories and the stress, appraisal and coping framework in particular remains a new frontier (Hosany, 2012; Jordan, Vogt, & DeShon, 2015). With few exceptions drawing on its ideas to study emotions and stress responses qualitatively (Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013), current literature is represented by quantitative studies interested in testing existing instruments to understand stress factors and coping strategies in business travel (Chen, 2017) and resident responses to tourism development (Jordan & Vogt, 2017a; Jordan et al., 2015). This literature draws on earlier recreational leisure studies of similar design and purpose which does not specifically examine the functions of primary appraisals (Miller & McCool, 2003; Schuster et al., 2006).

Psychological appraisal studies of stressful experiences focus on the stress appraisals of challenge, threat, and harm/loss, although the latter also denote actual damage of physical and psychological nature. Few consider benign-positive (benefit) and irrelevant (neutral)

appraisals due to their disassociation with coping effort (Kessler, 1998; Larsson & Wilde-Larsson, 2010). Depending on whether a potentially stressful encounter is appraised as promising harm or benefit, it is evaluated as threatening or challenging. When a situation imposes no demands on an individual, it is appraised as either irrelevant or benign-positive. These primary appraisals are marked by an emotional response which is measured using adjective-based scales (Ferguson et al., 1999; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Larsson & Wilde-Larsson, 2010; Smith & Kirby, 2011). The scales based on statements of personal stakes in a situation have also been developed for the stressful appraisals of threat and challenge (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Peacock & Wong, 1990; Searle & Auton, 2014; Skinner & Brewer, 2002).

Table 4.1 offers definitions of primary and secondary appraisals. As explained by Smith and Lazarus (1993, p. 918), 'motivational relevance is an evaluation of the extent to which the encounter touches on personal goals or concerns', and congruence 'refers to the extent to which the encounter is consistent or inconsistent with the person's goals'. Both threat and challenge appraisals apply to goal relevant encounters but only challenge to goal congruent ones (Smith, Haynes, Lazarus, & Pope, 1993). The literature also emphasises the interaction between the individual and the environment (situation), and the diversity of situational conditions influencing experience appraisal.

Table 4.1. Definitions of primary and secondary appraisals.

Construct	Construct definition
Primary appraisal	An appraisal of personal significance (motivational/goal relevance and congruence, and ego involvement)
Challenge appraisal	A positive evaluation of experience as substantially effortful, motivation-relevant and congruent, that is offering opportunity for 'goal attainment or the movement toward it' (Lazarus, 1990, p. 82)
Threat appraisal	A negative evaluation of experience as effortful and hindering achievement of relevant goals
Benign-positive (benefit) appraisal	A positive evaluation of experience as requiring little to no coping effort and associated with goal attainment (beneficial)
Irrelevant (neutral) appraisal	An evaluation of experience as having no significance for an individual
Secondary appraisal	An evaluation of coping resources
Perceived effort appraisal	Amount of cognitive and behavioural efforts required to cope with stressful external and/or internal demands (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984, p. 141).
Perceived control appraisal	An evaluation of 'what can or cannot be done to alter the troubled person–environment transaction' (Kessler, 1998, p. 75): controllable-by-self, controllable-by-others, and uncontrollable-by-anyone (Roesch & Rowley, 2005).

Special attention is given to whether or not a situation impinges on achieving something personal at stake and the answer to the question 'Do I have a goal at stake, or are any of my core values engaged or threatened?' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 76). As Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 36) observe, 'challenge will not occur, however, if what must be done does not call for substantial efforts. The joy of challenge is that one pits oneself against the odds'.

In relation to positive change, when an encounter is appraised as challenging, an individual's behavioural repertoire is likely to expand due to associated positive affect (Lazarus, 1990; Skinner & Brewer, 2002). In cognitive appraisal research, challenge has also been linked to strong interest in the pursued activity (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988b), and such positive emotions as eagerness, exhilaration, happiness and joy, as well as excitement, hopefulness and enthusiasm (Larsson & Wilde-Larsson, 2010; Lazarus, 1990).

Challenge, however, is a stress appraisal, and to elicit a strong enough response, desired outcomes must also be self-related, that is to have implications for ego-identity and maintenance of a desired self-image (Lazarus, 1990). Psychological (personal) growth, mastery of skill, competence (and consequently self-confidence), and expansion of knowledge, all of which function as dimensions of learning according to Falk et al. (2012), carry such implications. In addition to the opportunities for some form of success, other important stakes include social rewards, such as recognition and praise (Skinner & Brewer, 2002, p. 679); approval and respect, that is how an individual is perceived by others (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), as well as judgement and critique (disapproval) as the opposite of those, e.g. 'appearing incompetent to others' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 162). In addition to life goals and social and self-esteem, other ego-related stakes, or 'types of ego-involvement' (Lazarus, 1990, p. 102), include moral values, meanings and ideas, and other persons and their well-being.

To conclude, it is important to clarify the fine conceptual difference between challenge as a primary stress appraisal of personal significance and challenge as a psychological state resulting from a combination of primary and secondary appraisals. Although challenge in the latter sense has also been studied as a single emotion with an underlying meaning of 'effortful optimism' (Smith & Lazarus, 1993), cognitive appraisal literature is unanimous in conceptualising challenge not as a single emotion and not as an external stressor but as a complex internal psychological response of an individual to a particular situation, eliciting several different emotions. As argued by Rheinberg (2008), this is an important distinction, and it has not been clearly communicated in the current tourism literature where challenge is predominantly understood as an external stress factor.

4.4. Conclusion

As mentioned in the chapter introduction, the two dominant scholarly perspectives on challenge have notably different orientations: external and internal. The critical difference between the two approaches lies in the emphasis placed by the second on the role of the individual in how a particular situation can be interpreted. The perspective on challenge as an external event or circumstance triggering reaction to it is most prominent in the research on intercultural contact that examines cultural tourism, dark tourism, lifestyle tourism, voluntourism, and ecotourism. Although, to the exception of few studies, this literature does not appear to explicitly link this understanding to any particular theory, several arguments point to the concepts of culture shock and cognitive dissonance, and associated stress. It is also these studies that draw on the adult education theory of transformative learning to discuss positive outcomes of specifically intellectually challenging experiences.

The internal orientation in the understanding of challenge as a cognitive evaluation of contact with an external stimulus is found in both the theory of flow (optimal experience) and in stress appraisal literature. However, as far as tourism research is concerned, its presence varies. Those outdoor adventure tourism studies that closely engage with the theory of flow reveal a mixed approach. While discussing predominantly physical challenges as external factors in flow experiences, they draw on the understanding of challenge as perceived task difficulty and demonstrate how a difficult situation, in many ways, is only a source of potentially challenging experiences. In addition to the relationship between challenge (difficulty) and skill, adventure tourism literature highlights the role of motivation to deal with a difficult situation, as well as sense of control, personality and previous travel experience. The critical role of intentionality is also discussed in transformative tourism literature mentioned above.

In its turn, stress appraisal psychology literature concurs with flow research and emphasises the significance of personal stakes in a potentially challenging experience, i.e. alignment of an experience with deeply held personal interests, values, beliefs, self-perceptions and motives. It also stresses the importance of commitment to the desired outcome of that experience, since in stress appraisal terms challenge is a cognitive appraisal of personal significance. As for tourism studies, while the relationship of challenge with perceived importance is also observed in some of the literature on the concept of the memorable tourist experiences, it simultaneously discusses its role as a stimulant rather than a response to one. The cognitive appraisal approach to conceptualising challenge has limited presence in existing tourism research, compared to experimental, and study, health and sports-related psychology literature.

In addition to these findings, notable differences are found between the flow and stress appraisal theories in how well they help conceptualise the relationship between challenge and post-travel culture involvement. Firstly, in the flow theory, despite its internal orientation, challenge functions as a unidimensional construct, i.e. perceived task difficulty, which, in cognitive appraisal terms, is only one of many situational appraisals. Secondly, even though challenge appraisal and flow appear to refer to a similar psychological state, the flow and the stress appraisal models fulfil different purposes. The former explains the phenomenology of involvement in an activity and its effect on a person, while the latter has been integrated into the study of a person's relationship with others, i.e. culture involvement. Thirdly, while the idea of skill mastery is central to both, the broader notion of gain used by Lazarus (1990) creates room for such cognitive outcomes as change in one's world view and ways of life, as well as integration of the world views and ways of life of others.

Despite the differences in perspectives on challenge and how clearly those perspectives are communicated in tourism research, the interdisciplinary literature reviewed in this chapter agrees on the association of challenge not only with perceived effortfulness - as individuals in different settings find themselves in situations outside of their comfort zone - but also with positive affect. As suggested by the research on learning in educational settings reviewed in Chapter 2, not every experience is meant to be linked to a critical personal outcome, as some experiences are more about fun and pleasure than learning through perseverance. It further argues that in those settings learning should be perceived as effortless in order to be enjoyable and engaging. However, the transformative tourism literature discussed in this chapter argues that if any positive transformations in attitudes and behaviour and associated deep intrinsic satisfaction are to be achieved, tourists need to find themselves outside of their comfort zone and apply physical or mental effort, or both at some point during their travel. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the research on flow experiences, it is not the balance between challenge and skill that is important for personal growth but an experience of frontier adventure or even misadventure. Cognitive appraisal research also demonstrates that effort and positive affect are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist in challenging experiences.

The theme of effortfulness is prominently featured in the discussions of intercultural contact, since resolution of cognitive dissonance and change in perspective require conscious introspection. As demonstrated in Section 4.2.1, in order to experience flow while enduring great physical demands, a mountaineer has to be able to block out any fears and feelings of discomfort until they reach the goal and can enjoy the outcome, and under those circumstances that blocking *is* the mental challenge. In situations of cultural contact,

however, the psychological discomforts associated with learning and transformation cannot be ignored. They are what triggers reflection and what becomes the centre of one's attention if pre-conceived ideas are to be reviewed, and if positive change is to occur. If flow is about being in complete physical and mental control and enjoying the process, cognitive dissonance resolution and reflection are about intentional dwelling on the discomforts that triggered these processes in the first place. Although the literature does not discuss the difference, such critical engagement is what appears to differentiate any cognitive (mental) effort from deep engagement.

In addition to reflection, tourism literature on challenge also discusses the benefits of on-tour support available in group travel for achieving positive individual-level change outcomes. While informal learning is critical for fulfilling tourist experiences, and while moments of reflection can occur unexpectedly to those tourists who are open to personal growth, travel with transformative outcomes also requires 'planning and follow-up' (Stone & Duffy, 2015, p. 211). Although challenge is an overall positive psychological state, experiences requiring investment of substantial effort also need time and external support for the moments of significant discomfort to be re-evaluated as beneficial.

The literature has also revealed that in addition to insight seeking, some degree of risk and uncertainty are absolute pre-requisites of experiencing challenge and its positive outcomes. Although group travel provides some insulation from the uncertainty, risks and problem-solving associated with effortful tourist experiences, group tourists still look for adequately challenging experiences which address these important conditions. Regarding risk, however, the research reviewed in this and the previous chapter agrees on its somewhat questionable importance as a key element of both hard and soft adventure, and as a facet of involvement. The literature review suggests that in situations of social nature where actual danger does not apply, it is important to separate the opportunity to problem-solve by applying skills and knowledge from minimising risks to one's physical and psychological health.

Chapter 5 Conceptual Framework

5.1. Introduction

The literature reviewed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 demonstrates that there is substantial theoretical and empirical evidence to suggest that challenge can play an important role in stimulating post-travel culture involvement through their association with self-development. The purpose of this chapter is to provide theoretical rationale for the relationships observed empirically in tourism and leisure studies literature, and a guiding framework for data collection and analysis.

The conceptual framework proposed here draws on the interconnected theories from acculturation, social, cognitive appraisal, and positive psychology, as well as relevant literature on immersive, memorable, adventure and transformative tourist experiences⁴. In particular, this chapter proposes that acculturation process models and the stress, appraisal and coping theory are the most helpful for explaining relationship in question and for providing a more nuanced understanding of challenge in the context of cultural tourism.

Structurally, the chapter consists of three main sections and a conclusion. Section 5.2 introduces the main framework components and the underlying relationship between them, while the other two sections expand on each of the components. The chapter is concluded with a summary of wider societal implications of studying the conceptualised relationship and the limitations of the framework.

5.2. Framework Flow

The framework presented in Figure 5.1. consists of three main parts: experience during travel (the circular diagram); the overall cumulative appraisal of the entire experience; and post-travel culture involvement as the long-term outcome of interest. The framework flow reflects the understanding of appraisal as a mediator between the experience of what happens during travel and the experience outcome. Informed by the idea of cumulative experience from the discussions of tourist learning (Falk et al., 2012), previous travel experience (Weaver, Weber, & McCleary, 2007), and stress appraisal (Schuster et al., 2006), the circular diagram represents the overall tourist experience as a combination of everything experienced by a tourist during a trip. It shows that ongoing appraisal and

⁴ An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Kim and Butler (2016, 2018). I developed the conceptual framework, based on the literature review I had conducted, and wrote the full draft of the extended abstract (2016 conference paper) that required some edits by the co-authors. The 2018 book chapter is an expanded version of the abstract. My contribution to both publications was 80%.

reappraisal of all individual situations that make up the total tourist experience results in a cumulative evaluation of that experience.

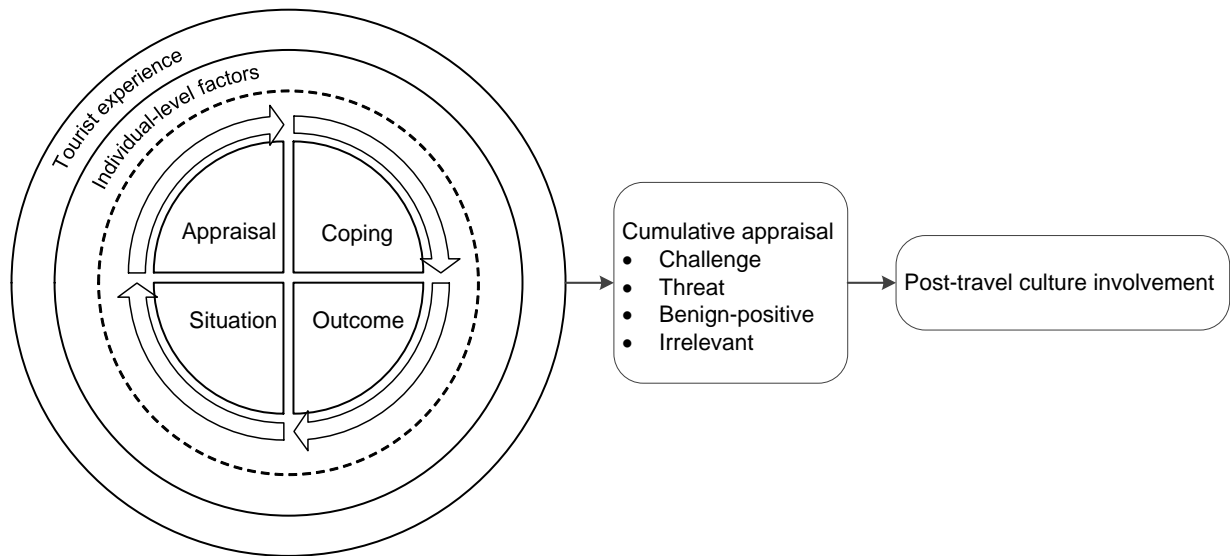


Figure 5.1. Conceptual framework.

The longer the visit, the more individual situations, also referred to as events, activities, encounters and experiences, it includes. The evaluation may identify the experience as challenging, threatening, benign-positive or irrelevant, influencing post-travel culture involvement as one of experience outcomes. Unlike the acculturative stress model (Berry, 1997) and the ABC model of acculturation (Ward et al., 2001), this framework uses circular flow to illustrate that an evaluation and outcome of one situation (activity) influences the experience of the next one. This interdependence is particularly important for understanding extended trips such as leisure group tours. While such an approach may not be feasible for understanding experiences of migrants which involve highly individualised independent journeys, this interdependence of different activities is particularly important for planning organised itinerary-based short-term trips where the order of activities can impact the overall experience. An evaluation and outcome of one pre-planned activity on a tour can influence the experience of the next one, and how tourists spend their free leisure time afterwards or which optional activities they choose.

5.3. Situational and Individual-Level Factors

The framework also incorporates individual-level factors the continuous influence of which on the experience is communicated by the dashed circle surrounding the stress and coping process as a symbolic “frame of mind”. Besides the influence of cultural distance on sojourners’ experiences of other cultures (Demes & Geeraert, 2014; McKercher & Du Cros,

2003), socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, education, occupation and income also play an important role. In particular, the last four are associated with a number of critical coping resources and moderate an individual's ability to deal with cultural demands (Ward et al., 2001). These resources, which involve not only travel-related skills but also attitudes and cultural knowledge (Ward & Searle, 1991), are predicted by previous travel experience and reflect overall cultural competence (Berry, 2006c; Safdar, Calvez, & Lewis, 2012). In tourism research, these socio-demographic factors are used to differentiate tourists in terms of destination choice, motivation to travel, travel memories, form of travel, risk perceptions and coping strategies, and preferences for comfort level, all relevant to the concepts of challenge and culture involvement (Huang & Petrick, 2009; Kazeminia et al., 2015; Lloyd & Little, 2010; Moal-Ulvoas & Taylor, 2014; Pearce & Lee, 2005). Other important individual-level characteristics include personality (Pomfret, 2006; Tomljenovic, 2010; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2013); expectations (Rogers & Ward, 1993; Tomljenovic, 2010); personal interests (Havitz & Demanche, 1990); and motivation to travel, particularly to learn and to interact locals, guides and travel companions (Falk et al., 2012; Safdar et al., 2012; Tomljenovic, 2010), and to persevere and challenge oneself (Lazarus, 1990; Pomfret, 2006; Rheinberg, 2008; Stebbins, 1996).

The "situation" stage refers to the key factors relating to the experience context which have been highlighted as important in both tourism and psychology research. These include host attitudes to visitors (Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006) and residents' attitudes towards tourists (Moufakkir, 2011; Woosnam, 2011); amount of support received in coping with cultural differences (Ong & Ward, 2005), including around dialogue, critical reflection, and cultural and social mediation (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Mancini, 2001); external demands as potential sources of stress such as infrastructure (economic) (Chang et al., 2012; Hottola, 2004; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Sin, 2009), norms of behaviour (social) and values (cultural) (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Brown & Osman, 2017; Kirillova et al., 2017); and factors related to the format and nature of cultural contact such as length, frequency, intimacy and authenticity of interaction with the hosts and participation in their culture (Jansson, 2007; Reisinger, 2013a; Tomljenovic, 2010). Other conditions include the actual activities undertaken by the tourists; form of travel (organised or independent); freedom of choice (Smith, 1994; Van Winkle & Lagay, 2012); opportunity for creative problem-driven and skilled consumption (Richards & Wilson, 2006); and a number of challenge-predicting appraisals. These appraisals are motivational relevance and congruence; potential for harm or loss; opportunity for some form of gain related to self-development; centrality (importance) of a given activity and its outcome to an individual; certainty/uncertainty; and appraisals of perceived coping resources such as perceived mental and physical effort (effortfulness) and

perceived control (controllability) (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005; Ellsworth & Smith, 1988b; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Peacock & Wong, 1990).

5.4. Tourist Experience Outcomes

Table 5.1. incorporates all individual-level tourism outcomes of challenging experiences discussed in the literature review, which can develop to various degrees and at different rate, both during and after travel. The outcome of post-travel culture involvement in this framework functions as a matter of change in attitudes and behaviours towards the host culture and is differentiated from more complex and long-lasting changes in cultural identity. Although empirical acculturation research examines the effects of international sojourn on short-term travellers such as students and expatriates, the idea of post-travel outcomes is not reflected in the current acculturation frameworks that deal with individual-level changes occurring only during the cross-cultural contact. Thus, while the issue of post-travel culture involvement can apply beyond tourism, it has not been found elsewhere in the relevant literature. The distinction between short and long-term outcomes used in acculturation psychology was deliberately excluded from this framework because any of these outcomes can start manifesting themselves at any point during the trip and strengthen afterwards. A further grouping principle, that is not applied here, incorporates psychological and sociocultural outcomes. While this distinction is important and is implied in the outcomes themselves, it was more relevant to the subject of this chapter to highlight the differences between the 'registers of engagement', i.e. self-related and others-related (Smith, 2012c, p. 12), introduced in Chapter 1, and their valence (positive and negative).

Among the self-related outcomes, the framework acknowledges physical discomfort, harm and loss, and positive and negative affective responses to intercultural contact known as "immediate effects" (Berry 1997, p. 19). In terms of associated stress levels, affective reactions can range from the emotional discomforts discussed by Stebbins (1997b), including cognitive dissonance (Christie & Mason, 2003; Elliot & Devine, 1994), to feelings of anxiety and complete withdrawal (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Hottola, 2004). These immediate responses precede such more lasting psychological outcomes as satisfaction and dissatisfaction and improved and impaired well-being (Demes & Geeraert, 2014; Ward et al., 2001). Strong negative emotions used to measure threat appraisal are associated with experiencing culture shock and personal crises (Berry 1997; Milstein, 2005; van der Zee and van Oudenhoven 2013). However, whether or a not an individual evaluates an experience as challenging (positive) or threatening (negative), is ultimately influenced by a combination of situational and individual-level factors discussed earlier. Besides positive emotions, other

positive self-related outcomes include increased motivation; involvement (as interest in the pursued activity); and a number of gains related to personal development.

Table 5.1. Tourist experience outcomes.

Register of engagement	Positive	Negative
Self-related	Positive affect (eagerness, exhilaration, happiness, joy, excitement, hopefulness, enthusiasm) Satisfaction Improved psychological well-being Increased motivation Involvement (strengthened interest) Personal development (personal growth, competence-mastery, self-actualisation, improved self-efficacy and self-confidence, self-identity change)	Physical discomfort, harm and loss Emotional discomfort (social awkwardness, confusion, cognitive dissonance) Negative affect (anxiety, fear, anger) Dissatisfaction Reduced psychological well-being Culture shock Identity crisis Perceived or actual harm or loss
Others-related	Place attachment Cross-cultural understanding Culture appreciation Culture involvement (integration and assimilation) Cultural identification	Reinforcement of cultural stereotypes Negative attitudes towards hosts Separation Marginalisation

Others-related outcomes represent positive and negative changes in affective, cognitive (attitudes and values) and behavioural orientations of tourists towards a host culture and were organised according to their complexity. The outcomes commonly mentioned in tourism literature include strong emotional bonding (place attachment); understanding the importance of other cultures and cultural differences (culture appreciation); and reinforcement or resolution of cultural stereotypes and prejudices (cross-cultural understanding). As for culture involvement and culture identification, it must be acknowledged that although tourists may experience changes in their cultural identity and choose to fully adopt foreign behaviours and values, such substantial changes are less likely to occur for two reasons. One is the briefness of culture contact in many instances and the other is the high adaptational difficulty associated with these changes (Osland & Osland, 2005; Stephenson, 2000). That is why in this framework culture involvement is interpreted as active behavioural involvement with another culture, either through independently undertaken activities such as watching documentaries, learning a language or mastering a craft, or participation in organised cultural activities and events. In regard to the four acculturation strategies, although they are more applicable to touristic experiences during

travel, they are relevant to the discussion of the overall experience and communicate different types of culture involvement.

The discourse of “self” versus “others” has been criticised for reinforcing the divide between tourists and hosts instead of bringing them closer together (Robinson, 2013). In this thesis, however, the “positive-negative” and “self-other” dichotomies are important as they highlight critical differences in touristic experiences and their outcomes. First, the framework differentiates between two types of positive evaluations, challenge and benign-positive. Both appraisals characterise a situation or experience as enjoyable and beneficial but only a benign-positive experience requires no coping effort as an individual feels content with the positive outcome, comfortable and relaxed (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). Furthermore, being characterised by relaxation and contentment, benign-positive appraisal shares common characteristics with boredom, when it elicits positive emotions, and to some extent with irrelevant appraisal (Smith & Kirby, 2011). For migrants, benign-positive appraisal is a highly desirable state that leads to smooth adjustment “made with minimal difficulty” (Berry 2006, p. 47). Tourists, however, feel no need to change due to the perceived temporariness of contact, and a benign-positive evaluation of an experience may not necessarily stimulate further interest in the destination and its culture as people feel almost too comfortable. Moreover, as Horvath (2013, p. 390) points out, “too much complexity or not enough content can equally...cause stress and fatigue”. That is when research on challenging experiences can help explain what causes boredom as relaxation, and the stress of both overchallenge and of boredom as unpleasant underchallenge (Matheny et al., 1986). Second, the framework emphasises the interrelatedness of self-related and others-related outcomes and its implications for culture involvement. In particular, it draws attention to how outcomes that develop the “self”, act as antecedents of outcomes related to our relationship with the “other” under the experience of challenge. As mentioned earlier, cultural tourists are motivated by both personal development and host-culture involvement, and an experience of challenge touches on both motivations through its growth-inducing quality. Furthermore, tourism scholars and practitioners should critically consider if tourism is really ever about the “other” and if travel is ultimately a very selfish activity where improved understanding of and relationship with the “other” is a by-product of travel, first and foremost, for understanding the “self”.

5.5. Conclusion

It is important to highlight that the framework proposed in this chapter is not a model of tourist acculturation. Rather, it provides a more differentiated and complete picture on the relationship between challenge and post-travel culture involvement by drawing on the

insights from acculturation, cognitive appraisal and positive psychology, as well as tourism and leisure studies, and the education theory of transformative learning. From the discussion above, challenge emerges as a complex and powerful psychological state that is influenced by a combination of factors and characterises highly personally relevant transformative experiences. While facilitation of challenging experiences may not be the ultimate solution to stimulating tourists' involvement with other cultures when they return home, the literature strongly suggests that it can certainly play a positive role through its association with personal growth.

Besides positive individual-level outcomes for tourists, the proposed relationship has implications of wider socio-cultural nature that extend to both host destinations and the members of their cultures in tourists' home countries. Carefully managed challenging tourist experiences can enhance positive self-related and others-related effects of cultural contact during travel, as well as potentially extend them to the post-travel stage. Interpretation programs oftentimes place emphasis on educating tourists about the meanings and value assigned to cultural objects and practices by the carriers of that culture. The question is how often these programs draw links with the multicultural environments these visitors live in and help them find ways to engage with these cultures outside the cultural attractions and institutions they come to visit occasionally. At the same time, tourism is a pleasure-driven industry, and placing tourists outside of their comfort zone can result in immediate negative reactions, as discussed earlier. Though tourists are generally attracted to exotic cultures and novel experiences (Franklin, 2003), cultural differences have to be carefully managed, even in voluntourism (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Raymond & Hall, 2008).

Nevertheless, the literature on transformative tour guiding and culturally enriching experiences warns against oversimplification and neutralisation of cultural difference (Christie & Mason, 2003). Not only do these goals defeat the overarching purpose of cultural tourism, but the second one is simply unattainable. While in immigration and student sojourn cultural difference can be a hurdle that should be overcome to meet other life goals, in tourism it is often the main attraction point. An understanding of the psychological origins of the challenge construct and the surrounding context of challenging cultural tourism experiences can help ensure a better alignment between tourists' complex needs and motivations, and their experiences. Achievement of this alignment, in turn, can help tourism operators build a reputation as providers of cultural experiences that are not only personally fulfilling but also have positive sociocultural impacts.

Chapter 6 Methodology

6.1. Introduction

Ontological views on reality and epistemological views on how this reality can be understood through research, can help distinguish between different research paradigms as sets of guiding beliefs, and methodologies as sets of procedures for conducting research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These philosophical views explain the diversity of perspectives on a range of methodological issues, including which questions can be asked and what kind of answers can be obtained; population and sample size; application of purposive and theoretical sampling; theory-building and testing; representation and variability; pattern-seeking and generalisation; and causality. This chapter reports a middle-ground approach to addressing these issues that allowed for elements of deductive thinking within a qualitative study, guided by a combination of realist and relativist views. The statement of paradigmatic considerations is followed by three main sections: research context, sampling and data collection, and data analysis. Management of ethical issues is addressed throughout the chapter, rather than in a separate section.

The research context⁵ was purposively narrowed down to Australians who had travelled to a diversity of destinations on small-group cultural tours by Australian outbound tour operators, and Sections 6.3 and 6.4 outline the rationale for these decisions and the sampling process. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of these decisions address the characteristics of the study population, they also determine the overall cultural context of the study. For the most part, the chapter is structured in the order of the decisions made. However, Section 6.4.4 on the approach to interviews was separated from Section 6.4.1 on data collection methods. Interviewer relationship with participants and questions of structure and depth were considered prior to data collection, but rather than simply outlining a plan of action, it was seen as more effective to incorporate insights from what transpired in the interviews. In turn, these reflections were presented as part of the methodology rather than the results and discussion part of the thesis, as the latter already consists of three chapters. Similar blurred boundaries between methodology and results can be observed about the reporting of data analysis.

⁵ An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Butler & Kim (2019). I conducted and analysed the interviews and wrote the first draft that required some conceptual and editing input from both co-authors. My contribution to this publication was 70%.

6.2. Paradigmatic Considerations

As reviewed by Maxwell (2013), the two dominant approaches to research have been underpinned by distinctively different paradigmatic views. One of the two main distinctions between quantitative and qualitative inquiry lies between 'ontological realism' (Maxwell, 2013, p. 43) and ontological relativism (Yin, 2011). Characteristic of positivist and post-positivist thinking is the view that single objective reality exists independently of the research situation and its participants. Ontological relativism, however, shared by interpretivism, critical theory and feminism, implies that there are multiple subjective versions of reality that are both individually and socially constructed. The other distinction deals with the difference in epistemological stances on value-free deductive 'knowledge excavation' by the researcher. Here, the researcher acts as an impartial observer whilst value-laden inductive 'knowledge construction' is initiated by both the researcher and the study participants (Mason, 2002). The third approach, mixed method research, remains a highly debated methodology, particularly in regards to how these paradigmatic views can be merged holistically, as opposed to conducting a study composed of semi-independent stages that reveal their own distinctive quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Bryman, 2006; Creswell, 2008).

Interestingly, however, a number of social science scholars who have fostered discourse on qualitative research, advocate the value of paradigmatic bricolage and combining inductive and deductive thinking within a single qualitative study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Wengraf, 2001; Yin, 2011). These scholars also emphasise the absence of one single 'supertheory' of qualitative research (Maxwell, 2013, p. 43); recognize the viability of a 'middle ground approach'; and highlight distinctive variations in the ontological and epistemological views and research implications of what are commonly known as qualitative research paradigms.

Mason (2002) also cautions against strict adherence to established sets of beliefs and instead encourages a more fluid approach to research that combines literal (realist) and interpretive (relativist) reading of data. In particular, Yin (2011) and Maxwell discuss this issue in relation to the relativist-realist and the inductivist-deductivist continuums. Wengraf (2001, p. 73), similarly to Mason (2002), identifies it as matter of strategy and level, and differentiates between 'top-down deductivists, bottom-up inductivists, and middle-level research question entrists'. Despite being a qualitative researcher, Wengraf (2001, p. 3) describes himself as 'strategically being largely a 'deductivist' or a theoretician while fully appreciating the need for particular moments of inductive working', and Yin (2011, p. 13)

observes that 'most qualitative studies will position themselves along a continuum between these two philosophical extremes' of relativism and realism.

The issue of using inductive or deductive logic is, therefore, interlinked with the issues of theory-building and testing. As the methodological advice reviewed above recommends, existing theories can and should be used in qualitative research. However, engagement must be developed critically and in moderation, leaving room for theory expansion and rectification, so that new insights can be incorporated, and new interpretations of the same phenomena accepted without being deformed or overshadowed by prior knowledge (Maxwell, 2013). The core difference between theory-verification and modification in quantitative and qualitative research is the emergent nature of the latter. As pointed out by Maxwell (2013, p. 29), in qualitative research 'explanation [of reality] is based on an analysis of how some situations and events influence others' based on the information drawn from people's personal accounts of those situations and events'.

Informed by these arguments, as well as by its own research context and objectives, this study adopted a middle-ground approach. Also exhibited by Maxwell (2013) and Miles et al. (2014), the ontological views of the research methodology developed in this study are guided by critical realism of the postpositivist period (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). First, a group tour is a product constructed with certain common aims using a relatively unified process of itinerary development to ensure consistency and maximise efficiency. While this process tries to accommodate for individual differences between tourists and for their preferences by offering optional activities and leisure time for independent exploration, it is sold as a final structured product. It was, therefore, anticipated, that this context was likely to determine a degree of similarity in responses, particularly among the tourists travelling on the same tours. Second, despite the gaps in the tourism literature, the phenomenon of challenge has been well-researched in cognitive appraisal psychology, as has been motivation and psychological involvement across tourism, leisure, and psychology studies. Therefore, the objectively established characteristics of challenge as a well-researched psychological state; coping strategies; known motivational factors; and antecedents of psychological involvement could not be overlooked in the process of analysis. As noted by Miles et al. (2014, p. 7), 'some reasonably stable relationships can be found among the idiosyncratic messiness of life'.

Its epistemological position presents a bricolage of interpretivist, constructivist and realist perspectives, aligned with a largely exploratory nature of the study and its interest in personal relevance of foreign cultural realities; subjective experiences of small-group cultural travel and meanings assigned to them; experience context (including external demands);

and post-travel culture involvement choices. It acknowledges that what 'people perceive and believe is shaped by their assumptions and prior experiences as well as by the reality that they interact with' (Maxwell, 2013, p. 43), including the research situation. However, it prioritises reporting of participants' meanings and experiences over extensive critical analysis of the sociocultural structures which may have pre-determined their responses (Mura & Sharif, 2017) and assigns greater trust in the language used by the participants to communicate their experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

6.3. Research Context

6.3.1. Small-Group Cultural Tours from Australia

As suggested by the literature review, opportunities for cultural immersion and transformative learning are key pre-conditions of challenging group tour experiences and potentially post-travel culture involvement. Among different types of packaged holidays, fully escorted, leisure-only tours, comprised of small-groups and travelling to one destination with a focus on its culture were anticipated as more likely to offer an environment conducive to more intimate contact with local people and their culture and to one-on-one group discussions and critical reflection facilitated by expert guides. While these selection criteria narrowed down the scope of the study, the target sample of tour operators and tours was expected to provide the context that would 'yield the most relevant and plentiful data' (Yin, 2011, p. 88) for answering the research questions' about challenge and post-travel culture involvement in the context of group travel. As for the cultural focus, for the purpose of this study, cultural tours were defined as tours where host-culture involvement, including engaging with and learning about other people and their culture, past and present, is central to the tour experience, and pursuits of other activity are of equal or lesser importance. This definition draws on the understanding of culture and cultural tourism which advocates 'breaking down of barriers between culture and society, art and life, high and low culture' (Smith, 2016, p. 6). Although a definition was developed, the study acknowledges that tourists can play an active role in co-construction and co-creation of their experiences (Jonasson & Scherle, 2012; Richards & Wilson, 2006) and that actual lived touristic experiences are likely to give a more accurate picture of how cultural a given tour program can be than how they are promoted.

In regards to the wording of the definition, the verbs 'to engage' and 'to learn' were chosen purposefully over some of the other verbs used in existing definitions. 'Learning' reflects a commonly accepted understanding of what drives cultural tourism (Ivanovic, 2008; Richards, 2007), and the verb 'engage' means 'to be doing or become involved' (Engage, 2005) and is

consistent with the interest of this study in involvement. Engaging also has a broader meaning than 'interacting' and allows room for learning that can occur through observation (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). As defined by Smith (2009, p. 23), cultural tourism is about 'passive, active and interactive engagement with culture(s) and communities, whereby the visitor gains new experiences of an educational, creative, and/or entertaining value'. Finally, to say that culture involvement is about 'experiencing' is also problematic because it can be interpreted in different ways. In response to these considerations, the definition of cultural tours used in this study intends to communicate the mixed nature of motivation for cultural travel but also to emphasise centrality of contact with local communities on multiple levels. As noted by Richards (2001a, p. 7), 'Littrell (1997) argues that culture can be viewed as comprising what people think (attitudes, beliefs, ideas and values), what people do (normative behaviour patterns or way of life) and what people make (artworks, artefacts, cultural products)'.

This interest is what distinguishes cultural tours from wildlife safaris and nature-focused tours (Smith, 2009). The emphasis on learning about others differentiates cultural tours from seaside tourism, motivated mainly by relaxation and entertainment (Aguiló et al., 2005), as well as health and wellness and spiritual retreats characterised by the pursuit of solitude and focus on the self rather than active exploration of the outside world (Kelly, 2012; Smith, 2013). As for the ratio of work (paid and unpaid) and pleasure (Brown, 2005), this study was interested in tours that involve no work component at all, which also excludes volunteer vacations (Brown, 2005; Novelli, 2005).

Australian operators who design their own tours (not buying packages from wholesalers) and Australian nationals were chosen as the target population in order to control for cultural differences among the study participants. As discussed throughout the literature review, tourists' cultural background is an important factor influencing their relationship with challenge and culture involvement (Demes & Geeraert, 2014; Enoch, 1996; Kende et al., 2018; Lee & Wilkins, 2017; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; Moufakkir, 2011). However, it adds an additional layer of variability to tourist experience research and requires larger samples. Given the qualitative nature of the study, it was decided to gain a deeper insight into the perspective of tourists of one nationality (Australian) while sampling a diversity of tours and destinations, as explained further in the chapter. Here it is important to add that researching Australian tourists comes with its own layer of complexity due to the highly multicultural composition of the Australian society (ABS, 2017a).

Considering the exploratory nature of this study and its interest in multiple interpretations of the same phenomena by different people, the only other individual-level selection criteria

applied to tourists were age (over 18), the screening question about the significance of cultural difference they had experienced, and the time of travel. All potential participants were required to have completed their travels 3 -12 months prior to engagement with the researcher. At the start of tour operator recruitment, a minimum of 6 months was allowed to elapse before the interviews took place. However, once the companies had been recruited, the lower limit was adjusted to 3 months. Both timeframes were viewed as allowing a reasonable amount of time for tourists to return to their normal routine and to enable a discussion of frequency of behavioural involvement. The maximum of 12 months was set for practical and ethical considerations, and to maintain a degree of consistency in terms of elapsed time after travel.

6.3.2. Australian Outbound Tourism Trends

Australians' 'penchant for travel overseas' (Salt, 2016, p. 1) has been explained by Australia's British heritage and the allure of Europe as the old world (White, 2014); its multicultural composition, and particularly long and complex history of Australia's neighbouring relations with Asia (Noble & Ang, 2018; Sobocinska, 2014); and their 'venturesome' character (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006, p. 221). Between 2015 and 2017, around 5.5 million Australians holidayed overseas each year. Although the numbers vary slightly between different sources produced by Tourism Research Australia (TRA, 2016, 2017a, 2017c), overall, they display a modest but steady growth in total resident departures. In 2017, out of the total 10.5 million Australians who travelled overseas, 53% went on a holiday and 28% to visit friends and family (Australian Federation of Travel Agents [AFTA], 2017). The top 10 international destinations visited by Australians in 2015-2017 were New Zealand, Indonesia, the USA, the UK, Thailand, China, Singapore, Japan, Fiji and India (ABS, 2016b; AFTA, 2017). According to the ABS (2016b) data, New Zealand retained its first position since 2006 while visits to Indonesia increased by 5.5 times, taking it from the 8th to the 2nd place, ahead of the continuously popular USA, UK, and Thailand. However, as Table 6.1 shows, when only those who travelled on a holiday are considered, to the exclusion of VFR (visiting friends and relatives), business and other travellers, the numbers present a different perspective. The table contains an expanded list of destinations from a different data set that includes other European countries, the Middle East and Africa, and covers a 3-year period between the time of travel of the participants in this study (2015-2016) and the data release for the year ending June 2017. Firstly, the order of the top five destinations changes to Indonesia, the USA, New Zealand, Thailand and the UK for 2015-2016, with the UK moving to the 7th position in 2017, behind the increasingly popular Thailand, Japan and Fiji. Secondly, China moved from 6th place, when all overseas trips are

considered, to 12th behind Italy and France in 2015; then to the 10th in 2016; and fell behind Italy again in 2017. As for India, out of the 20 countries presented in Table 6.1, it is found in the bottom five. This contrast between the lists based on total numbers and holiday trips only is explained by the significantly larger numbers of VFR, business and other travellers, and is an expected effect of increased immigration discussed later in this section (Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015). In the case of China, the latter were consistently 2-2.5 times more than the number of people travelling for the purpose of holiday alone.

Table 6.1. Australian residents' outbound trips to top 20 destinations for holiday purpose in 2015-2017.

Destination	Year ending	Destination	Year ending	Destination	Year ending
	June 2015 (000)		June 2016 (000)		June 2017 (000)
Indonesia	810	Indonesia	825	Indonesia	889
USA	554	USA	598	USA	578
New Zealand	507	New Zealand	538	New Zealand	577
Thailand	395	Thailand	396	Thailand	384
UK	211	UK	249	Japan	257
Fiji	205	Japan	233	Fiji	219
Singapore	175	Fiji	207	UK	216
Japan	173	Singapore	154	Singapore	176
Vietnam	148	Vietnam	154	Vietnam	168
Italy	134	China	134	Italy	141
France	107	Italy	126	China	125
China	109	France	102	Malaysia	96
Malaysia	100	Malaysia	95	France	86
Hong Kong	95	ME and NA*	77	Canada	87
ME and NA	86	Canada	72	Hong Kong	73
Canada	67	Hong Kong	70	India	71
India	49	Philippines	69	Philippines	60
Philippines	58	India	68	ME and NA	53
Germany	45	Germany	40	Germany	44
South Africa	27	South Africa	27	South Africa	24

Source: National Visitor Survey (TRA, 2017b)

* ME (Middle East) and NA (North Africa)

To a degree, these results are consistent with the findings of the *Seniors Travel Survey* (STV), commissioned by the Australian Seniors Insurance Agency (Core Data, 2016), which sampled 1200 participants and compared the results between senior respondents aged 50+

and younger travellers under 35 years of age. In response to the question 'What would be your specific dream holiday destination?' by specific country, the majority of participants in both groups (seniors and millennials) selected the US (51.7% and 51.6%) and Canada (37.9% and 19.4%) in North America; and the UK (27.9% and 21.3%) and Italy (15.9% and 19.7%) in Europe (Core Data, 2016). For the Pacific (including NZ), Southeast Asia (including Thailand and Indonesia) and Northern Asia (including Japan and China) regions the report provided information only about senior Australians who favoured NZ, Fiji, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Russia, and China above others.

The consistent popularity of New Zealand, the USA, the UK, Indonesia, and Thailand is perhaps unsurprising due to their association with migrant populations living in Australia (Sobocinska, 2011). According to the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016a), England and New Zealand remain the most common countries of birth, with English, Scottish and Irish ancestries also as the most common after Australia. To the exception of family ties, the attraction of the first three destinations can be explained by cultural similarities that make travelling there easier (Ng et al., 2007). Reisinger and Mavondo (2006, p. 18), for example, excluded New Zealand from their cross-cultural study on risk perceptions all together, explaining that '[t]he responses obtained from New Zealand tourists could be quite similar to Australians'. Noble and Ange (2018, pp. 298-299) also note that the 'British-derived culture' continues to be a dominant form in Australia, and that the US and the UK are 'the two most globalized sources of English-speaking cultural content'. As for Indonesia and Thailand, their geographical proximity, affordability and developed tourism infrastructure explain their continuous attractiveness for the Australian market seeking rest and relaxation while also experiencing something culturally different (Sobocinska, 2014). Walker and Sobocinska (2012, p. 14) note that 'in recent years the holiday to Asia has become so common as to qualify as a shared national experience'. Sobocinska (2011, p. 204) draws attention to the fact that the competition between Indonesia and New Zealand to be Australia's most popular travel destination has continued for over two decades, and TRA (2017a) predict this to continue into the 2020s.

As for the remaining destinations on the list and those absent from it, it is important to view their performance relative to the visitation to whole regions. In addition to the visitation by country, the National Visitor Survey (NVS) data includes aggregated results for other countries in each of the main geographical regions visited by Australians but with visitation too low to be acknowledged on the list individually (see Table 6.2 below). When these numbers are combined with the results listed in Table 6.1, four main regions emerge (Table 6.3): Asia, consisting of Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia,

Philippines), East Asia (Japan, China, Hong Kong), South Asia (India), and Other Asia; The Pacific/Oceania (including Fiji and NZ); Europe (including the UK); and North America (the USA and Canada).

Table 6.2. Australian residents' outbound trips to less popular destinations by region in 2015-2017.

Region	Year ending June 2015 (000)	Year ending June 2016 (000)	Year ending June 2017 (000)
Other Pacific excluding Hawaii	186	173	177
Other Europe	275	275	315
Other Asia	145	161	186
Other Americas	78	65	73
Other Africa	26	23	31

Source: National Visitor Survey (TRA, 2017b)

The Middle East (ME) and North Africa (NA), followed by Other Americas, and Africa, continue to receive comparatively few Australians, and this is also reflected in the *STV* survey findings (Core Data, 2016). The survey found that very few seniors and slightly more younger travellers envisaged to have their next holiday in those bottom three regions if they could travel wherever they wanted. Compared to Europe, which was nominated by 34% of senior and 30.5% of younger respondents, Africa was mentioned by 2.6% and 2.5%, Central/Latin America by 0.8% and 0.5%, and the ME by 0.4% and 0.5%. In the *NVS*, the corresponding percentages without the age breakdown were 1.1% for Other Africa, 1.6% for Other Americas, and 1.8% for the combined ME and NA. According to the World Bank (2018), the MENA region consists of 19 countries, including Egypt, Morocco, Turkey and Iran, but neither the *NVS* nor the *STV* survey name the destinations they included in their data collection. Moreover, the *STV* report also provides no information about whether or not they asked their participants about individual destinations and then reported on aggregated data, as done by the *NVS*. Therefore, the data collected in both surveys is not fully comparable, but the percentages for the compared regions are still noticeably low in both studies.

Although the *STV* survey found that Australians are generally 'undeterred by bad experiences' (Core Data, 2016, p. 2), security was the main concern for the greater majority of the study participants, with war, terrorism and political issues strongly influencing their decision to travel not only to the ME (including Turkey), but also to Europe, regardless of

age. The statistics in Table 6.3 demonstrate, however, that travel to the ME and NA declined significantly by June 2017.

Table 6.3. Australian residents' outbound trips by region in 2015-2017.

Destination	Year ending	Year ending	Year ending
	June 2015 (000)	June 2016 (000)	June 2017 (000)
Southeast Asia	1694	1702	1782
East Asia	377	437	455
South Asia (India)	49	68	71
Other Asia	145	161	186
The Pacific/Oceania	898	928	973
Europe	772	792	802
North America	621	670	665
ME and North Africa	86	77	53
Other Americas	78	65	73
Africa	53	50	55
Total	4773	4950	5115

The visitation to these two regions from Australia has remained considerably low over the past decade compared to the top 10 destinations, as they continue to be perceived as high risk (Brown & Osman, 2017; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006; Sharifpour et al., 2014). Commenting on perceived cultural risks in the ME, Sharifpour et al. (2014, p. 113) note that ‘the region is commonly known as a Muslim state where the lives of women remain restricted and the compatibility between the needs of the hedonistic westernized tourist and Islamic way of life is minimal’. Similar observations are shared by Brown and Osman (2017) on the experiences of female tourists in Egypt, although the authors also acknowledge the diversity among Islamic countries and call for more research in this area. Furthermore, secular Western societies where religion is separate from government have difficulty accepting that ‘this duality is not universal’, and that in Islamic states the word of Qur’an, the holy book of Islam, governs all spheres of life (Jafari & Scott, 2014, p. 4). Still, despite the actual and perceived risks and disagreements, the ME and NA saw a steady increase in arrivals from 45,000 in 2006 to 83,000 in 2010, which dropped slightly for a short while and peaked again at 80,000 in 2013, reaching the highest point in 2015, only to decline significantly by mid-2017 (TRA, 2017b). The positive international tourism growth projections in these regions provided by UNWTO (2015, February, 5) were conditional upon ‘peace and stability’ which were significantly disturbed by a chain of events in Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia and Europe in late 2015-2016 (Sophia, 2017, May, 3).

Australians, both young and old, continue to seek unique and exciting, culturally rich and physically active tourist experiences (Core Data, 2016; Bauer, 2012; Kay, 2009; Patterson & Pan, 2007; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006; Sobocinska, 2014). As concluded by ASIA (2017, para. 13), 'while separated by generations, technology gaps and a lifetime of experiences, this study concludes that no matter the age, we are all very similar when it comes to living life to the fullest'. However, the relationship of Australians with the notions of adventure and challenge still remains unclear, particularly where intercultural contact is concerned. On the one hand, there is evidence demonstrating that Australian tourists of all ages are interested not only in challenging themselves physically but also in learning about other cultures. On the other hand, the literature shows that the place of cultural adventure in the travel motivations of Australians requires more empirical research. Reisingner and Mavondo (2006, pp. 25-26) found that the young Australians who they surveyed several years after the 2002 Bali bombings, 'felt less safe, were more anxious and reluctant to travel' than the UK tourists who appeared to be the least concerned with cultural, health and political risks, in comparison to the Australian, Hong Kong, American and Canadian tourists. Given that majority of Australian tourists continue showing a preference for 'kinship' and beach holiday destinations, questions arise about the motivational and experiential scope of 'the positioning of tourism as 'quintessentially Australian'' (Sobocinska 2011, p. 2015). To better understand the interest of Australians in cultural experiences overseas and in post-travel culture involvement after travel, it can, therefore, be helpful to know their relationship with culture consumption at home.

6.3.3. Cultural Participation in Australia

Australia has been described as 'a creative nation' in the *Connecting Australians* report by the Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council, 2017, p. 9). The report outlines the results of the third NAP survey, introduced in Chapter 1, on Australians' attitudes to and engagement with the following cultural domains: music, reading books, and live events (music, dance and theatre, visual arts and crafts, festivals, First Nations Arts, literary events). Adopting this broad definition of the arts and drawing on a representative sample of 7,537 participations, it revealed that out of 23.4 millions in 2016 (ABS, 2016a), '17 million Australians acknowledged the significant positive impacts of the arts' (Australia Council, 2017, p. 10) and 57% believed that 'the arts shape and express Australian identity' (Australia Council, 2017, p. 12).

The results also revealed that narrow understanding of the arts as only 'high arts' like opera and ballet, to the exclusion of reading, listening to recorded music and practicing a craft, acts as a barrier to cultural participation all together. In addition, the survey findings remind of

Bourdieu's (1984) observation that the restricted accessibility of the knowledge required to understand, appreciate and express taste for art can function as a filter of social distinction, separating those more privileged who were able to access the additional education required from those less fortunate. This is why the reading of creative writing and listening to music require special acknowledgement as the most accessible and the most popular domains of culture among 97% and 79% of Australians aged 15 and above (Australia Council, 2017).

The national results for the domains more commonly accepted as art forms showed that in 2016 with live music engaged 54% of Australians; 46% participated in visual arts and crafts; 45% in arts festivals; 41% in theatre; 35% in First Nations Arts; 32% in dance; and 21% in literary events. Regarding the differences in participation by socio-demographic characteristics, the survey found that young Australians under 35 years were the most engaged, and that participation decreases with age. Classical music was found more popular among older Australians aged 65 and over, while contemporary culture was found to be of higher interest to the under 35s. The survey also showed that arts attendance across the sample was higher than creative participation, with 80% and 61% of young Australians respectively, and 66% and 37% of those aged 45 and over. As for gender, no significant differences were found in the attitudes to the arts, arts attendance and overall creative participation in the arts, but some variation was found by specific art forms. In particular, females were found 'more likely to creatively participate in visual arts and craft (34%) than males (26%)' (Australia Council, 2017, p. 70).

Another large-scale study on cultural consumption patterns in Australia, *Australian Cultural Fields: National and Transnational Dynamics* was undertaken between 2014 and 2016, with research findings published in Kelly et al. (2018), Noble and Ang (2018), Waterton and Gayo (2018), Bennett, Gayo, and Rowe (2018), Dibley and Gayo (2018), Gayo and Rowe (2018), and Bennett and Gayo (2016). The survey measured cultural knowledge, taste and participation as elements of cultural capital in 'six fields of cultural practice – television, sport, music, heritage, visual arts and literature ... with 1461 people, including ... ethno-specific 'boost' samples of 50–60 respondents each of Italian, Lebanese, Chinese and Indian heritage, and a 'boost' sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' (Noble & Ang, 2018, p. 296). The research was informed by the work of Bourdieu (1984) and Bennett and colleagues (Bennett, Frow, & Emmison, 1999; Bennett et al., 2009) on the relationship between culture and class. The project 'sought to address the distinctive socio-cultural coordinates of a settler-colonial society with an Indigenous population asserting an increasingly strong cultural presence, and a large and growing multicultural population with a rapidly changing composition' (Rowe & Bennett, 2018, p. 123). Observations from the

Australian Cultural Fields (ACF) project support the NAP survey results, while others differ quite substantially under its more granular approach to participant segmentation. Together, however, they provide a comprehensive picture of cultural participation in Australia today. The ACF publications also refer to other surveys conducted in Australia, but given their limitations highlighted in the aforementioned publications and the limited space for their discussion here, they were excluded from this review.

Focusing on visual art (painting) genres, Bennet and Gayo (2016, p. 16) note that differences in participation (attendance/visitation) levels and aesthetic preferences are predicated by age, education (level and discipline), occupational class (degree of routine, level of managerial responsibility, owner/employee, professional/technical) and ‘the acquisition of competencies pertinent to the art field’. The paper reaffirms the existence of similarities between men’s and women’s tastes and discusses how age distinctions are particularly pronounced when preferences for traditional and contemporary art are concerned. However, the study results also show variation in preferences among Australians aged 55-64, and 65 and above, as both demographic groups included respondents interested in traditional art only, and a mix of traditional and contemporary art, with varying levels of interest.

The ACF survey results on the music field in Australia also align with NAP survey findings about the popularity of music among Australians, although revealing a higher percentage (35%) of people with very little interest in music (Dibley & Gayo, 2018). The results showed a very similar grouping of preferences for contemporary and classical genres by age and education, as well as education and residence to the visual arts field. The similarity is consistent with Bourdieu’s (1984, p. 14) comment about the strong correlation between ‘listening to records...visiting art-galleries, and knowledge of painting’, and the polarizing nature of engagement with music as simultaneously the most and the least accessible field (Bennet et al., 1999). The cluster with the most diverse (inclusive) tastes was represented by 16.47% of Australians aged 55-64, with ‘tertiary education, including postgraduate, and in professional roles’ (Dibley & Gayo, 2018, p.156).

Waterton and Gayo’s (2018) heritage study also supports the broader understanding of culture and the growing interest of cultural consumers of all ages in everyday life, as discussed in Chapter 2. In particular, the authors draw attention to 21.1% of predominantly female respondents aged 45-54, and 65 and over, with higher education and holding unspecified intermediate positions. This cluster showed deep interest in personal heritage, ‘pointed to a sense of the past that is rooted and significant in everyday life – memories, objects and places that are not always recognized as heritage because they lack the status

as such attributed by professional or expert power' (Waterton & Gayo, 2018, p. 269). In addition, 'educated professionals in their mid-30s and 40s' (Waterson & Gayo, 2018, p. 280) were found to be the most interested in local, national and particularly international heritage, including migrant heritage liked by only 4% of all respondents in the study, compared to 42% interested in Australia's national heritage.

Kelly et al. (2018) examined book reading as part of book culture and in relation to several reading-related practices, including owning books at home and following book discussions online. Their findings help clarify the results of the NAP survey (Australia Council, 2017) that measured only the fact of reading and only creative writing. This difference in the examined intensity of involvement, as noted by the authors, explains why the percentage of non-readers found by the ACF survey (39%) was considerably higher than in the NAP report (21%). The paper concludes that Australia has a reading class that is typically 'educated, affluent, white, middle aged and tilted toward women' (p. 283) and residing predominantly in metropolitan areas. The authors are also more cautious than Australia Council (2017) about assigning too much value to the practice of reading. Noting that not everyone reads for 'accumulation or exercise of cultural capital' (Kelly et al., 2018, p. 293), they raise concerns that the popularity of reading is being increasingly driven by the social distinction carried by the activity itself rather than by what is read. A similar view on cultural participation more broadly is shared by Prieur and Savage (2015, p. 316) who propose that the mode of consumption, that is *how* culture is consumed, is starting to matter more in class hierarchies than the object of consumption. To this they add that 'the knowing mode of cultural appreciation, the cosmopolitan orientation and 'busyness'' (Prieur & Savage, 2015, p. 316) – in other words, having conversational competence; aligning one's leisure and political interests more closely with other countries and cultures; and looking busy (having little free time) - is a form of emerging cultural capital used by the educated middle class and the elite to differentiate themselves from those with presumably lower cultural capital.

Food experiences are another major aspect of cultural life in Australia (Bonner, 2015; Collins, 2015), even though they were not analysed in surveys reviewed above. Food is a matter of taste (Bourdieu, 1984; Di Giovine & Brulotte, 2014); a source of sustenance and sensory pleasure (Pan & Ryan, 2009); and a social lubricant (Di Giovine & Brulotte, 2014); source of adventure (Bauer, 2012; Reisinger, 2013a); and a marker of social status (Bonner, 2015; Bourdieu, 1984). Both abroad and at home, tourists engage with food through culinary tours, cooking classes and tastings (Junker, 2015, May 31; On the Go Tours, 2018c); markets, festivals and fairs (Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; Savinovic et al., 2012); and other

activities. At home, they also watch and participate in cooking shows, read cookbooks and magazines, and, of course, apply the knowledge and test their skills (Bonner, 2015).

Australians are no exception, being highly attracted to food experiences overseas (Core Data, 2016) and at home (Gross & Brown, 2008; Savinovic et al., 2012), with Australia internationally recognised as a food tourism destination (Pforr & Phau, 2018). Food as a cultural field is also a window to regional histories and cultural identities (Grasseni, 2014; Kim & Iwashita, 2016), and Australia continues to foster a long history of European and Asian food influences (Bonner, 2015; Collins, 2015) with a number of restaurants and shops from many other countries (Noble & Ang, 2018). Where the analysis of food practices as forms of cultural participation in multicultural states such as Australia becomes more complicated is when contact with international cuisines is also acknowledged as an ordinary part of everyday life. As Bonner (2015, p. 112) notes, 'the takeup of the [cultural] knowledge', as well as the 'goods provided: the extent to which everyday multiculturalism is enacted in Australian shops, kitchens and dining spaces where food is shared' remains to be investigated.

The literature reviewed so far has revealed that in addition to age, education, and class, an interest in cultural participation can also be partly explained by gender and place of residence. It also shows that some factors have stronger influence on participation in certain cultural fields than in others, and what is a source of distinction for some is a participation deterrent for others. Here, it is relevant to mention that despite the increased accessibility of cultural content enabled by digitalisation of production and consumption channels, the cost of participation is still part of the equation. Growing economic inequality and class differentiation affecting cultural engagement in Australia have been mentioned in both the *Mapping Social Cohesion* (MSC) (Markus, 2017) and *Connecting Australia* (Australia Council, 2017) reports, and closely examined in the ACF publications. On one hand, local and international travel is relatively affordable for Australians due to strong Australian economy, availability of different travel options and low-cost airfares (ASIA, 2016 December). On the other hand, Bennett et al. (1999) found that in Australia tertiary education and professional occupation were strong determinants of preference for international travel. A decade later, White (2014, p. 1) observes that 'the capacity and desire to travel have long depended on class identities, and the travel experience is still a marker of social status'.

In addition to these socio-demographic factors, both the ACF and the NAP surveys paid close attention to the role of ethnicity in cultural participation, given Australia's unique multicultural composition. As reviewed earlier in Chapter 2, discussions of ethnicity give rise

to complex sensitive questions about identity and ownership, explaining why the ABS (2016c) does not offer a single definition of ethnicity informing its census survey. Instead, it provides a brief overview of existing definitions and summarises multiple indicators of ethnicity, including those used in the census (ancestry, country of birth, country of parents' birth, language spoken at home, and religious affiliation). It also emphasises the importance of self-perception as far as ethnic identification is concerned. Ethnic membership is also often determined on 'the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry' (Beer, 2009, p. 4), or heritage, as in the case of the ACF project (Noble & Ang, 2018). The NAP report avoids this term all together, differentiating between the 'respondents from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds' (Australia Council, 2017, p. 14) and mainstream Anglo-Celtic Australians. A critique of this particular approach can be found in Beer's (2009) study who argues, drawing on the case of food culture in Great Britain, that distinctive ethnic groups can also be found among mainstream white English-speaking populations. However, as the literature shows, applying such a division to Australia is not unfounded. In addition to the differences in cultural participation by CALD backgrounds pointed out in Chapter 1, the report supports Austin and Fozdar's (2018) observations that an increasing number of Anglo-Australians are experiencing a cultural identity crisis (Australia Council, 2017). It is, therefore, not surprising to also discover that 'for those not identifying as CALD, there may be less likelihood of identifying mainstream cultural offerings as reflecting Anglo-Celtic roots (Australia Council, 2017, p. 49).

Furthermore, both academic and industry sources describe Australia's relationship with multiculturalism, immigration, and cultural diversity as volatile, particularly in the last 30 years, and influenced by economic concerns about threats to employment and economic contribution (Austin & Fozdar, 2018). Another important factor has been 'the political prominence' of immigration issues (Markus, 2017, p. 46). Less than 100 years ago Australia was governed by the policy of increasing the population of white British Australians, echoed in the Howard's government (1996-2007) nostalgia for Australia's colonial past under the British rule (Austin & Fozdar, 2018). In more recent times, the emphasis on 'Judeo-Christian ethics, a British political heritage ... the spirit of European Enlightenment (and) Distinct Irish and non-conformist attitudes' has been found not only in the *Becoming an Australian Citizen* booklet, as cited by Chisari (2015, p. 577), but also in the recommendations for the Australian Curriculum (Peterson & Bentley, 2016). Yet, little attention is given to teaching world history, and stronger emphasis is placed on teacher involvement in preventing student radicalisation rather than educating both the students and the teachers about world religions (Peterson & Bentley, 2016).

To conclude, the combined insights on cultural participation and cultural diversity in Australia call for involvement in effective management of these complex issues not only of the government and cultural institutions but a wider group of stakeholders, including tourism businesses. They also highlight the importance of considering what tourists are like in everyday life at home for understanding their behaviour during travel (Lean, 2012; Robinson, 2012).

6.4. Sampling and Data Collection

6.4.1. Methods

6.4.1.1. Semi-structured Interview

The main types of data collection methods used in qualitative research include interviews (one-on-one and group), observations, and document analysis. They can also be accompanied by short pre-interview questionnaires to save interview time on collecting demographic data (Wengraf, 2001). In this study, voice-recorded semi-structured in-depth interview was adopted as the main method of data collection, with a brief supplementary questionnaire-type form used prior to interviews, as explained later in this section. The reasoning behind this was due to three considerations: ontological interest in participants' experiences, behaviours, interpretations, meanings, perspectives, and feelings; epistemological approach to understanding these elements of the participants' reality through live interaction; and the retrospective nature of data collection.

Field observations excluding, recollections of past experiences and accounts of current activity can be obtained from written self-reports (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988b), interviews as conversations (Grabowski, 2013) and travel blogs (Bosangit, et al., 2015). In stress, appraisal and coping literature, participant-written self-reports of past experiences are an accepted data collection method (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988a, 1988b). As Frijda (1993, p. 382) notes, 'self-report is valuable in providing access to the cognitive content of emotional experience, and thereby provides cues to what differentiates one type of emotional experience from another'.

However, the fixed nature of written responses and the absence of paralinguistic cues increase the researcher's reliance on assumptions and make it more difficult to validate their inferences (Flick, 2009). Interviews, on the contrary, can engage participants in the process of immediate questioning of this evidence and the testing of the researcher's own assumptions. Unlike written statements, including travel blogs, interviews as 'conversations with a purpose' (Mason, 2002, p. 62) also provide an opportunity to ask follow up and

clarification questions not only about pre-planned concepts but also about those that would not seem relevant at the time a study was designed. Furthermore, interviews can help learn more about the participants themselves, contributing to more thorough, nuanced and balanced understanding of their subjective experiences (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). As for focus groups, this method was not appropriate for this study. The uniqueness of each experience was anticipated to require personalised attention from the interviewer to each participant, which group discussions tend to limit due to active interaction between participants (Finch, Lewis, & Turley, 2014).

In regards to the mode of interviewing, participants were offered three options: face-to-face, phone, and synchronous online interviews via Skype (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014), depending on where they were located (interstate or in Adelaide) and their preferences for using video or not. It is commonly argued that phone interviews can be as more difficult to conduct effectively compared to face-to-face conversations due to the absence of body language cues (Wengraf, 2001). At the same time, phone interviews still contain a number of vocal paralinguistics that can help strengthen the inferences made about the truthfulness and other meaning of participants' responses (Flick, 2009).

The choice of semi-structured interviews as a data collection method for this study also comes with two significant validity challenges, but its strengths help mitigate its weaknesses. The two interrelated issues are the accuracy of recall during retrospective data collection and reappraisal of past events. With time, not only can it become difficult to recall factual information about a trip, both semantic memories about places and times (Tung, Lin, Qiu Zhang, & Zhao, 2017) and episodic memories of internal events, that is past emotions and cognitive elaborations on those emotions, can transform. This perspective on memory as dynamic and ever-changing, rather than a static depository, is reflected in the understanding of appraisal as a process and in the concept of reappraisal, as discussed earlier. Memories of past experiences can be re-evaluated (re-appraised) under the influence of new life events and information, as well as 'through narration' (Cutler, Doherty, & Carmichael, 2016, p. 134), and are, therefore, not simply recalled but constructed in the process of sharing them with others (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010).

To address the issue of reappraisal and capture possible changes in tourists' cognitive evaluations of their experiences, a longitudinal study design was initially considered to collect tourists' responses immediately after travel and several months later. Longitudinal research involves data collection at a minimum of two different time points in order to identify any change in participant response (Crossley, 2012b; Ritchie, 2004), but this design could not be implemented, as it was declined by tour companies. The primary reasons for this

rejection were time constraints and the potential negative impact of the methodology on tour operators' own customer feedback collection methods. The interview situation itself, however, offers a favourable ground for learning how a particular reaction reported by a participant emerged and developed, and whether or not it resulted in a gradual reappraisal of the associated event (Buckley, 2016; Tung et al., 2017). Furthermore, empirical tourism and psychology research shows that self-reported memories are, in fact, a very informative data source, particularly where emotion-rich novel leisure experiences are concerned (Buckley, 2016; Kim et al., 2012; Kirillova et al., 2017; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). As reviewed by Kim et al. (2012), memorability of life events improves with such cognitive evaluations as meaningfulness and challenge.

6.4.1.2. Questionnaire

Motivation

The questionnaire-type form included five questions on tourists' individual characteristics: one multiple choice question on travel motivation; two questions on previous travel experience (PTE); and two socio-demographic questions on age and education (Appendix A). The importance of these characteristics was discussed in previous chapters. As for the choice of method, it was influenced by two considerations. Firstly, the form was introduced to reduce the burden of interview participation on the interviewees by offering them to answer these questions electronically prior to the interview at their own convenience. Secondly, as discussed in the literature review, tourists are motivated by a range of motives, but not all of them can always be mentioned in an interview due to time constraints and problems with recall. Furthermore, the literature emphasises the importance of alignment between applying effort and goal relevance and congruence for an experience to be perceived as challenging (Lazarus, 1990). Therefore, to examine this alignment, a more nuanced understanding of tourist motivation was required.

The motivation question included only the most relevant factors and items to cultural tourism and this study. The specific motivation items representing novelty, entertainment, culture learning (education), personal development, sightseeing, escape and relationship-seeking were borrowed from the Travel Career Patterns (TCP) Scale by Pearce and Lee (2005). Unlike the earlier model of Travel Career Ladder, the TCP theory is non-hierarchical and has been acknowledged for 'considering the totality of a traveller's motives' (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 271) and substantial empirical support (Falk et al., 2012; Panchal & Pearce, 2011; Zhang & Peng, 2014).

Besides its comprehensiveness and multi-item factor structure, the TCP scale is particularly valuable to this study for two other reasons. Firstly, it conceptualises personal development and host-site involvement, also known as culture learning, as dimensions of self-development, and, therefore, suggests the link between these two motives and communicates the complexity of self-development. Secondly, it emphasises behavioural outcomes. Push factors are particularly important for understanding the desire to travel, and the TCP scale incorporates such important push factors as personal development and self-actualization which are particularly relevant to challenging experiences.

To manage the length of the questionnaire, some items under the 'stimulation' and 'relationship' factors were excluded due to redundancy in meaning. The 'experiencing thrills' motive was removed due to the association of 'thrill' with 'excitement' (Thrill, 2005), also an indicator of challenge appraisal (Ferguson, Matthews, & Cox, 1999; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), already found in another item. The items 'exploring the unknown' and 'being spontaneous' were also taken out as they had the lowest factor loadings, significantly lower than the other items. Although the loadings were significant enough (0.53 and 0.50) to be retained in the scale (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), the items were least prominent in the factor structure. Another indicator, 'experiencing the risks involved' was excluded, as the meaning of taking risk is implied in the motive 'having daring/adventuresome experience'. The adjectives 'daring' and 'adventuresome', however, imply different degrees of risk. The first one can be interpreted as 'involving a lot of risks or danger' (Daring, 2005), while the second one can be associated with more (harder) and less (softer) riskier experiences (Williams & Soutar, 2005). To reflect these important differences in meaning, the respective item was split into two motives, and the item on risk was removed.

Out of the two relationship factors, only 'relationship (strengthen)' was partially kept. Despite its popularity in tourism (Huang & Hsu, 2009), one of the limitations of Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs, which informs the TCP scale, concerns the role of physiological and safety needs. A comparison of his theory with Herzberg's (1950) theory of motivation reveals that Maslow's model fails to differentiate between the actual motivators, or higher order needs such as relationship, stimulation, self-development and self-actualisation, and hygiene factors, or simple determinants of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, one of them being the need for safety/security (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). For these reasons, the 'relationship (security)' factor was excluded. As for the 'relationship (strengthen)' dimension, only those items relating to interaction with travel companions were retained.

The following six factors were also excluded: nature, autonomy, isolation, romance, nostalgia and recognition. The 'nature' motive was omitted due to the focus of the study on

cultural tours, while autonomy and isolation were removed due to their marginal relevance to group travel, compared to independent travel. Motivation for romance was not included since it is understood as seeking intimate contact with others. While single travellers can be partly motivated by these reasons (Dann, 1981), they were expected to have limited importance compared to the other motivations of cultural tourists. Furthermore, romance, together with nostalgia and recognition, were found to be the least important factors of all by Pearce and Lee, 2005. To address the potential limitation of excluding these factors, however, the 'other' option was added to allow for any of the omitted and other relevant motives to be indicated by the participants. In regards to the principle of participant-led conversation in qualitative research, the multiple choice answers collected prior to the interviews were only raised in conversation after the participants had addressed the open interview questions about travel motivation, and only to invite them to comment on any motives they did not mention but had previously selected in the form.

Previous travel experiences

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, previous travel experience influences tourist motivation to travel (Pearce & Lee, 2005) and future destination choice (Crouch et al., 2016; Pearce & Kang, 2009), and is a significant predictor of cultural adjustment (Masgoret & Ward, 2006). While it can be explored from a wide range of angles, including the actual activities undertaken, travel purpose, time and mode of travel, and length of stay (Crouch et al 2016; Pearce & Kang 2009; Weaver, Weber, & McCleary, 2007), the closed questions included here were designed to collect information about the 'travellers' cumulative travel experience' (Weaver et al., 2007, p. 334). The total number of countries visited (Question 2) is a common measure of previous travel experience (Paris & Teye 2010; Weaver et al. 2007). The 'tourism (holiday)' travel purpose was specified in the question to simplify the task for the participants by limiting the number of trips they were asked to recall. The grouping of tourists by level of previous travel experience, however, appears to be context specific, depending on the largest number of countries visited in a given study. Pearce and Caltabiano (1983) used it to evaluate the extensiveness of previous travel experience from low (0-3 countries) to high (10+ countries). Weaver et al. (2007) found that an average of 12.5 countries in total is an indicator of a well-travelled person, while in Paris and Teye (2010) the low travel experience group visited 16 countries and less. All three studies measured how well the tourists travelled in general, but Weaver et al. (2007) also collected separate data on specifically pleasure trips.

In addition, Paris and Teye (2010) used two more factors to cluster their respondents by travel experience levels: (1) the number of international trips taken and (2) the number of

global regions visited. The first factor was included in Question 3 not only because it can provide additional information about the extent of exposure to a particular culture but also because it can indicate if the participants held a stronger interest in some countries over others. The second factor was seen as redundant, as potential answers to it could be obtained from the information on the number of countries previously visited. In addition, Question 3 also asked the participants to indicate the total number of days spent in each country out of the 10 they were invited to list, and to report how different they found the cultures of those countries to the Australian culture as their home culture (culture of origin) when they had first visited them. The length of contact or length of stay is an important trip characteristic related to previous travel experience (Weaver et al., 2007), and has been used to evaluate the significance of exposure to another culture, as discussed previously. Question 3, however, did not ask the participants to indicate the time of travel (Pearce & Kang, 2009). While listing the countries in a chronological order could have provided insight into how the participants travel preferences changed over time in the lead up to the sampled tour, the order was not specified to prevent confusion in aligning it with the number of trips per country. The total number of countries was also limited to 10 to manage the burden on the participants. The sub-question on cultural difference was added to further qualify the participant's previous travel experience and discuss its implications for their generic coping skills.

6.4.2. Sampling

6.4.2.1. Key Considerations

Qualitative research can sample not only individuals and secondary data sources but also research settings such as organisations or touristic sites, and particular types of experiences (Mason, 2002). This study used a 'nested' (Yin, 2011, p. 82) multi-stage non-probability purposive approach to sampling where selection of tour operators and tours pre-determined, to some extent, the composition of the tourist sample. In line with Objective 3 (Chapter 1), the study also aimed to sample a range of experiential contexts determined by the type of companies included in the sample and the diversity of cultural tours they offered. Once relevant tour operators were purposively sampled and recruited, as described in Section 6.4, they assisted with recruitment of their passengers using the sampling guidelines provided to them.

Although, as noted by Coyne (1997), many researchers use the terms 'purposive' and 'theoretical' sampling interchangeably, the subtle but critical difference between them comes down to the source of sampling criteria (Ritchie et al., 2014). According to Mason (2002), theoretical sampling is informed by grounded theory, a distinctive variation of qualitative

methodology that prescribes 'emergent theorising' (Wengraf, 2001, p. 256), a purely 'bottom-up approach' to research design (Yin, 2011, p. 21). Consequently, selection criteria emerge 'from and through data' (Mason, 2002, p. 125), as the process of grounded data collection is 'open and unstructured' at the beginning, and additional participants are selected based on emergent findings (Ritchie et al., 2014, p. 115). In contrast, the starting point of purposeful sampling is the identification of significant selection criteria based on a known (already defined) population and existing research but with a possibility of adding new criteria in the grounded way (Ritchie et al., 2014). In summary, both theoretical and purposeful sampling methods are deliberately selective, but they are different in the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions about the sources of knowledge that should guide this selection.

In regards to purposive samples, Ritchie et al. (2014) identify three criteria for evaluating their robustness: they should be informative enough to assist purposive selection; comprehensive and inclusive; and sufficiently large. The last two criteria address symbolic representation of the population and diversity of study units, be that people, organisations, contexts/settings, events, objects or texts (Mason, 2002). The relationship of qualitative researchers, however, with the concept of 'representation' depends on the research purpose and their paradigmatic views about the nature of reality and how it can be known. While Mason (2002, p. 125) is critical of 'sampling representationally', Ritchie et al. (2014) discuss the difference between statistical and symbolic representation and emphasise the importance of the latter. They define symbolic representation as inclusion of key units and characteristics of the population which 'both 'represent' and 'symbolise' features of relevance to the investigation' (Ritchie et al., 2014, p. 116). This position is shared by this study.

In addition to the overarching approach to sampling, the time donated by research participants was a critical ethical and sampling consideration (Miles et al., 2014). Besides minimising the burden of participation on study participants, researchers also have responsibility to the wider scholarly community and future users of the research to ensure its rigour, including transparency of data collection procedures. That is why in addition to purposeful sampling of the tour operators, the decision was made to provide participating tour operators with recruitment guidelines based on prior screening of their tours by the researcher in order to distribute the burden of recruitment between the companies; to reduce the anticipated time commitment in the project; and to ensure consistency of sampling across all businesses. The sampling frames for the tour operators and the tours are discussed in Section 6.4.2.2. While selecting tourists based on their country of origin was anticipated to be a routine automated task for tour operators, it was posited that the

screening of past departures for the tours that meet a unique set of study criteria was likely to require considerably more time.

Regarding interview sample size, Kvale and Brinkman (2009) recommend a minimum of 10 interviews; Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, and Braun (2017) suggest a tentative range of 15 to 30+ for PhD projects engaged in thematic analysis; and Ritchie et al. (2014) advise not to go over 50, as the analysis becomes unmanageable. However, as noted by Terry et al. (2017) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 113), any suggestions on a minimum and maximum sample size in qualitative research are arbitrary, as the size ultimately depends on the study objectives, and 'combination of the time and resources available'. Ritchie et al. (2014) note that the more heterogeneous is the study population and the more selection criteria are used, the larger the qualitative sample is likely to be. Comparative analysis of sub-groups within a sample may also require a larger sample size (Mason, 2002), but, as Braun and Clarke (2016, p. 4) argue, 'the bigger the sample, the greater the risk of failing to do justice to the complexity and nuance contained within the data'. This study was designed with a goal to conduct no more than 50 interviews with tourists, but enough to have relatively equal sub-groups per company to enable further comparison.

6.4.2.2. Sampling Frame

To ensure systematic selection, Council of Australian Tour Operators (CATO) list, the only official list of tour companies produced by an Australian tourism body at the time, was used as a sampling frame. Although such member-lists appear more often in survey studies relying on large databases of tourism businesses for selecting representative samples (Pennington-Gray, Reisinger, Kim, & Thapa, 2005; Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005; Weeden, 2001), sampling frames are just as appropriate for qualitative research (Ritchie et al., 2014). As Morgan (2008, p. 801) explains, 'similar to defining a sampling frame in survey research ... the key goal is to specify the set of data sources within the general population that will be eligible for inclusion in the study'. The rest of this section outlines the steps taken develop a sampling frame consisting of 21 tour operators.

The list was screened for the selection criteria defining the research context: travel service type, leisure focus, accessibility, tour group size, level of escort and centrality of culture. Although CATO was deliberately created to represent the interests of tour operators separately from those of travel agents (CATO, 2013), out of 72 members it still included businesses operating as resellers of tours developed by their suppliers. It also listed wholesalers, cruise companies, operators of package holidays, and transport and accommodation providers. The websites of the remaining 37 tour operators were then

screened for the remaining criteria. Out of these businesses, four companies were excluded as their tours were tailored to niche groups other than leisure tourists from the general public, such as students, fundraising mission groups, and people pursuing photography to fulfil a substantial special interest other than cultural. Six more companies were excluded because they offered tailor-made itineraries for individuals and private groups.

The remaining 27 businesses were reviewed for maximum group size and level of escort. Thirteen companies offered small group tours among other tour types, and the other 14 identified themselves as operators of purely small group tours. Two companies operated tours of 40 passengers, which were significantly larger than the rest of the sample. Table 6.4 below lists all group sizes of the tours advertised as small group and the number of companies working with them.

Thirteen companies indicated that the size of their small group tours was between 10 and 20 passengers. These numbers fell within the range of medium size tours, as suggested by Armstrong and Weiler (2002), and of small group tours by Holland (2012), Buckley (2007) and Smith et al. (2010). The latter, however, recommend the upper limit of 15 tourists. Nine companies worked with tour groups of between 24 and 28 passengers, and the group size for three other businesses stating to offer small group tours was not found. Given these findings, the maximum tour group size for this study was set at 25, reducing the total number of companies to 23. Although groups of 22+ passengers can be considered large, based on the four papers mentioned above, the businesses operating tours with 24-25 passengers per group formed a significant proportion (7) in an already relatively short list. One more business using only driver-guides was excluded, further reducing the sample frame to 22 tour operators offering small group tours led by either local guides meeting their tour groups at destination or by teams consisting of one national guide travelling with passengers from Australia and a local guide.

The websites as well as the electronic and hard copy brochures of these 22 tour operators were analysed further to determine if any of the small group single-destination tours they offered met the criterion for centrality of culture based on how the tours were advertised. In the absence of already established measures of centrality of cultural experiences in a group tour program, the analysis involved a screening of company descriptions, tour groupings, tour names and descriptions of individual itineraries for references to the domains of culture reviewed in Chapter 2. If more than half of the days on a single tour program included at least one culture-related activity, the company was retained on the list. Although many tours can be considered cultural to a degree, some tours had distinctive names, descriptions and

imagery emphasising activities revolving around non-cultural themes. As a result, one more company was excluded, as the only four small-group tours it operated had multi-destination itineraries, and two of them were also nature-focused. The other 21 companies offered at least one single-destination tour with culture being the central theme.

Table 6.4. Tour operator screening by tour group size.

Maximum group size	Number of companies
10	1
12	2
15	2
16	2
18	3
20	3
24	3
25	4
26	1
28	1
40	2
Small	3
Total	27

In terms of centrality of culture as a tour theme in the total portfolio of companies and tours and how that focus was communicated, three types of businesses emerged:

1. Six businesses did not group their tours by any activity-based themes but stated in their company descriptions that all of their tours focused very closely on experiencing other cultures, which was supported by their itineraries.
2. Five businesses used 'culture' and culture-related themes to differentiate cultural tours from other types of experiences.
3. Ten businesses did not use 'culture' and culture-related themes to group their tours and did not refer to themselves as specialising in cultural holidays but descriptions of some of their tour itineraries demonstrated centrality of cultural activities.

Table 6.5. provides a combined profile of the tour companies by centrality of culture and their geographic reach. If a company organised tours to more than one geographic region, its reach was recorded as 'global'. In several cases, the companies worked with only one region or one specific country, and one business specialised in journeys to Asia and Russia.

Table 6.5. Tour operator sampling frame: Geographic reach and centrality of culture.

Geographic reach	N/companies by centrality of culture		
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Global	3	3	4
Asia	1 (+Russia)	1	3
Europe	1	-	-
South America	-	-	1
Africa	-	-	2
Turkey	1	-	-
Nepal	-	1	-

As far as the average age of the tourists is concerned, relevant information was obtained only about six companies. As Table 6.6 shows, younger tourists in their 20s were served by only one of these companies, and all six worked with customers aged 40 to 70. The table also shows service levels offered by all 21 companies. Evidence exists that age and service levels are closely linked, and that many senior travellers prefer package holidays for their greater levels of comfort (Kazeminia et al., 2015; Alén et al., 2017). Moreover, considering that older Australian travellers aged 50 and above have been found to have higher than average incomes and 'higher discretionary incomes because they have fewer outgoing expenses' (Bauer, 2012; Patterson & Pan, 2007, p. 35), it can be suggested that several more tour operators tailored their tours to this demographic, particularly from the 'luxury' and 'upper mid-range' categories.

Table 6.6. Tour operator sampling frame: Tourist age and service level.

Age	Service level			
	Luxury	Upper mid-range	Varied	Mid-range
Unknown	5	1	5	4
55-70	-	1	-	-
45-65	-	-	-	1
40-65	-	-	1	-
40-60	-	1	-	1
25-60	-	-	1	-
Total	5	3	7	6

The descriptions of service level emphasised the quality of accommodation and transport, as well as the inclusion of additional services such as portage and transfers, from luxury as the

highest to mid-range as the lowest. Only two businesses mentioned that some of their tours offered the standard of accommodation lower than 3 stars on some parts of their programs, such as homestays or camping. Seven companies indicated that their small group tours varied by service level, and six others described their tours as all-inclusive luxury or deluxe, with 4-5 star central hotels, some with unique character and in picturesque locations, and offering exclusive insider experiences. The upper mid-range group was added to the table to distinguish between these luxury tours and the three businesses which advertised their tours as 'premium', 'in-style' and 'superior-class' but did not use the words 'luxury' or 'deluxe' at all. As it is not uncommon for luxury travel to be negatively associated with inauthentic contrived experiences (Pappalepore et al., 2010), it could be suggested that these words were deliberately omitted. As for the six mid-range tour operators, their tours were described as 'value for money', with 3-4 star hotels, centrally located wherever possible, comfortable and with private facilities.

6.4.3. Recruitment

6.4.3.1. Tour Operators

Tour operators were contacted between October and December 2015 via email. Email was chosen as the preferred method of initial contact to minimise personal influence on the company's decision to participate; to maintain a written record of what was communicated to them; and to ensure they made a decision based on complete information included in the email. The introductory email (Appendix A) included a four-page information sheet (Appendix A) outlining the project objectives, tour operators' selection criteria, details of their proposed involvement, benefits and risks, and confidentiality and anonymity assurances. Due to the relatively small size of the sampling frame, the businesses were informed of a small risk that they could be inadvertently identified from the published output of the study either by other participating tour companies and participants or by external parties. Thus, they were assured that every effort would be made to keep their specific participation and that of all interviewees strictly confidential. Moreover, all interview responses were afforded full anonymity. In addition, to safeguard the potentially commercially sensitive nature of the data collected during the study, the information sheet promised to de-identify (anonymise) any information that may identify the study participants, participating organisations and related third parties directly and indirectly.

Table 6.7. Sample of tour operators by passenger age, group size, service level and destination.

Characteristic	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Company 4
Maximum tour group size	16	20	20	18
Smallest average group size	10	20	16	6
Largest average group size	16	20	18	18
Passenger age range	40-60	45-65	55-70	50+
Service level	Upper-mid range	Mid-range	Upper-mid range	Upper mid-range
Centrality of culture	Group 3	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1
Cultural specialisation	General interest	General interest	Special cultural interest	Special cultural interest, educational
Geographic reach				
Africa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Asia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Europe	✓	✓	✓	✓
Middle East	✓	✓	✓	✓
Latin America	✓	✓	✓	✓
North America	✓	-	✓	✓
Oceania	-	-	-	✓

Four companies accepted the invitation, but the contact with one company was lost after additional information was requested about their tours. Similar to Company 3, an additional company (Company 4), was recruited to balance out the sample. Company 4 was contacted together with three other operators of similar type, but they either declined the invitation or did not respond to it. As can be seen from Table 6.7., the final sample consisted of two operators of general interest cultural tours for people aged 40+, and two operators of cultural tours with special interest around a particular aspect of culture or historic period for passengers older than 50.

6.4.3.2. *Tourists*

A tour sampling matrix (Table 6.8) was developed to inform the individualised recruitment guidelines provided to the tour operators. The final sampling matrix used in passenger recruitment guidelines (Table 6.8.) included 15 destinations and 68 tours Asia, Europe, Middle East, Latin America and Africa, with Egypt marketed as an African and a Middle Eastern destination, and Turkey as a Middle Eastern and European by different companies.

Sampling matrices are commonly structured as tables with selection criteria and numbers or quotas of sampling units assigned to each and are used when it is important to control for the number of participants representing a particular selection criterion (Ritchie et al., 2014). In this case, the matrix consisted of a list of countries with the number of tours and tour departures assigned to each country. Early communication with some of the participating companies reaffirmed the decision to develop such a matrix, as they indicated that distributing invitations to passengers required a significant investment of their time and resources. The matrix was developed based on intended (advertised) departures of all four companies for the period of January - September 2015, as per their brochures and websites.

In the guidelines, each company was provided with a list of their pre-selected tours; an estimated number of passengers to be contacted per destination (Table 6.10.); departure months; and the participant selection criteria discussed in earlier. The guidelines template can be found in Appendix B. The tour operators responded within a month with the numbers of passengers who had actually departed (Table 6.9.). Companies 1, 3 and 4 included October departures, and Company 4 also added November numbers due to the overall low numbers for the requested departure period of January – September 2015. Due to the considerable difference between the requested and actual departures and the one-month delay in emailing invitations to tourists, October and November were added to the final list of passengers to be contacted.

Table 6.8. Tour sampling matrix.

Country	Company 1		Company 2		Company 3		Company 4		Total per country		Estimated number of tourists	Region
	N/tours*	N/dept**	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept		
1. China	2	7	1	7	1	1	6	7	10	22	352	Asia
2. Cuba	1	23	1	6	1	1	-	-	3	30	480	Latin Am
3. Egypt	1	10	2	28	-	-	1	2	4	40	640	ME/Africa
4. Ethiopia	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	48	Africa
5. France	2	8	-	-	1	1	5	5	8	14	224	Europe
6. India	2	31	2	14	1	1	-	-	5	46	736	Asia
7. Iran	1	12	-	-	2	2	1	1	4	15	240	ME
8. Italy	3	17	-	-	4	4	2	2	9	23	368	Europe
9. Japan	1	10	1	6	-	-	2	2	4	18	288	Asia
10. Mexico	1	9	1	5	1	1	-	-	3	15	240	Latin Am
11. Morocco	1	19	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	20	320	Africa
12. Myanmar	2	12	1	3	1	1	1	2	5	18	288	Asia
13. Russia	1	4	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	5	80	Europe
14. Sri Lanka	1	9	1	10	1	1	1	1	4	21	336	Asia
15. Turkey	1	14	1	9	1	2	1	1	4	26	416	ME/EU
Total	21	188	11	82	15	16	21	24	68	316	4960	

*N/tours (number of tours)

** N/dept (total number of departures on all tours)

Table 6.9. Actual departures.

Country	Company 1 (Jan-Oct 2015)		Company 2 (Jan-Sep 2015)		Company 3 (Jan-Oct 2015)		Company 4 (Jan-Nov 2015)		Total per country	
	N/tours	N/tourists	N/tours	N/tourists	N/tours	N/tourists	N/tours	N/tourists	N/tours	N/tourists
1. China	-	-	1	22	1	17	1	6	3	45
2. Cuba	1	17	1	9	1	12	-	-	3	38
3. Egypt	1	2	1	19	-	-	-	-	2	21
4. Ethiopia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. France	-	-	-	-	1	9	2	11	3	20
6. India	2	17	2	51	-	-	-	-	4	68
7. Iran	1	23	-	-	2	34	1	17	4	74
8. Italy	3	23	-	-	3	52	2	15	8	90
9. Japan	1	26	1	46	-	-	1	5	3	77
10. Mexico	1	7	1	14	1	10	-	-	3	31
11. Morocco	1	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	43
12. Myanmar	1	19	1	7	1	15	1	20	4	61
13. Russia	-	-	-	-	1	18	-	-	1	18
14. Sri Lanka	-	-	1	59	1	16	-	-	2	75
15. Turkey	1	108	1	39	1	17	1	14	4	178
Total	13	285	10	266	13	200	9	88	45	839

Table 6.10. Recruitment guidelines: Number of passengers per destination.

Destination	C1	C2	C3	C4
China	20	20	15	20
Cuba	35	35	15	0
Egypt	45	35	0	15
Ethiopia	30	0	0	0
France	45	0	15	45
India	30	30	0	0
Iran	35	0	30	20
Italy	35	0	35	35
Japan	35	35	0	30
Mexico	45	45	15	0
Morocco	20	0	0	0
Myanmar	30	30	15	30
Russia	45	0	15	0
Sri Lanka	35	35	15	15
Turkey	35	35	15	25
Total	520	300	185	235
percentage	42%	24%	15%	19%

The guidelines were finalised by the end of January, 2016, and the first round of invitations to participate in the study were distributed by tour operators to a finalised list of customers in February, 2016. In April 2016, due to a low response, the tour operators were approached with a request to redistribute the invitations for the second time to the same groups of customers. Company 1 and Company 3 did not respond, while Company 4 and Company 2 assisted with the request and sent out the second round of invitations in April and August 2016.

The rest of this section explains the sequence of steps taken to develop the matrix informing the process describe above. Given the number of recruited companies, the matrix was developed with the goal of conducting 10-12 interviews per company, at the response rate of 6%, or 1 Australian passenger per 1 tour departure with an average group size of 16 passengers. The conservative response rate estimate was informed by the percentage of purposeful cultural tourists reported by Du Cros and McKercher (2015). The group size was calculated from the average group sizes for each company obtained from their websites (Table 6.7.). The average of the smallest average group sizes was 13 and the average of the largest average group sizes was 18, with 15.5 being the mean which was rounded to 16. To achieve the target sample size at the response rate above, it was estimated that the study had to approach around 1000 Australian tourists in total or 250 per company. In the absence of exact numbers of how many of the scheduled tours went ahead and how many Australian

tourists actually travelled on those tours, an estimate population of all tourists for the four companies was calculated from the number of their intended departures multiplied by the average group size. This estimate had to be calculated in order to evaluate the extent of the companies' involvement in the screening of their tours for Australian passengers, and to decide on the number of the passengers they would be asked to contact.

All scheduled tour departures for each company for 2015 were screened to select single-destination cultural tours using the same procedure applied earlier in the screening of tour companies for the presence of cultural tours in their product offering. The number of destinations in a trip was checked by scanning tour titles and descriptions, as none of the companies provided a dedicated filter for this criterion on their website, and the brochures organised tours by regions. The remaining trips were then screened for centrality of culture.

In total, the screening identified 161 single-destination cultural tours with 954 departures travelling to 45 countries, with 34 countries covered by Company 1, 12 countries by Company 2, 19 countries by Company 3, and 24 countries by Company 4 (Appendix B). The number of destinations included in the recruitment guidelines, however, was limited to 15 (Table 6.8) to reduce the burden of recruitment on the tour operators, and to enable comparison between destinations and the two sub-groups of companies. The priority was given to the countries represented by four and three companies, but Morocco and Ethiopia were also chosen to add Africa to the sample.

Although Mason (2002) disagrees with purposeful selection driven by empirical representation, in this case destinations were chosen based on both empirical and theoretical significance by considering their popularity, and symbolic representation of the full range of tour programs and diversity of participating companies. While the list of destinations was reduced by two thirds, this decision still considered the exploratory nature of this study and the importance of including a diversity of countries and itineraries. In several cases, more than one tour to the same destination was included. Furthermore, the number of intended departures per country also had to be taken into account in order to collect a sufficient number of responses. Because the matrix was based on estimated departures and not on the actual numbers, tour cancellations had to be considered. Finally, the sampling also had to factor in a range of departure months in order to cover an extended period of past travel which was 11 months.

6.4.4. Interview Process

6.4.4.1. Relationship with Participants and Personal Involvement

Once the tour operators emailed the invitations to participate in the study, 22 of their customers responded directly via email with an expression of interest and their preferred contact details. To ensure informed consent and minimise the risk of coercion, the tour operators were asked to use the email text provided to them. This text assured the recipients that their participation in this study would be entirely voluntary and that choosing not to participate would have no effect on the services provided to them by the companies (Appendix A). In addition, the tour operators were asked to attach the *Letter of Introduction and Information Sheet*, written specifically for this participant group (Appendix A).

In several cases, data collection had started before the interviews began. Between the initial contact and the interview, as the time and place for the interview were being negotiated and the electronic questionnaire forms collected, some participants revealed personal information about their occupation and family circumstances. A number of participants also commented in writing during email exchanges or over the phone on their past travel experience and how much they thought they could contribute to the study. These exchanges contributed to the building of the interviewer-interviewee relationship. As a result, in some cases, the information shared by the interviewees was used to open the interviews as a logical continuation of the conversations that had started earlier.

The researcher's role in the co-construction of knowledge is a critical consideration in interpretivist interview research, guided by ontological relativism (Mason, 2002; Maxwell, 2013). As far as acknowledgement of multiple perspectives is concerned, this principle applies not only to participants' views but also to the researcher's reflection on their personal views that may impact data collection and analysis and on the nature of their relationship with interviewees. At the same time, Mason (2002) points out that a reflexive approach to data collection and interpretation is one of the three possible ways (in addition to literal and interpretive) in which a researcher may choose to engage with their participants and data. These approaches can be applied in isolation but more commonly are used in combination.

The degree of reflexivity, that is the extent to which their views and, consequently, personal involvement can and should be integrated into the analysis and discussion 'as part of the data', is dependent on the objectives of a given study (Mason, 2002, p. 149). Furthermore, reflection on own interpretations is not something that a qualitative researcher can address anecdotally. Maxwell (2013) observes that it is better suited for writing about the analysis, and Mason (2002, p. 150) specifies that it 'must take a form (or be put into a form) that can

be readily sorted and organised for analytical purposes'. Such operationalisation of the researcher's role beyond the methodology chapter was outside the scope of this thesis, but the following acknowledgements of the author's background may enable greater transparency and can help clarify research parameters.

Formal knowledge of cultural tourism and group travel was gained by the author in the course of studying tourism in Australia, even though she had previously conducted half-day cultural tours to gain relevant work experience as an undergraduate in language interpreting in Russia. Her understanding of these concepts was later developed through travelling internationally, also from Australia as the country of origin. Therefore, whilst living in one of the mass tourism source markets discussed in Chapter II and in a developed society with a European, predominantly Anglo-Celtic majority (ABS, 2016a) - a demographic that forms the subject of much of research on group travel - the researcher's own perspective on these two phenomena formed under the influence of academic debates around them. While it would be a fair observation that the researcher approached her own travel activities and this study with a more critical view on tourism than someone who may not be familiar with these debates, she also worked as a travel agent in 2011, following her Bachelor degree. This experience helped her balance those views with an awareness of the diversity of group travel and development of a considerably positive and pragmatic outlook on small group tours. She has also travelled both independently and in groups, seeing value in both travel modes.

The author's cultural background has also played a part in the selection of the research topic. First, as a Russian interpreter, she has observed the challenges of igniting in international tourists an interest in the Russian culture that would build on the fascination with its many heritage sites and forms of high culture, such as theatre and ballet, and extend beyond them. Second, as a Russian migrant in Australia, she has a direct appreciation of what it means to negotiate cultural differences and dispel stereotypical notions of one's home country.

Regarding personal involvement, while the participants openly shared their deeply personal views and observations that some of them had not previously disclosed to anyone else, the interviews were still relatively brief engagements, compared to immersive ethnographic research (Brown, 2009; Torres, 2015). Furthermore, out of 15 sampled destinations, the author had travelled to only France and Turkey, and had lived in Russia for 21 years until migrating to Australia permanently in 2007. For these reasons, the study adopted a more impartial approach to data collection, analysis and reporting that may also come across as somewhat impersonal.

However, the nature of the questions posed by this study and consequently the nature of the intended interview questions (Appendix A) still called for an active approach to interviewing. Occasionally, it involved stepping beyond the interviewer's impartiality and inconspicuousness and into sharing personal views in response to the interviewee's comments and questions to the interviewer (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; Maxwell, 2013).

Early in the process, it was found that the efforts to 'refrain from commenting on an answer', recommended by Yeo et al. (2014, p. 198), seriously impeded the interview flow. Given that the interviews in this study engaged the participants in value-laden post-travel reflection or in sharing their reflections, it became clear very soon in the process that it was important to give them something in return for them to feel heard. Some participants actively sought feedback on their thoughts, not simply in terms of whether or not they were answering the question but wanting to hear from someone who had also travelled to the destination before or had an interest in the discussed subject.

In some instances, letting the interviewees know that their answers were identified to be particularly thought-provoking resulted in them further expanding on their answers. In others, displaying researcher vulnerability, by reminding the participants that the interview was about finding answers to questions with their help rather than about making covert judgements, appeared to have a positive effect on their willingness to help by taking time to reflect on some questions and comments more deeply. Sometimes, however, such invitations to a deeper discussion would pass unnoticed, suggesting that further deliberations had possibly little relevance to them (Flick, 2009). Before making any comments that could influence the direction of the participants' future answers were shared with them, it was established that they had spoken at length on a range of issues, to clearly separate their perspective before and after.

The respondents were treated as experts in their own travel experiences who contributed to constructing this knowledge. All participants were also invited to seek clarification on the interview questions whenever they needed, which resulted in gaining deeper insights on their views, as they not only sought clarification but also wondered about the very need for some questions. In turn, at all times, an effort was made to clarify their perspectives, meanings and recollections of experiences, even if that meant openly inquiring about the inconsistencies in their answers (Wengraf, 2001).

6.4.4.2. Degree of Structure and Depth

The degree of structure is used as one of the main points of differentiation between different types of interviews, commonly referred to as structured, semi-structured, and unstructured.

Wengraf (2001) describes structured interviews in terms of 'heaviness', allowing for a more nuanced spectrum of structure between unstructured, lightly, heavily, and fully structured interviewing used predominantly in quantitative survey research. In order to determine which level of structure is appropriate for a given study, it is necessary to understand what is meant by structure and what its implications are for research outcomes. In the context of interviews, structure is the way in which an interview is organised and is determined by the source, nature and number of questions, as well as their order. It is also strongly influenced by how much the researcher deviates from that original schedule or plan, which raises the issues of researcher control over the interview process and the level of their personal involvement. Depth is the second most important consideration, and as Wengraf (2001, p. 6) explains, it has a complex meaning:

1. To go into something 'in depth' is to get a more detailed knowledge about it.
2. To go into something in depth is to get a sense of how the apparently straight forward is actually more complicated, of how the 'surface appearances' may be quite misleading about 'depth realities'.

The research questions in this study were developed from prior theoretical and empirical research and with the aim to understand how this prior knowledge applies to cultural tourism and can be enhanced by studying it. Given the number of concepts examined and their multi-dimensionality, all interviews for this study required interview schedules with a considerable degree of structure and standardisation in terms of the questions designed in advance (Appendix A). It was posited that the discussion of travel motivation, perceived gains and post-travel culture involvement could be initiated using direct questions due to the study interest in the purposefulness of travel; actual behaviours; and perceived benefits, such as those that they recognised themselves. As for the challenge aspect, it was decided that a combination of direct and indirect questions would be most effective in eliciting responses about the place of challenge in tourists' experiences, including situational context.

As a psychological state resulting from concurrent primary and secondary appraisals, challenge has several established characteristics, while the answers to a direct question about it would depend on the participants' personal understanding of the word 'challenge'. Therefore, it was important to both inquire about their conscious understanding and actual experiences. As discussed in the psychology literature informed by phenomenological inquiry, 'what humans experience' and 'what they consciously know' is not always the same (Elvin-Nowak, 1999; Lopez & Willis, 2004, p. 728). The timing of the questions was equally important.

To achieve these objectives, following a formal introduction about the research objectives, the interviews started with relatively broad 'mapping' questions (Yeo et al., 2014) about the significance of cultural difference and most memorable aspects of their trips. As the literature suggests, challenging experiences are memorable experiences (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). They also involve effort, sharing this characteristic with the notion of cultural difference in tourism and acculturation literature as something difficult that separates (Salazar & Graburn, 2014) and has to be dealt with (Robinson, 2013). These questions, therefore, helped generate enough rich context for further in-depth discussion of what happened on the trip and the effect those events on them. In those cases where challenge as a state, a concept, or as both did not come up in the participants' answers to these indirect questions, they were asked directly about the challenges they had experienced on their tours. To clarify the meaning of challenge, all participants were also then asked what this word meant to them. Asking the participants to recall examples of 'challenging' situations and then later to explain what they understand by 'challenge' also made it possible to uncover and explore inconsistencies in responses to these questions. The same methodological benefit was also reported by Tan et al. (2013) who asked their participants to qualify a number of touristic activities as creative or not and then invited them to define creativity in their own words.

In addition, the original interview schedule was modified during data collection to gain deeper insights about perceived effort as a central dimension of challenge that functions as its indicator, and to inquire about several situational factors: on-tour support, group discussions, free time, and opportunities for interaction with hosts. As Wengraf (2001, pp. 53-54) suggests, 'the more abstract the theoretical concept, the greater the number of 'indicators' that need to be examined'. While the participants were asked 'How did you cope with these differences?', they were also probed, where otherwise not mentioned, for moments of surprise, questioning, disagreement and cognitive dissonance in their memories of their experiences: Was there anything that you found surprising, questioned, and didn't understand why it happened and needed clarification from the guide? Although these questions directly inquired about specific aspects of the experience, they were also meant to generate discussions that could indirectly inform the study about the place of perceived challenge in the participants' experiences. They also helped generate the information about the experiential context by encouraging the interviewees to 'explore the same situation from a variety of 'stand/view/points' (Wengraf, 2001, p. 155).

Related to the issue of interview structure and specific to this study was the question of using tour itineraries as prompts to trigger memory (Wengraf, 2001). Prompting is an important part of interviewing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), but it was important to ensure that

if an itinerary was used, the conversations would not become mechanical, step-by-step descriptions of what the participants did. If specific situations were mentioned only briefly, the interviewees were asked to expand on those examples, which helped understand the surrounding context in more detail. The interviews, therefore, adopted a 'funnel approach' to interviewing (Wengraf, 2001), from broad to more specific in-depth questions. Only when the participants found it difficult to recall the specifics of the tour, were they asked more directly about whether or not they had participated in the specific activities mentioned on the itinerary and what those activities had involved. In such instances, the demarcation between the prompted and unprompted answers was very evident. Without asking to qualify those experiences as challenging or something else, in some cases these itinerary-driven questions helped elicit enough contextual knowledge to seek further clarification, as well as reveal in more depth how participants felt about the situations discussed without asking them directly. This approach offered a balance between inquiring into the aspects of the experiences that were important but may have not been mentioned otherwise and remaining flexible and responsive to the participants, with each interview, consequently, somewhat different in flow, content, and length.

6.5. Data Analysis

6.5.1. Cross-Sectional Methods

As Miles et al. (2014, p. 325) argue in regards to reporting the results of qualitative analysis, 'reporting is not separate from thinking or from analysis. Rather, it is analysis'. Therefore, a methods section on its own cannot adequately capture the full process of analysis, since much of the abstracting, interpreting and connecting occurs during the writing-up stage (White, Woodfield, Ritchie, & Ormston, 2014). A similar observation is made by Wolcott (2009) who argues that data analysis methods are best explicated through an account of how they were applied to specific research. In line with these arguments, this section briefly introduces the methods used and the overarching approach to analysis, for them to be further explicated through the reporting and discussion of results.

As shown in Figure 6.1., this study engaged in a combination of within-case and cross-case analysis using thematic analysis (TA) as a cross-sectional method; participant profiles and narrative summaries as non-cross-sectional methods; and different types of matrices for linking the results produced by them (Maxwell, 2013; Mason, 2002). This common combination of categorising and connecting approaches helps 'reconcile an individual case's uniqueness with the need for more general understanding of generic processes that occur across cases' (Maxwell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173). Figure 6.1. reflects the

main stages of analysis, starting with verbatim transcription and gradually moving towards developing answers to the main question about the relationship between challenge and post-travel culture involvement by addressing the three objectives. It must be acknowledged, however, that the process was not always linear, and some concepts were examined concurrently at various degrees of detail, using both cross-sectional and non-cross-sectional methods, depending on the analytical questions arising in the process.

As argued by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), Beazley (2013) and Terry et al. (2017), analysis of textual data starts with transcription completed by the researcher. In this study, the interviews were transcribed verbatim using NVivo 11, a qualitative analysis software. Attention was paid to pauses; rising and falling of intonation; voice pitch; changes in breathing; sounds indicating agreement, amusement, hesitation, and questioning, and other reactions. These paralinguistic cues were taken into consideration during both phone and face-to-face interviews (Flick, 2009; Hepburn & Bolden, 2013), but no formal transcribing method was used. Transcription was followed by thematic analysis.

The terms 'thematic analysis', 'coding', 'indexing' and 'categorising' are often used interchangeably (Bazeley, 2013; Maxwell, 2013; Terry et al., 2017). All three refer to cross-sectional slicing of textual sources into multiple segments and labelling them with a word or phrase which summarises the essence of that segment for further analysis during which the labels and the data they represent can be 'regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation' (Grbich, 2007, as cited in Saldana, 2009, p. 8). Therefore, while the coding process is foundational to all applications of TA, it is only one of its stages. In addition to gaining a comprehensive understanding of the data on the granular level, the goal of TA is to develop a smaller number of more inclusive categories and abstract concepts or themes representing patterns found across the data set (Terry et al., 2017), as illustrated in Figure 6.2. Furthermore, TA has also been referred to as an analytical approach, as the different activities involved during data coding (organising), describing, and, sometimes, explaining, can require a mix of methods (Spencer, Ritchie, Ormston, O'Connor, & Barnard, 2014).

In the context of this thesis, the term 'coding' is used to refer to the process of chunking the data into segments using more and less abstract words and phrases to communicate a particular theme, or 'what a unit of data is *about* and/or what it *means*' (Saldana, 2009, p. 139). Codes are differentiated from themes as indicators of 'patterned response' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82), since codes can be applied only once and later discarded, reapplied or merged with others, once a pattern emerges (Terry et al., 2017).

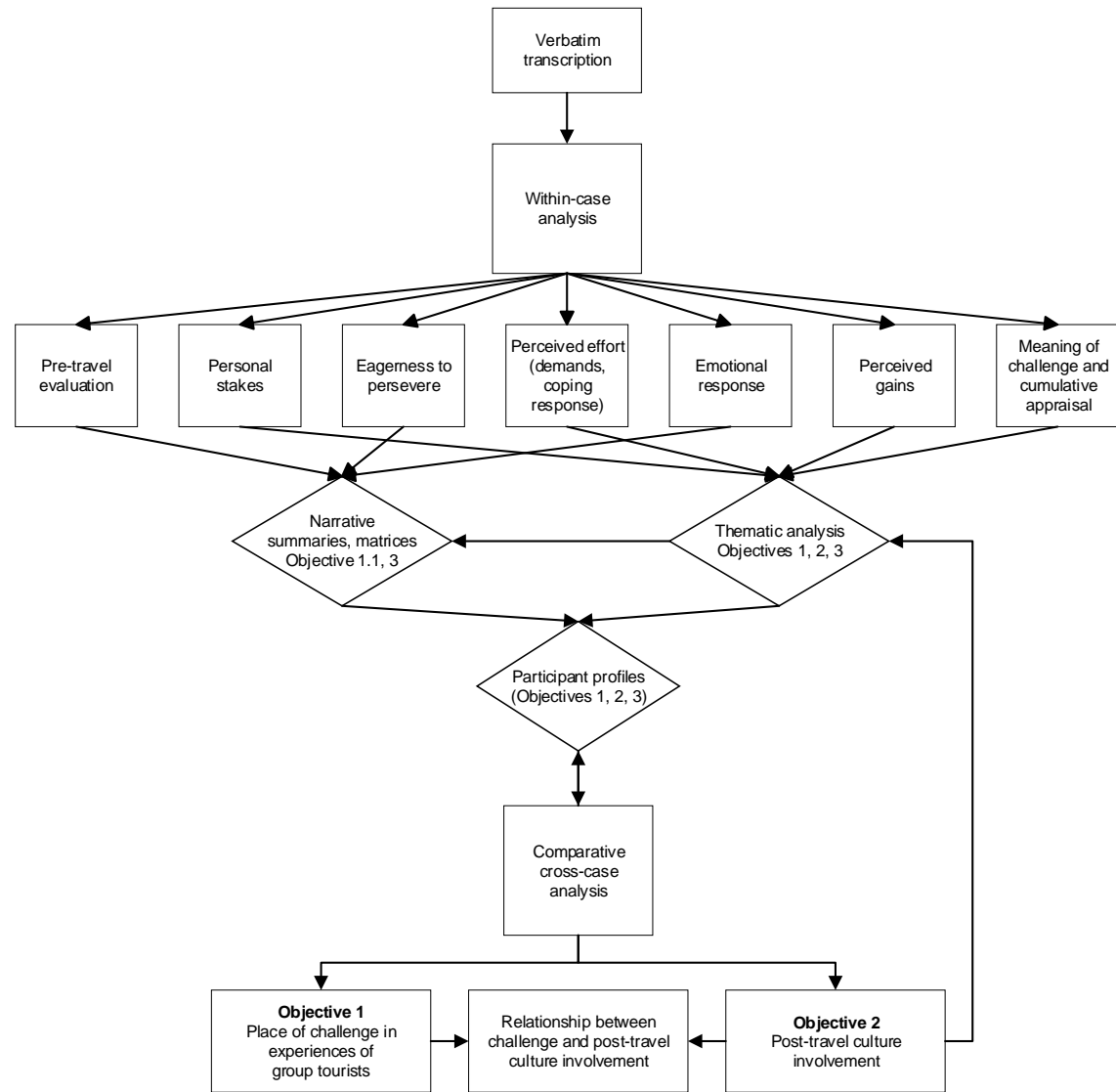


Figure 6.1. Data analysis methods and stages.

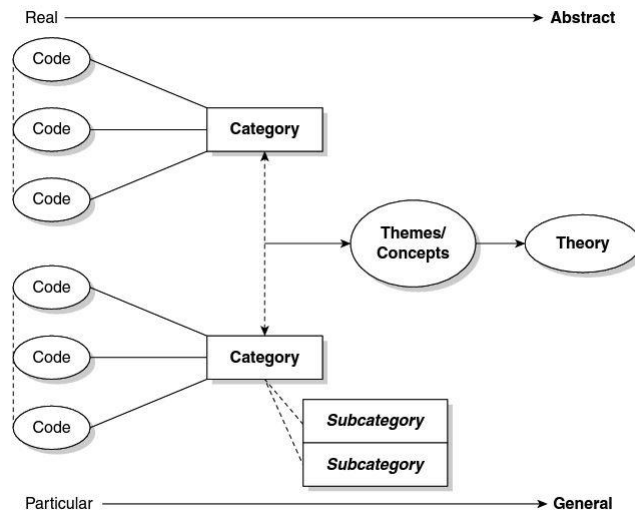


Figure 6.2. A streamlined codes-to-theory model of qualitative inquiry.

Source: Saldana (2009, p. 12). Reproduced with permission.

TA is consistent with the interest of this research in the participants' experiences, behaviours, feelings, motivations and perspectives (Mason, 2002; Patterson & Pan, 2007; Wickens, 2002; Woosnam et al. 2009; Buckley, 2016). As a pattern-seeking method, it is commonly contrasted with the methods of conversation, discourse and content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Mason, 2002; Maxwell, 2013). The first two are used to understand the structure and functioning of text and talk, rather what they may say about the participants producing them and their realities (Mason, 2002; Spencer et al., 2014). As for content analysis, usually reliant on software-automated coding, searching for frequency of occurrence and co-occurrence of words and themes is its primary purpose (Bazeley, 2013; Spencer et al., 2014). While useful for analysing large volumes of data with large samples (Kazemina et al., 2015; Poria et al., 2006), it involves the risk of misrepresenting the prevalence of themes, a key question in TA. As noted by Braun and Clark (2006), what can be considered as a pattern or a prominent theme is context-dependent and requires interpretation. Content analysis, however, informed by positivist logic, relies on generic software algorithms and statistical representation, and was, therefore, not suitable for this study.

In addition to transcription, NVivo 11 was used primarily to assist with the process of data management (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Spencer et al., 2014): development, revision and reorganisation of codes; storage, retrieval and recoding of data; monitoring systematic application of codes by visualizing coding for each interview, comparing the coding for several codes, and running matrix coding queries. The latter are automated cross-tabulations of codes (or 'nodes' in NVivo); codes and participants (cases); or codes and

participants with certain characteristics (attributes) in rows and columns, where each cell shows how many participants mentioned a combination of selected themes, or who specifically discussed which themes. Here, it should also be acknowledged that NVivo text search and word frequency functionality was engaged in the early stages to assist with data familiarisation, as well as for retrieval of data when following up on emergent analytical questions.

In addition, during the interpretation stage NVivo 11 was used to explore linkages between codes and themes, as it allows to view all or selected coding for a single passage and identify if any text has been coded under multiple labels. CAQDAS (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software), however, can encourage cross-sectional thinking and overlook important contextual connections (Bazeley, 2013; Spencer et al., 2014). That is why it was supplemented by Excel and Word that proved to be more versatile for connecting the findings in complex tables (matrices) incorporating multiple themes, dimensions and participant attributes for comparative cross-case analysis.

Another key consideration in TA is the source of the organising labels, or codes. Here, theory-driven and interpretive (researcher-driven) etic coding was combined with In Vivo (grounded in participants' language) and also derived from the data but descriptive emic codes, as illustrated in Figure 6.3. by some of the codes developed when analysing personal stakes. The prominent role of existing theories, frameworks and scales in informing this study has been addressed at various points throughout this and preceding chapters. Therefore, what remains to be acknowledged is that at all stages of the analysis the coding process was approached with a-priori theoretical labels in mind. In most cases, however, they were applied as structural codes to organise the interviews into large segments around key concepts, and less so to group In Vivo and interpretive codes as dimensions of more abstract, emergent themes.

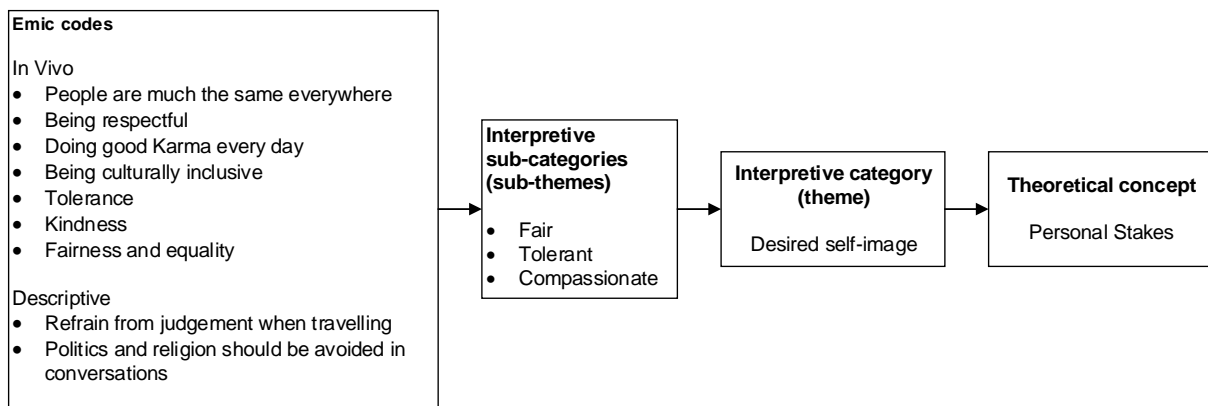


Figure 6.3. Example of thematic analysis.

To summarise, the application of TA during first cycle open coding was closely aligned with realist philosophical assumptions, according to which ‘people’s words provide direct access to reality’ (Terry et al., 2017, p. 22), particularly in the analyses of meanings. However, it was combined with the constructivist approach to themes as ‘the outcome of the analytic process, rather than a starting point’ (Terry et al., 2017, p. 12) and the need for interpretation of multiple subjective versions of reality communicated by participants. As far as the degree of interpretation is concerned, in this study, the effort was made to gain as much clarity on the participants’ perspectives as possible during data collection in order to reduce the need for the type of latent, critical interpretation of participant subjectivities, typical of psychoanalytic and psychosocial approaches (Crossley, 2012b; Mason, 2002).

In addition to the generic coding methods that form the foundation of TA, Saldana’s (2009) coding manual also identifies ‘values coding’ and ‘magnitude coding’ which support evaluative analysis (Miles et al., 2014). Values coding was used to analyse personal stakes to determine what the interviews said about what was and was not important to the participants. As noted by Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 315), ‘the appropriate entry point for measuring the person’s primary appraisal is an assessment of personal stakes, i.e. what it is that he or she judges to be at stake in the transaction, and the magnitude of its potential costs, and/or benefits ... by asking the person to tell us in some way what is at stake and how much it matters’. In addition to the tourists’ more direct comments on their beliefs, attitudes and values, close attention was paid to the words and phrases highlighted by Saldana (2009, p. 92) as indicators of importance such as ‘ “It’s important that”, “I like”, “I love”, or “I need” ‘, as well as ‘ “I think”, “I feel”, and “I want” ‘.

Magnitude coding is applied to ‘an existing coded datum or category to indicate its intensity, frequency, direction, presence, or evaluative content’ using numeric codes; qualifying

adverbs such as 'strongly'; adjectives describing valence such as 'positive', 'negative', 'neutral' and 'mixed'; or grounded in the data (Saldana, 2009, pp. 58-59). In qualitative tourism literature, magnitude analysis forms the foundation of tourism research on the strength of motivations, depth of experiences, degrees of participation, and resulting typologies (McKercher, 2002; McKercher et al., 2002; Patterson & Pan, 2007; Wickens, 2002). The notions of magnitude and evaluation are central to this study, as it examines primary appraisals (evaluations) varying by the associated degree of stress and effort; centrality of culture to tourist motivations; significance of cultural difference; and degree of culture involvement.

Thinking about magnitude was applied in the analysis of travel motivations, significance of cultural difference, perceived effortfulness, and post-travel culture involvement, but formal codes were developed only for overall trip evaluations (cumulative appraisal) and meaning of challenge. The analysis also took note of how much emphasis the participants placed on a particular theme based on the interview structure: whether they brought up the subject themselves or if it was prompted, thus indicating its importance to them; how early in the interview they started discussing a theme; how much time relative to the total length of their interview the participants spent talking about a particular point; and how often they referred to that point throughout the interview.

6.5.2. Non-Cross-Sectional Methods

The need for participant profiles emerged early in the process to acquire a contextualised and holistic understanding of each case; and to note emergent prominent themes, individual characteristics, and links between the answers to different questions (Bazeley, 2013). Each profile consisted of the section headings representing the main discussion points from the interview schedule, and as the analysis progressed, they were updated to include new sections addressing recurrent themes. Compared to lengthy transcripts, participant profiles proved highly effective not only in future cross-case comparisons but also whenever key analytical insights and connections between them on any given interview required quick revision.

As for narrative summaries, those played a critical role in the analysis of challenge in tourists' experiences (Objective 1.1). Guided by Bazeley's (2013) and Maxwell's (2013) advice and examples, they took on a form of short (half a page to single page) synopses summarising the story of each participant's tour experience. Starting with the participants' decision to travel, the summaries aimed to capture the relationships between travel motivation, critical events during the trip in the order that they unfolded, and perceived

experience outcomes. These should not be confused, however, with the type of narrative analysis that examines not only 'the basic story being told' but also 'the way an account or narrative is constructed' (Spencer et al., 2014, p. 270).

To address this first objective, the analysis was structured around the stress, appraisal and coping process framework, as illustrated in Figure 6.1., in order to identify and then compare the instances of challenge and other primary appraisals in the participants' accounts of their individual experiences. It first started with thematic analysis of the data organised under the three key concepts used to differentiate between primary appraisals: personal stake, perceived effort appraisal (degree of effortfulness), and perceived gains. However, it soon became apparent that in order to retain and visualise the emerging connections, it was important to organise the findings holistically. The responses from each interview were then organised into individual matrices. An example of an abridged matrix can be found in the Appendix C.

Each Excel spreadsheet consisted of the columns labelled by the main components, and additional columns (pre-travel evaluation, emotional response, activity) were added in the process. As each transcript was re-read line by line, the matrix was filled with relevant quotes in the same order in which they appeared in the interviews, with transcript line number and time span recorded for each row. As shown in Appendix C, some lines contained information about multiple components, while others only about one or two, but together they helped gain a sense of the whole; note if a particular theme was raised more than once, and whether or not the situations described were reappraised either during or after the tour.

The participants' emotive language used to describe how they felt was noted in the matrices to help differentiate between possible stress appraisals, and effortful and effortless experiences later in the analysis. As demonstrated by existing cognitive appraisal studies, primary appraisals can be differentiated by asking participants 'to provide a situational description of an event's emotional impact (Ferguson et al., 1999, p. 99). Open-ended responses to such questions can then be analysed for the presence of emotion words communicating emotions associated with different primary appraisals, including challenge. The adjective-based approach was originally proposed by Folkman and Lazarus (1985) and can be found in adjective-based appraisal scales (Fergusson et al. 1999; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Larsson, 2011). As Folkman and Lazarus (1985, p. 161) posit, 'the greater the stake, the higher the potential for emotion in the encounter'. Emotional response occurs when 'an encounter also involves a commitment to a value or an ideal, another person or a goal, or when physical well-being is endangered' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 77).

The list of adjectives compiled from those scales (Table 6.11.) was consulted in the process, in addition to the words communicating degree of satisfaction and approval such as ‘fine’ and ‘nice’. Upon consideration it was decided to refer to emotional responses only as one type of indicators among others, due to the shades of meanings of individual words (Lazarus, 1990), as well as possible variations in the levels of emotional expressiveness in the participants’ speech, explained by individual differences and not by the intensity of the actual emotions experienced during their trips.

In regards to analysing for process, Searle and Auton (2014, p. 2) argue that ‘retrospective measures of appraisal should be avoided’, since the appraisal-reappraisal process cannot be reconstructed in full due to the instantaneous and often unconscious nature of appraisal in the first place (Lazarus, 1990; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The task is further complicated by the concomitance of all three components, ‘cognitive appraisals, emotional reactions, and coping strategies’ (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005, p. 54). However, despite the limitations, Anshel (2001) was able to identify critical instances of evaluation of experiences as challenging from the situations that their participants were able to recall. Furthermore, as observed by Buckley (2016), experiences of fear and thrill (excitement), which in stress appraisal literature are used as indicators of threat and challenge appraisals (Ferguson et al., 1999), can be particularly memorable due to the heightened awareness and strong physiological response associated with those emotions.

Table 6.11. Emotion words indicating stress appraisals.

Stress appraisal	Adjectives
Challenge	challenging, enjoyable, stimulating, exhilarating, informative, exciting, confident, hopeful, eager
Threat	threatening, fearful, worrying/worried, hostile, frightening, terrifying, anxious
Benign-positive	exhilarated/exhilarating, pleased/pleasant, happy/joyous, glad, relieved, relaxed/relaxing
Harm	angry, sad, disappointed, guilty, disgusted

Once within-case analysis on this level was completed for each interview, the results recorded in the individual matrices were linked through context and time in the narrative summaries. Next, the results of thematic analysis and the non-cross-sectional analysis described above were transferred in a summarised form into a single matrix incorporating all interviews, with one row per interview (Appendix C). This matrix formed a foundation for further cross-case comparative analysis and identification of within-sample patterns. In particular, it was used to compare the interviews of those participants who experienced challenge with those who did not, noting similarities and differences in experience context,

individual characteristics and whole experience patterns. As mentioned earlier, some observations were noted during the writing up of participant profiles, but it was not until the within-case analysis for challenge had been completed that cross-case analysis was undertaken. Where stress appraisal was concerned, it was important to compare not the coding for its discrete components such as personal stakes but the patterns of connections between them.

The matrix was also helpful in linking the challenge findings to the results on post-travel culture involvement, as it captured those findings in one place. The pathway to connecting challenge and post-travel culture involvement called for developmental analysis using another matrix. To explore 'local causality' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 132), the examples of challenging experiences and post-travel involvement were analysed using another matrix for a shared core, noting if the sources of the interest lying at the centre of post-travel culture involvement could be traced through context to any of the on-tour situations recalled by the participants, including those which resulted in experiences of challenge. Not all qualitative research engages in explaining observed patterns (Spencer et al., 2014). For this study, however, understanding why some did and not experience challenge, and did and did not seek post-travel culture involvement, was critical for offering empirically informed conjectures about how the two phenomena may be connected. Mason (2002, p. 175) notes that 'qualitative research is particularly good at understanding causality, again precisely because of its attention to detail, complexity and contextuality'. Unlike the positivist view on causality underpinned by the notions of measurable variance and 'observed regularities in associations of events', the approach described above was founded on the importance of processes that connect those events chronologically and contextually, illuminating how something comes to be (Maxwell, 2004, p. 244).

6.6. Conclusion

To summarise this chapter, this study was designed with many methodological decisions made a-priori. In particular, the interviews were guided by a qualitative 'instrumentation theory' developed for this study: what to ask about (content); how to ask about it or 'planned sequence of types of interview practices'; and when to ask (timing) (Wengraf, 2001, p. 108). Thinking about these questions can help maximise the relevance of the interview answers and their effectiveness in terms of depth, participant voice, truthfulness of their responses, and validity of potential conclusions without anticipating actual responses (Kvale & Brinkman 2009; Mason 2002; Wengraf, 2001). These and other decisions on sampling and data analysis were informed by stress, appraisal and coping literature and general methodological

advice from social sciences in the absence of qualitative tourism research utilising the same theories. However, several modifications to interview questions and data analysis methods were applied in response to the emergent nature of this qualitative research and the limitations of cross-sectional data coding as part of thematic analysis.

The methodology of this study is also distinguished by a considerable component of secondary analysis of tour operators' websites and brochures, and tours itineraries in order to create a diverse but balanced sample that could enable within-sample comparisons. Twenty-one Australian operators of small-group (maximum 25 passengers), single-destination tours were screened for centrality of culture to their tour offerings, revealing three types of businesses. Just over half of them used 'culture' as a theme to differentiate themselves or some of their tours, suggesting that 'cultural' is a relevant product descriptor. The following indicators of centrality of culture were developed to guide the analysis: company and tour positioning in websites and brochures, and at least half of tour days per itinerary with cultural activities.

This analysis also helped develop recruitment guidelines to enable more systematic sampling of tours and tourists and reduce the burden of assisting with participant recruitment for tour operators. Part of that process was development of a tour sampling matrix based on anticipated departures of four tour operators who agreed to participate in the study. The aim was to minimise the time invested by the companies into assisting the study, including into communication with the researcher. However, retrospectively, actual departures on selected tours should have been requested upfront and guidelines offered later, as it was found that while companies schedule multiple tours and departures, only a very modest number of them actually go ahead. As for the sampling of tourists, the demographic of 40+ emerged as a characteristic of the small-group tour market, but the profile of the actual sample is reported in the next chapter.

Regarding methodological issues addressed in this chapter, some could be considered as difficult-to-resolve limitations, such as capturing the appraisal-reappraisal process in recollections of past experiences and distinguishing between emotional, cognitive and coping responses. Others, however, are more accurately referred to as methodological decisions with their own advantages and disadvantages requiring alignment with research objectives and careful management: purposive sampling; reliance on prior theories to guide data analysis; discussing local causality in qualitative research; and the issues of degree of structure and researcher's personal involvement in the interview process.

Chapter 7 Tourist Profiles

7.1. Introduction

This chapter situates the study by reporting on the pre-selected characteristics of the participants and the tours they travelled on. Although for this reason it is the most descriptive out of three results and discussion chapters in the thesis, it still contains elements of discussion, as it aims to position those characteristics in the reviewed literature. Section 7.2 introduces the main destinations; profiles the tours by the structural small group tour characteristics introduced in Chapter 2, main tour themes, activities and sites; and offers a brief overview of the participants' age, gender, and education. Sections 7.3 and 7.4 on previous travel experience and motivation analyse the data collected through both closed and open-ended questions and are the focal points of this chapter, as these tourist characteristics function as key moderators of challenge appraisal. In particular, Section 7.4 sets the scene for Chapter 8, as it reports on the participants' cultural and personal development interests; establishes motivational relevance and congruence of the trips; and, thus, introduces many of the key themes, including 'challenge', examined further in that chapter from the perspective of coping with demanding contact situations. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings.

7.2. Destination, Tour and Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Although a total of 22 group tourists took part in the interviews, one participant from New Zealand was excluded to maintain a homogeneous sample in terms of the country of origin. Regarding the percentages of those who responded out of all the tourists who had travelled with each company, C2 had the highest result of 4.5%, followed by C4 (3.4%) and C3 (2.5%), all within the percentages of purposeful cultural tourists identified by Du Cros and McKercher (2015) but lower than the anticipated 6% rate of one tourist per departure of each tour. The lowest response rate of 0.7% from C1, the largest operators of all four, was caused by an issue with passenger recruitment that was outside of the study's control and forced the company to immediately withdraw from further participation.

Despite this obstacle, however, the number of interviews conducted with the passengers of C1 and C2 as generalist tour operators was still considerably higher than with the passengers of the specialists, even though their combined departures were comparable to C2 alone. Furthermore, the dataset was expanded by interviewing several participants about more than one trip, generating additional insights about Russia, Myanmar, India, Iran, and Turkey. While discussions about previous travel experience were part of all interviews,

extended discussions of other trips (Table 7.2.) were initiated only by a small group of participants. Most interviews lasted 1 to 1.5 hours as initially planned, but conversations with P6 and P18 were twice as long.

Table 7.1. Response rate

Destination	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total interviews per destination	Actual departures
Cuba		1			1	38
Egypt		1			1	21
India		3			3	68
Iran			1	2	3	74
Italy			1		1	90
Japan		2			2	77
Mexico		1			1	31
Myanmar		1			1	61
Russia			1		1	18
Sri Lanka		3	1		4	75
Turkey	2		1	1	4	178
Total interviews per company	2	12	5	3		
Response rate per company (%)	0.7	4.5	2.5	3.4		

The conversation with P4 shifted from Sri Lanka to India as a more memorable destination early in the interview when she was asked about her overall impression of Sri Lanka. Although Sri Lanka was still discussed in sufficient detail, a large part of the conversation was devoted to India. In regards to Russia, the interview with P6 started with her impressions of her very first visit to Russia in 1973 and progressed to her second trip in 2015. She was then interviewed during the same extended session about her 2014 trip to Myanmar with the same company, which she had mentioned in an email prior to the interview as something she would be happy to discuss. Although that trip ran a year before the one that had been pre-selected from C3 trips, it was included in the analysis because there was only one other participant who had also been to Myanmar. Under similar circumstances, P9 made a comment in an email that her trip to Iran with another company could be of more interest to the study, than the one to Mexico. Hence, she was interviewed about both Mexico with C2 and the trip to Iran with a specialist tour operator that had been contacted during the sampling stage but had not responded to the invitation to participate. As for P12, the pre-selected tour was her fifth trip to Turkey since her first independent visit

around 1990, and, similarly to P4 and P6, her first impressions played a significant role in her decisions to return.

Table 7.2. Participant profile: Destinations.

ID	Sampled tour	Year	Company	Extended discussions about other trips			
				Destination	Form	Company	Year
P1	Japan	2015	C2				
P2	Sri Lanka	2015	C2				
P3	Turkey	2015	C3				
P4	Sri Lanka	2015	C3	India	Tour	Other	2005
				India	Tour	Other	2014
P5	Sri Lanka	2015	C2				
P6	Russia	2015	C3	Russia	Tour	Other	1973
				Myanmar	Tour	C3	2014
P7	Myanmar	2015	C2				
P8	Italy	2015	C4				
P9	Mexico	2015	C2	Iran	Tour	Other	2015
P10	Iran	2015	C3				
P11	Cuba	2015	C2				
P12	Turkey	2015	C1	Turkey	Independent	NA	1990
P13	Iran	2015	C4				
P14	Turkey	2015	C1				
P15	India	2015	C2				
P16	Sri Lanka	2015	C2				
P17	Japan	2015	C1				
P18	Egypt	2015	C2				
P19	Iran	2016	C4				
P20	India	2016	C2				
P21	India	2016	C2				

In terms of the destinations, China, Ethiopia, France and Morocco, the countries that had been included in the recruitment guidelines, did not end up featuring in the final sample. As for the remaining 11 destinations, Sri Lanka, Turkey, India and Iran had the highest representation, followed by Japan and Myanmar, and the other five countries were represented by only one participant each. While the dominance of these four countries in the final sample is consistent with total departures, this correlation should not be overestimated. The interview numbers for Japan and Italy were significantly lower than the actual departures for both (77 and 90 correspondingly), and departures for Myanmar were not far behind. Regarding the representation of different regions, Asia (Myanmar, India, Sri Lanka, and Japan) had the highest participant numbers, and Latin America (Mexico and Cuba) and Europe (Italy and Russia) the lowest. Here, it should be noted that while Turkey was categorised as a European destination by the specialist tour operators, the results presented

further suggest that the participants' impressions of Turkey were mixed, sharing considerable similarity with the impressions of Iran as a Middle Eastern, Muslim-majority destination.

Despite the eclectic mix of destinations, several prominent similarities can be observed in the composition of the itineraries and the level of service provided. First, with few exceptions, all tours were comparable in group size (7 to 25), length (2-3 weeks), transport used (bus, train, flights), type of accommodation (3-5 star hotels), and number of one-night stops (Table 7.3.). The group sizes of C2 tours noticeably varied, compared to C3, but, overall, none of the tours exceeded the maximum group size of 25 set as the limit during the sampling of tour operators. Regarding the length of stops, all tours, except the one to Turkey with C1, had more extended (minimum 2 nights) than one-night stays. However, the tours operated by C3 differed from the rest in that they included several longer stays of over 3 nights on all itineraries. Second, all four companies advertised in their brochures the expertise and personal qualities of their guides, and the balance of organised activities and free time. Thus, all tour descriptions met many of the foundational small-group tour criteria used to differentiate their potential for delivering superior educational value from organised mass travel.

More prominent differences were found in the types of guides employed; availability of indicated free time; and the number of meals included. Tour operators work with different types of guides: tour leaders, driver-guides, step-on city guides, and on-site guides (Poynter, 1993). Table 7.3. differentiates between the types of tour leaders, or the guides who travelled with the groups for the duration of the tours and performed multiple roles. The tours organised by the two generalist tour operators were led only by local guides from the destinations and met the groups upon arrival. In contrast, the specialist operators C3 and C4 employed teams of guides: one national tour leader from Australia and one main local guide per tour.

The other two differences are closely interrelated. All companies were aware of the importance of free time, attempting to include at least one free day per trip and mornings, afternoons, and evenings at leisure, as well as half-days (Table 7.3). Comparing the value of one or two full free days to several evenings or afternoons is outside the scope of this chapter. Furthermore, differences between the destinations should be taken into consideration. However, the numbers of organised meals offered by the generalist and the specialist tour operators across the sample do further suggest that the former intended to provide more flexible programs with more opportunities for independent exploration by reducing the number lunches and dinners to one third of the itineraries, in most cases.

Table 7.3. Tour profile: Structural characteristics

Destination and company	Group size	Guide	Length	Free time	Transport	Accommodation	Meals	Number of one-night stops
Turkey (C1)	11 (2)	Local	15	Evenings (3) Half-days (1)	Boat, bus	Hotel (comfortable)	B (14) L (1)	7
Cuba (C2)	20	Local	17	Most evenings	Bus, flights	Hotel (3-4 star) Guesthouse (1)	B (14), L (11), D (2)	4
Egypt (C2)	9	Local	17	Some afternoons and evenings	Boat, bus, flights	Hotel (4-5 star) Boat (4)	B (14), L (6), D (6)	1
India (C2)	7, 11 (2)	Local	25	Full days (1) Half-days (7) Evenings (1)		Hotel (3-4 star) Houseboat (1)	B (23), L (5), D (6)	2
Japan (C2)	12, 20	Local	16	Some afternoons and evenings	Bus, train	Hotel (3-4 star) Guesthouse (2)	B (13), L (3), D (4)	-
Mexico (C2)	24	Local	17	Most evenings Full days (1) Afternoons (4)	Bus, flights	Hotel (3-4 star)	B (14), L (10), D (2)	5
Myanmar (C2)	7	Local	13	Some afternoons	Bus, flights	Hotel (3-5 star)	B (10), L (4), D (4)	1
Sri Lanka (C2)	8,10, 25	Local	17	Some afternoons	Bus	Hotel (3-4 star)	B (15), L (1), D (11)	1
Iran (C3)	16	National and local	15	Afternoons (1) Full days (1)	Bus, flights	Hotel (4-5 star)	B (All), L (12) D (14)	-
Italy (C3)	18	National and local	14	Mornings (3) Evenings (2)	Bus	Hotel (4 stars)	B (All), L (5) D (4)	-
Myanmar (C3)	20	National and local	16	Half-days (1)	Bus, flights	Hotel (comfortable)	B (All), L (12), D (9)	-
Russia (C3)	18	National and local	17	Full days (2) Afternoons (1)	Bus, train	Hotel (4 star)	B (All), L (7), D (6)	-
Sri Lanka (C3)	16	National and local	17	Afternoons (4) Full day (1)	Bus	Hotel (3-5 star)	B (All), L (10), D (13)	3
Turkey (C3)	17	National and local	18	Afternoons (2) Evenings (2)	Bus, flights	Hotel (4-5 star)	B (All), L (13) D (13)	2
Iran (C4)	7 (2)	National and local	17	Morning (1)	Bus, flights	Hotel (comfortable) Caravanserai (1)	B (16), L (16), D (16)	7

Table 7.4. Specialist tours: Themes and attractions.

Attractions	Italy	Russia	Turkey	Iran	Iran	Myanmar	Sri Lanka
	C3	C3	C3	C4	C3	C3	C3
Main tour theme(s)	Private estates, castles and gardens	Complex history; rich culture and art	Crossroads of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires	Prosperous ancient civilisation; Islamic nation	Prosperous ancient civilisation; Islamic nation	Buddhist culture; complex past	Ancient history; Buddhist culture
Main types of heritage sites	Private estates, castles and gardens	Historic buildings, religious sites (cathedrals and churches)	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments,	Historic buildings, archaeological sites, ancient monuments	Historic buildings, archaeological sites, ancient monuments,	Religious sites (temples, pagodas, monasteries)	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments, religious sites (temples, dagobas)
Heritage sites by time period							
Ancient (BC to 700AD)	1	-	15	10	7	1	7
Medieval (700AD to 1600)	7	4	4	5	7	8	6
Modern (1600 – 1900)	3	6	1	11	9	7	unspecified
Contemporary (1900 – present)	-	2	1	-	-	5	1
Museums and galleries	1	6	7	3	6	1	1
Nature-based Attractions	8	-	1	5	4	2	2
Townscapes and villagescapes	4	2	-	3	1	2	1
Markets	-	-	1	2	2	2	-
Agricultural heritage	2	-	-	-	-	-	1
Crafts	-	-	1	-	1	4	-
Performances	-	1	1	-	-	1	1

Table 7.5. Generalist tours: Themes and attractions.

Attractions	Egypt	Turkey	Myanmar	Sri Lanka	India	Japan	Cuba	Mexico
	C2	C1	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2
Main tour theme(s)	Prosperous ancient civilisation	Mix of highlights	Buddhist spirituality and heritage; captivating landscapes	Natural wonders; ancient history; Buddhist culture	Mix of highlights	Mix of highlights	Colonial heritage; revolution; vibrant atmosphere	Vibrant atmosphere; rich history and culture
Main types of heritage sites	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments	Religious sites (temples, pagodas, monasteries)	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments, religious sites (temples, dagobas)	Historic buildings, religious sites (temples)	Religious sites (temples)	Historic buildings	Archaeological sites, ancient monuments
Heritage sites by time period								
Ancient (BC to 700AD)	12	9	2	4	-	1	-	5
Medieval (700AD to 1600)	2	2	8	6	10	5	2	2
Modern (1600 – 1900)	1	2	6	unspecified	3	3	2	unspecified
Contemporary (1900 – present)	3	2	1	-	4	4	3	1
Museums and Galleries	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	-
Nature-based attractions	1	1	1	5	2	4	3	2
Townscapes and villagescapes	-	4	1	4	1	2	6	4
Markets	1	-	3	1	-	1	-	1
Agricultural Heritage	1*	-	-	2	-	1	2	-
Crafts	-	2	2	-	-	2	-	-
Performances	-	1	-	1	1	1	3	-
Home visits	1*	1	-	1	1	-	1	-
Visits to local institutions	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-

This inference about generalist tour operators assigning more value to free time is supported by the different approaches to food experiences communicated in the brochures. All four companies emphasised the important place of food in culture, but while C1 and C2 saw mealtimes as opportunities to explore the destinations, C3 and C4 stressed the depth of cultural insights received from carefully planned and selected meals.

As for the actual activities included (Table 7.4.), most tours were advertised as offering comprehensive overviews of these destinations but primary through sightseeing. Other common types of activities included in the main programs were shopping at local markets and attending a cultural performance. The least common activities were visits to local institutions, such as schools, and on one occasion a local medical clinic in India; private home visits; and participative experiences such as bathing in Turkey and Japan; lead pouring in Turkey; fan-making and dressing up in traditional costumes in Japan; and dancing in Cuba. All three types of activities were found only on the itineraries of generalist operators, but two participants who travelled to Iran on different tours with specialist operators were able to enjoy an opportunity to share a meal with a local family and friends of their local guides. To summarise, generalist operators offered a somewhat greater variety of activities with elements of ethnic tourism.

At the same time, as far as sightseeing is concerned, the programs were quite similar. As can be seen from the tables above, the main broad types of attractions in terms of quantity were built heritage sites, followed by depositories of culture (museums and galleries), nature-based attractions, including man-made such as gardens; tours of whole townscapes and villagescapes incorporating both man-made sites and landscapes where specific sites were not listed on the itineraries, such as the colonial towns of Sri Lanka, Cuba and Mexico; markets; agricultural heritage; and visits to artisan workshops showcasing traditional crafts. Regarding nature-based attractions, in some cases surrounding landscapes were inseparable from cultural heritage sightseeing, particularly in the case of gardens in Italy and Iran.

Among built heritage sites, strong emphasis was placed by all companies on the distant past, ancient to modern, up to late 1800s, with very few contemporary sites built between now and early 1900s. Although the periodisation is quite broad, it is consistent with the references to ancient and medieval history in the itineraries to indicate the age of the sites where specific dates were not provided and enables a succinct comparative overview of the tour programs.

What also unites this wide range of tour programs is the dominance of ancient (BC to 700 AD) and medieval sites (700 AD to 1600), with few exceptions: Russia, Myanmar, Japan, and Cuba. As for the main types of heritage sites included in the tour programs, those varied by destinations, in consistence with the main themes of the tours but with some similarities among selected countries. The most prominent differences between the itineraries of specialist and generalist operators to the same destinations and across the sample were in the number of museums and galleries, more popular on C3 and C4 tours, and in the popularity of short town and village tours in C1 and C2 programs.

Table 7.6. Participant profile: Socio-demographic characteristics.

Participant	Gender	Age	Education
P1	M	65	Bachelor
P2	F	69	Master
P3	M	69	Bachelor
P4	F	68	Doctoral
P5	F	74	Honours
P6	F	69	Master
P7	F	62	Grad Dip
P8	F	74	Diploma
P9	F	71	Master
P10	F	-	Doctoral
P11	F	65	Diploma
P12	F	57	Doctoral
P13	M	77	Bachelor
P14	F	69	Bachelor
P15	M	66	Diploma
P16	M	81	Master
P17	M	71	Bachelor
P18	F	61	Bachelor
P19	F	75	High School
P20	M	64	Bachelor
P21	F	64	Diploma

In terms of gender, notably more women (14) than men (7) took part in the study, compared to the relative gender balance among cultural tourists discussed in Chapter 2. As for age and education, with 20 out of 21 participants aged 60 and over, and with 73% (16 participants) having tertiary education, the sample characteristics in this study are consistent with prior research on senior tourists being a prominent segment in cultural tourism (Alén et al., 2017;

Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; Ramires, et al., 2017). The age-homogeneity of C1 and C2 passengers is, however, somewhat unexpected, considering that their average age at the time of company selection ranged between 40 and 65, compared to the age range of 57-81 in this study. The age of participants representing C3 and C4 is also of a higher bracket (68-77), compared to 50+. While these findings may suggest that the older tourists responded as the more culturally motivated, it is also possible that it was due to them being retired and having more discretionary time than the ones still employed (Huang & Petrick, 2009). Appendix D offers summative bio sketches of all participants. It contains additional socio-demographic information that was not systematically collected (discipline of the undertaken degree, occupation, employment/retirement status, marital status) but emerged as important in relation to individual interviewees. These and other key findings summarised in this table, including previous travel experience, are discussed further in the thesis.

7.3. Previous Travel Experience

The initial data collection was designed to include two closed questions on previous travel experience in order to allow more time for the main interview questions. However, in actuality the data was collected through both the questionnaire form and during the interviews, as the participants frequently drew comparisons between the sampled trip and their other travel experiences. Some of those comparisons were unprompted, but those interviewees who did not find their tour experience particularly challenging were also asked if they had had more challenging experiences in the past, which prompted a discussion of their other travels.

The interviews revealed that the closed questions about previous travel experience were, indeed, in some ways better suited for answering prior to the interview. When two participants brought the form to complete during the interview, they both struggled to recall the exact number of countries they had travelled to and the length of their stay without consulting their diaries and completed these questions at home. At the same time, the interviews also showed that the tourists had no difficulty recalling the actual details of those trips when they brought them up in the conversations, and those discussions helped clarify how some of the participants had interpreted the closed questions.

In response to Question 2, most participants were able to estimate how many countries they had travelled to for tourism (holiday) as main purpose in total, prior to undertaking the discussed tour. Two participants could not recall the exact number, advising that since they started travelling in their late teens, 'there are stacks of place' (P5) and they 'have done a lot of travelling' (P10). In addition, the first interview revealed how the question could be

misinterpreted, limiting some answers only to the trips made within 3-12 months prior to the interview. This limitation was addressed in two more interviews, but the total number of countries visited by P1 was not ascertained. This is where the insights about previous travel experiences obtained from the interviews and from Question 3 helped fill some of the knowledge gaps.

Question 3 invited the participants to name up to 10 countries from their previous travel experience and provide the following details: number of trips per country; total number of days spent in the country; and how different the cultures of those ten countries were to the Australian culture as their home culture (culture of origin) when they first visited them. Table 7.7. shows the answers to Question 2, as well as the combined number of countries per participant mentioned in response to Question 3 and those discussed in the interviews. It also shows the combined number of trips taken by each participant to the countries listed in response to Question 3 and mentioned in the interviews, and the number of regions out of seven (Europe, Asia, North America, Oceania, Middle East, Latin America, and Africa). As far as travel purpose is concerned, in significant majority of cases the additional trips mentioned in the interviews were described as pleasure holidays. However, VFR, business, volunteering and mixed purpose trips were also included to capture all relevant information about the participants' previous travel experience in terms of exposure to diverse cultural contexts.

In terms of the number of countries visited (Table 7.8.), the majority of participants can be described as having medium to very high travel experience, that is 11 countries and more, compared with the previous studies (Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Weaver et al., 2007). In the three cases where the total number of countries visited was missing, it was substituted by the numbers from the second column in Table 7.7. The relatively small group with the lowest previous travel experience had visited 6-11 countries. The largest subgroup consisting of nine participants had travelled to 11-23 countries. The six tourists in the high experience group had visited 36 to 100 countries. It must be noted, however, that these ranges are arbitrary, and the third subgroup could be further divided into high (36-49) and very high (61-100). In addition, a medium-to-high level had to be created for the two participants who indicated that they travelled to more than 15 and more than 20 countries.

Table 7.7. Number of countries visited.

ID	Total number of countries (Q2)	Number of countries (Q3 and interviews)	Number of trips (Q3 and interviews)	Number of regions (Q3 and interviews)
P1	-	10	10	3
P2	23	14	24	5
P3	15	11	34	4
P4	>15	10	21	6
P5	-	14	32	5
P6	15	12	24	5
P7	40	13	59	4
P8	37	19	21	6
P9	97-100	10	10	2
P10	-	17	34	6
P11	6	6	7	3
P12	20	12	59	5
P13	36	32	35	6
P14	22	22	33	3
P15	8	8	11	3
P16	15-20	12	15	6
P17	61	12	16	5
P18	9	7	9	4
P19	49	12	22	7
P20	>20	16	25	6
P21	21	16	19	5

Although the number of trips and regions are not based on these total numbers of countries visited, the groupings across all three parameters are still relatively consistent in terms of size and the participants belonging to them, with some exceptions highlighted in bold font. As far as the number of trips are concerned, the interview discussions revealed that when drawing on this information to assess the levels of previous travel experience, it is important to consider repeat trips to the same countries, something that was not considered in the reviewed literature (Weaver et al., 2007; Paris & Teye, 2010). In the present study it was found that out of seven participants in the high experience group by the number of trips, six made multiple return trips to several countries each, and five of them (P3, P5, P10, P12, P14) mostly to Europe.

Table 7.8. Levels of previous travel experience.

Previous travel experience	Range	Number of participants	Participants	Level
Number of countries visited for tourism (holiday) purpose (Q2)	6-10	4	P1, P11, P15, P18, P1	Low
	11-23	9	P2, P3, P5, P6, P10, P12, P14, P16, P21	Medium
	>15	2	P4, P20	Medium to High
	36-100	6	P7, P8, P9, P13, P19, P17	High
Number of trips (Q3 and interviews)	7-10	4	P1, P9, P11, P18	Low
	11-25	10	P2, P4, P6, P8 , P15, P16, P17 , P19 , P20, P21	Medium
	32-60	7	P3 , P5 , P7, P10 , P12 , P13, P14	High
Number of global regions (Q3 and interviews)	2-3	5	P1, P9 , P11, P14 , P15	Low
	4-5	9	P2, P3, P5, P6, P7 , P12, P17 , P18, P21	Medium
	6-7	7	P4, P8, P10 , P13, P16 , P19, P20	High

Among them, P3 reported making 20 trips to England and France (10 each); P5 travelled four times to France, and six to Italy; P10 made eight trips to the UK, five to France, and 6 to Italy; P12 visited Germany and Switzerland 20 times each; and P14 made five trips to France, three to Germany, and two to England and Italy each. Although it was not clarified during the interviews, it appears from the number of trips, the total length of stay and from some of the comments provided that P10 and P12 may have included VFR trips in their responses. Another exception were the participants who had travelled to many more countries than what they actually discussed in the interviews (P8, P7, P9, P17, P19), hence, their level of experience by the number of trips and regions appears to be lower. In summary, whilst these results suggest substantial travel experience, these indicators (number of countries, trips and regions) were primarily used to facilitate comparisons with

the literature. Such results do not communicate how tourists spend their time and how they travel (independently or in organised groups).

Regarding the latter, between the unplanned discussions of the participants' preferred travel mode at the time of the interviews and what they shared about their previous travel experiences, it was found that over two thirds of the participants continued to enjoy independent travel. One third identified themselves as predominantly independent travellers, and slightly more advised that they alternated between independent travel and organised tours, depending on the destination, or planned for independent stays before or immediately after tours. These are important findings, as they illuminate the diversity within this travel market that is more often associated with package holidays of different types (Farmaki et al., 2017; Kazeminia et al., 2015; Ramires et al., 2018). In line with the research reviewed by Alén et al. (2017), they highlight the influence of higher education levels and income on stronger preference for more independence in travel among senior tourists.

Table 7.9. Travel regions by popularity (number of trips).

Region	Number of trips	Countries
EUROPE	271	
Western Europe	108	Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxemburg, Switzerland, The Netherlands
Northern Europe	76	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, the UK
Southern Europe	72	Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain
Eastern Europe	15	Belarus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Slovakia
ASIA	129	
Southeast Asia	90	Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam
East Asia	19	China, Japan, South Korea
South Asia	18	Nepal, India
Central Asia	2	Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
NORTH AMERICA	30	Canada, the USA
OCEANIA	27	Fiji, New Zealand, Solomon Islands
MIDDLE EAST	24	Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, UAE
LATIN AMERICA	22	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru
AFRICA	14	
North Africa	9	Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia
Sub-Saharan Africa	5	Ethiopia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia

While more nuanced within-sample comparisons are drawn, where relevant, throughout the results chapters with reference to specific trips, some patterns observed in the results reported here are still noteworthy. The emergent ordering of the regions and even sub-regions listed in Table 7.9. by popularity (number of trips) is, for the most part, very similar to the data provided earlier in Table 6.3. on Australian residents' outbound trips by region in 2015-2017. Among them, all participants had been to at least one country in Asia; only one (P11) had never visited Europe; a third did not mention the Middle East and North America; and just over half of the sample did not name any Latin American and African countries among the places they had visited in the past. The main difference is that the available results on Europe and Asia reversed, with twice as many European trips recalled, compared to Asia. In the light of some of the outliers mentioned earlier in regards to the number trips, the results on the total number of participants per destination and the findings on repeat tourists appear to be more useful for further comparison.

Table 7.10. lists the top 20 countries by the number of participants, among which are 15 repeat travel destinations. The remaining nine were visited by less than five participants each, with only one repeat tourist per destination. From this table it can be observed that while the English-speaking destinations (the UK, the USA, New Zealand, Canada) were still among the most popular, they were surpassed by the European (Italy, France) and Asian (Vietnam, China, India) destinations, and by Turkey. As reviewed in Chapter 6, Table 6.1., in the national results for 2015 and 2016 (TRA, 2017b), the period when the participants travelled on the sampled tours, Turkey did not feature in the top 20; India was in bottom five; and Italy, France and China occupied the positions from 11 to 13.

As for the other most popular holiday destinations nationally, Thailand, Fiji, Singapore and Japan were mentioned by less than five participants each, with Indonesia acknowledged by a third of the sample, compared to its first position in the National Visitor Survey (TRA, 2017b). The results on repeat visitation and the significance of cultural difference help interpret the significance of these findings for understanding what kind of tourists were interviewed for this study.

Table 7.10. also suggests that repeat travel for the participants in this study was considerably unpopular. The exceptions include Italy, the UK, France, and New Zealand, followed by Germany, Indonesia, India, China, the USA, and Canada. The unpopularity of repeat travel is consistent with the prominence of travel motivation for novel experiences across the sample, and with the scarcity of evidence of repeat international travel in general (McKercher & Tse, 2012) and among cultural tourists in particular (Mechinda et al., 2009; Kastenholz et al. 2013). Higher novelty-seeking among the participants as senior tourists

(Pearce, 2005; Prayag, 2012) could also be explained by the urgency linked to physical aging (Patterson & Pan, 2007). These and other relevant motivation findings are discussed further in the chapter.

Table 7.10. Top 20 most popular destinations in the sample.

Destination	Total participants	Repeat tourists
Italy	14	12
Vietnam	13	1
UK	12	10
USA	12	4
China	11	4
Turkey	11	2
France	11	9
India	11	4
New Zealand	10	7
Cambodia	9	0
Canada	9	3
Spain	8	1
Germany	8	4
Greece	7	0
Indonesia	7	3
Portugal	6	1
Norway	5	0
Hungary	5	0
Brazil	5	0
Malaysia	5	1

At the same time, repeat travel has been found to be motivated by feelings of familiarity, comfort, and stronger place identity (Moniz, 2012; Mechinda et al., 2009). Indeed, Italy and France were the destinations that the participants referred to when describing Europe as ‘reasonably comfortable’ (P20) and ‘user-friendly’ (P3), and ‘just a slight variation of your own way of living’ (P15) in terms of the level of orderliness, but ‘different enough to make it, sort of, a break in the routine’ (P7) and comfortable enough ‘to go to slightly out of the way places’ (P14) on their own. The reasons for repeat travel to Italy, the UK (England and Scotland), France, Germany and New Zealand were found to be pleasure holidays (organised and independent) and visiting friends and family. The popularity of these European destinations is, therefore, also consistent with the literature discussing the tendency of older tourist to go away for longer (Huang & Petrick, 2009), particularly to Europe as a destination region for residential tourism among seniors from English-speaking countries (Correia et al., 2017). This is further illustrated by the results on total days spent at

destination (Appendix D). As P20 described his motivations to return to Italy, 'it's really because of the laid-back lifestyle: the food and cheese and drink'. As for the lack of interest in Indonesia (mainly the island of Bali), Thailand and Fiji, these findings are consistent with the low interest in beach holidays, as addressed further in the chapter.

Regarding the significance of cultural difference, the answers to Question 3 were also complemented by the interview data. Given the interest of this study in previous travel experience, the destinations to which the participants had travelled on the sampled tours were excluded, unless they were repeat visits. Not all destinations, however, were discussed in sufficient detail, and the available data on the significance of cultural difference and on total days spent at destination in relation to previous travel experience are provided in Appendix D.

As far as the sampled destinations are concerned, the responses to the closed question were found to be consistent with the interview answers. Similar to the results provided in Table 7.11., a significant majority of respondents reported during the interviews that the differences between Australia and the cultures they had experienced were significant. These findings further highlight that India, China and Turkey were not mainstream destinations in 2015-2016. The results have also been found consistent with the data on outbound travel from Australia. Among the few participants who had been to the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, majority evaluated the destinations in those regions as significantly different ('somewhat' and 'very') and travelled there only once, except Turkey. They stayed between 7 and 20 days in the ME and Africa, and 3 and 21 in Latin America, with most of the trips to the latter region mentioned as part of multi-destination tours, which could be due to such pragmatic considerations as time efficiency and cost, given the geographical distance (Enoch, 1996; McKercher & Guillet, 2011).

A greater diversity of responses was found about European destinations, including within the same sub-regions and for the same countries. Italy, for example, was evaluated as 'a little different' by five participants, and as 'somewhat different' by another nine, and similar results were found on France and Germany. The approximate length of stay per European trip (total days spent divided by number of trips) varied. It ranged from 4-5 day single visits, mainly to Eastern and Northern Europe (except the UK and Ireland) as part of multi-destination tours and cruises, to a variety of lengths between 7 and 25 days of mainly independent and often repeat trips, going up to 90 days in some exceptions, including single pleasure trips to Western and Southern Europe. The geographical distance between Europe and Australia is significant; however, as far as repeat travel is concerned, these findings support the

literature that discusses the differences in the likelihood of repeat visits between pleasure (here to Europe) and culturally (here to the ME, Africa and Latin America) motivated travel (Correia et al., 2017; Kastenholz et al., 2013). It must be noted that culturally motivated trips are also pleasure trips; however, as mentioned earlier and discussed further in the travel motivation results, trips to Europe were perceived to be easier and, therefore, more relaxing.

Table 7.11. Significance of cultural difference: Sampled destinations (Question 3).

Destination	No answer	A little	Somewhat	Very	Total
Cuba	1			1	2
Egypt	-		2	1	3
India	1			10	11
Iran	-			1	1
Italy	-	5	9		14
Japan	1			2	3
Mexico	1		1	2	4
Myanmar	2			1	3
Russia	-		1	1	2
Turkey	-		3	8	11

In regards to Asia, many destinations in this region, including such a popular tourist spot among Australians as Bali in Indonesia (Sobocinska, 2014), were described as substantially different. The popularity of Vietnam is consistent with the STV survey findings (Core Data, 2016) on senior Australians, and Cambodia was found to be often included as part of the same tour. Another destination, Japan, popular among Australians (TRA, 2017b), was mentioned only by three participants in total, two of whom were also interviewed about their trips. The reasons for repeat visitation to India and China were discussed in too few interviews to discern any patterns, but it is possible that some of the second visits were motivated by seeing how those countries had changed since the first visits before 1990s. The length of stay per trip in Asia was found to be very similar to the other regions, ranging between 7 and 35 days, but with more of longer trips of over 15 days to India and China.

On one hand, the findings on the unpopularity of Latin America, Africa and the Middle East support the recent survey results on Australians' travel preferences and risk perceptions (Core Data, 2016; TRA, 2017b), and suggest that many participants who had travelled there represented the more adventurous segment of Australian outbound tourists. This inference is further supported by the popularity of China and India in the sample, including recently made trips. They also support the conclusion by Le Serre et al. (2017) that when examining travel risk perceptions, it is more important to consider subjective rather than actual

(chronological) age. On the other hand, given the diversity of countries within Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, it is possible that the homogeneity of responses on those regions can be explained by fewer responses, compared to Europe. In their turn, the findings on the wide range of responses on Europe may be reflective of its own diversity (Kay, 2009).

How the participants interpreted the question about significance of cultural difference during the interview is addressed in the subsequent sections of this and the other two chapters. As for the closed question, what differences the participants had in mind when answering it prior to the interviews was not part of the interview schedule, and relevant findings emerged only from some interview. The aforementioned observations also do not account for when the trips were made and, consequently, how the destinations had changed over time and at what age the participants had visited them. Whilst the interviews provided relevant information on some trips and have confirmed that these are important considerations (Pearce & Kang, 2009), these questions were not included in the questionnaire for the reasons outlined in Chapter 6 and were not part of the interview schedule. Hence, the interview data on these questions was incomplete. Nevertheless, available interview findings were included in the analysis of other results where relevant, particularly on the additional trips listed in Table 7.2. earlier in Section 7.2.

7.4. Motivation

As discussed, the comparison of the results collected using both closed and open questions supports the initial decision to use a combination of methods. First, the interview answers (Table 7.12.) were found to be largely consistent with the responses collected via the closed multiple-choice question (Table 7.13.) in terms of the word choice; the range of main motivational themes (factors) across the sample; and their prominence. Second, as anticipated, in some cases the questionnaire answers and their discussion during the interviews helped develop a more nuanced understanding. As observed by Yeo et al. in Ritchie and Lewis (2006, p. 184) about interviews, 'an initial response is often at a fairly surface level'. Indeed, half of the participants opened up their responses about travel motivations by referring to previous interest in the destinations, including gained through prior visits, or to 'a set of circumstances' (P18). Most elaborated on their answers without prompting, as the interviews progressed, but some participants appeared to be less specific.

During analysis, the interview segments containing responses to the following direct questions about travel motivations were grouped together: 'What motivated you to travel to this country?', 'Did you look for any specific experiences that the trip had to offer?', and 'How well did the trip deliver on what you expected to get out from it?'. The third question was a

modification of a more theory-grounded question initially proposed for the interview schedule (Appendix A) and subsequently simplified. In combination, these questions addressed the alignment between the motivational relevance and congruence of the trips (Smith & Lazarus, 1993). They also served to seek a fuller understanding of the participants' motivations and to mitigate the issues of recall by engaging the participants in discussing both their reasons for travel and attainment of desired outcomes.

Responses were first analysed InVivo, indexing them using direct quotes to retain participants' language. The resulting open codes, many of which were included in Table 7.12., were then organised into more abstract themes. The broadly phrased items of the TCP scale were specific and diverse enough to assist with this stage of analysis. For example, P12's answers about wanting to 'do bizarre things', 'doing fun things' and 'experiencing new things' were grouped under 'experiencing something different', given the emphasis on experiencing things that are different in both the interview answers and the scale item, as well as under 'having fun' (Pearce & Lee 2005, p. 231). Some motivations, however, were considered distinctive enough to be included as emergent (E) dimensions of larger themes, for example, 'following the tour leader' under the theme of 'relationship'. Other emergent themes, also marked as (E) in Table 7.12., were found to form distinctive motives: 'nature', 'recognition', 'autonomy', and 'security'. Here, it must be noted, however, that while these four motives were drawn from the data, they are not new to the literature and belong to the factors excluded from the multiple-choice question. Another reason for consulting the scale was to enable further comparison of the questionnaire and the interview answers. While, as discussed in Chapter 6, theory-guided coding can impose an a-priori structure and meanings, it was applied after open coding.

7.4.1. Culture

The answers to both interview (Table 7.12.) and multiple-choice questions (Table 7.13.) were consistent with the findings from the existing literature in that participation in cultural tourism activities is motivated by a confluence of factors (Ramires et al. 2018; Jovicic, 2016). However, in addition to pre-travel interest in the destinations, six other observations point to the importance of cultural motivations among all participants: their prominence in the questionnaire answers (Table 7.13.); shared interest in experiencing different aspects of the destinations; the emphasis on travelling somewhere culturally very different to where they had been before; persistence in travel preferences; use of free time during travel; and differentiation by some participants between travel for relaxation and the tours they chose.

As can be seen in Table 7.13., a significant majority of the participants chose multiple indicators of motivation for novelty and host-site involvement, two of the main drivers of cultural tourism that share the meanings of cultural participation, learning, and entertainment, as discussed in Chapter 2. In the interviews, the participants also named several reasons, phrased considerably differently to the TCP scale items. Three of them were found to be more closely related to novelty, and six to host-site involvement. While some of these reasons, for example, 'going to places I haven't been before', are similar in meaning to some of those borrowed from Pearce and Lee (2005, p. 231) - for example, 'experiencing something different' - they were retained to acknowledge possible variations in how tourists may describe their motivations.

Among these emergent themes are also those that differ more substantially in *what* was experienced, *how* something was experienced, or both. Examples of the former include 'developing my knowledge of the history of the place' and 'developing my knowledge of the society'. When discussing their motivations, the participants in this study tended to specify what they were interested in, compared to the broad motivation for 'developing my knowledge of the area' (Pearce & Lee, 2005, p. 231). In regards to the *how*, some of the themes differ in the verbs used, for example, 'to explore the destination' and 'to see different places and structures', compared to 'learn new things' and 'develop my knowledge of the area' in Pearce and Lee (2005, p. 231). In light of the literature on the different meanings of learning and typologies of tourists by motivations, reviewed in Chapter 2 (Poria, 2013; Falk et al., 2012), these are important distinctions. The motivations that involve both the 'what' and the 'how' include 'learn about the culture' and 'experience different aspects of the place'. Finally, one emergent motivational theme, 'getting older and travelling while I still can', reflects the demographic of the sample. As Patterson and Pan (2007, p. 33) observe, senior travellers 'want to 'seize the moment' and take holidays that are more challenging and less passive in nature while they are still mobile and fit'. This theme was included under 'novelty' due to the context surrounding it, which was the interest in travelling to more new places, rather than in the possible self-development benefits of this activity.

Table 7.12. Travel motivations: Interview answers.

Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SL	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
Novelty																									
Having fun						✓									✓										
Experiencing something different						✓			✓						✓						✓		✓	✓	
Going to places I haven't been before (E)									✓		✓										✓		✓	✓	
Feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination					✓		✓							✓						✓					
Visiting places related to my personal interests			✓		✓		✓			✓				✓			✓				✓		✓		
Getting there before it becomes too developed (E)										✓															
Getting older and travelling while I still can (E)						✓										✓					✓			✓	
Escape/relax																									
Escaping cold weather (E)						✓																			
Nature (E)																									
Viewing the scenery	✓		✓													✓	✓				✓				
Seeing the animals		✓				✓																			

Note: JP (Japan), SL (Sri Lanka), TK (Turkey), IN (India), RU (Russia), MY (Myanmar), IT (Italy), MX (Mexico), IR (Iran), CU (Cuba), EG (Egypt)

Table 7.12. Travel motivations: Interview answers, continued.

Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SL	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
Relationship																									
Doing things with my companion(s)																									
Doing something with my family/friend(s)		✓								✓				✓			✓								
Being with others who enjoy the same things as I do				✓																					
Following the tour leader (E)				✓	✓					✓				✓											
Travelling with an expert tour leader (E)				✓						✓				✓											
Going to places where friends, family members or colleagues are from (E)				✓															✓						
Recognition (E)																									
Having others know that I have been there														✓		✓									
Autonomy (E)																									
Being independent										✓												✓			
Doing things my own way										✓															
Having my own experience										✓					✓							✓			
Security (E)																									
Being with others if I need them									✓						✓		✓								
Feeling personally safe and secure (E)		✓	✓				✓	✓				✓		✓				✓		✓			✓		
Enjoying ease and convenience (E)	✓	✓	✓		✓								✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	

Table 7.12. Travel motivations: Interview answers, continued.

Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SL	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
Stimulation																									
Feeling excitement				✓					✓																
Having unpredictable experiences							✓	✓				✓		✓											
Experiencing adventure					✓				✓												✓	✓	✓		
Exploring the unknown (E)			✓																						
Having physically active experiences (E)		✓																							
Self-development (host-site involvement)																									
To explore the destination (E)												✓													
Learning new things									✓	✓			✓		✓							✓			
Learn about the culture (E)			✓				✓	✓																	
Experiencing different cultures	✓			✓	✓																			✓	
Meeting new and varied people										✓															✓
Develop my knowledge of the history of the place (E)		✓	✓					✓				✓	✓		✓	✓				✓					
Developing my knowledge of the society (E)	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		
Meeting the locals		✓							✓	✓								✓							
Following current events					✓																				
To experience different aspects of the place (E)	✓									✓				✓					✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
To see different places and structures (E)		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓				✓		

Table 7.12. Travel motivations: Interview answers, continued.

Themes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SL	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
Self-development (personal development)																									
Develop my personal interests			✓																						
Knowing what I am capable of									✓												✓				
Gaining a sense of accomplishment			✓																		✓				
Gaining a sense of self-confidence									✓												✓				
Getting outside the comfort zone (E)																		✓					✓		
Challenging myself (E)									✓																
Developing skills and abilities			✓						✓												✓				
Mastering new environments (E)			✓															✓							
Facing my fears (E)																					✓				
Self-actualize																									
Gaining a new perspective on life							✓									✓					✓				
Understanding more about myself									✓																
Feeling inner harmony/peace					✓																	✓			

Table 7.13. Travel motivations: Multiple choice answers.

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	JP	SL	TK	IN	SL	RU	MY	IT	MX	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN
Novelty																					
1. Having fun	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
2. Experiencing something different	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
3. Feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓		✓		✓		
4. Visiting places related to my personal interests		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓			✓				
Escape/relax																					
5. Resting and relaxing															✓						✓
6. Getting away from everyday psychological stress/pressure				✓	✓																
7. Being away from daily routine	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓						
8. Getting away from the usual demands of life				✓	✓				✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		
9. Giving my mind a rest				✓																	
10. Not worrying about time				✓										✓							
11. Getting away from everyday physical stress/pressure				✓	✓				✓							✓					
Relationship																					
12. Doing things with my companion(s)	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓				✓		✓					
13. Doing something with my family/friend(s)		✓							✓					✓				✓			
14. Being with others who enjoy the same things as I do	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓							
Stimulation																					
15. Feeling excitement					✓		✓				✓				✓						
16. Having unpredictable experiences					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
17. Having daring experience							✓								✓		✓				
18. Experiencing adventure					✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 7.13. Travel motivations: Multiple choice answers, continued.

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	JP	SL	TK	IN	SL	RU	MY	IT	MX	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN
Self-development (host-site involvement)																					
1. Learning new things	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
2. Experiencing different cultures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
3. Meeting new and varied people	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		✓			✓
4. Developing my knowledge of the area	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
5. Meeting the locals	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6. Observing other people in the area	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		
7. Following current events					✓		✓							✓							
Self-development (personal development)																					
8. Develop my personal interests					✓			✓		✓				✓							
9. Knowing what I am capable of					✓		✓				✓			✓				✓			
10. Gaining a sense of accomplishment			✓								✓			✓				✓			
11. Gaining a sense of self-confidence							✓				✓										
12. Developing my skills and abilities					✓																
13. Using my skills and talents					✓									✓							
Self-actualize																					
14. Gaining a new perspective on life					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
15. Feeling inner harmony/peace																					
16. Understanding more about myself					✓		✓				✓	✓									
17. Being creative														✓							
18. Working on my personal/spiritual values																					

Although, the tourists were more selective in the interviews, their responses were similar in many ways to the multiple-choice answers. As can be seen from Table 7.12., only P5 referred to escape among her travel motivations in an interview. In all other cases, the participants' relationship with this factor became known only when they were asked to comment on their multiple-choice answers or referred to it in a different context. In the multiple-choice question, the relaxation-related motives ('resting and relaxing', 'giving my mind a rest', and 'not worrying about time') were selected by only three participants (P4, P15, P20), none of whom described their holidays as relaxing in the interviews. When asked directly about the need to relax, P4 confirmed that in travelling to India she was looking 'to step out of the daily grind' having 'fairly hectic lives at home' and until recently highly stressful jobs. She also noted that she had felt very 'relaxed' about passing on the physical activity of climbing the Sigiriya rock in Sri Lanka and waiting for her group to complete the activity. However, as far as mental stimulation is concerned, having an expert tour guide was the first reason she identified when asked why she had decided to travel to Sri Lanka. As for the other two participants (P15 and P20), in contrast to their questionnaire answers, both spoke at length about how they had chosen to travel to India to experience a very different culture and, to various degrees, 'get out of the comfort zone'. Furthermore, over half of the sample chose one or more motives implying escape from stress or daily routine rather than from mental or even physical activity.

Similar findings were inferred from the comments provided by a majority of participants (18) in response to the questions about whether they found their trips relaxing or stimulating, and how they spent their free time, if they had any. Among them, eight interviewees, who travelled to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, India, Turkey, Egypt, Iran and Russia, emphasised the difference between the type of tours chosen for this study and holidays for rest and relaxation, where 'most of the time it will be lazing by the pool or on the beach' (P2). The answers included comparisons with sun-sea-sand escapes, such as those enjoyed at Fiji (P18) or Bali (P2, P20), where people visit regularly, 'have a great time; they know what's there, and it's comfortable; and it's no surprise' (P20).

The contrast itself between the tours and relaxing holidays is somewhat expected, as sightseeing tours are known for having busy itineraries (Enoch, 1996; Torres, 2015), and it does not validate the conclusion about centrality of cultural motives. What is noteworthy, however, is how the sampled tours were described as 'cultural experience[s]' (P18), rich in cultural and historical facts, and motivated by learning; wanting to 'get out and about and engage in the culture' (P2); and experiencing 'how people live' (P7, P20). The answers of P5 and P6 also reflect this:

I must admit the guide really liked his country, liked his work and wanted to show it all to us, and if you were the type who was up there for a bit of sun, fun and shopping, you may have got bored walking around, listening to King this and King that. But for me, no, perfect. (P5, Sri Lanka)

I don't do relaxing holidays. If I travel to a country, I really want to learn about the country. So, I mean Russia for me was special, obviously, but, certainly, any country to which I travel, I'm going because I really want to learn about the country and experience a different culture, you know. That for me is what travel is about. I don't do lying on beaches very much. (P6, Russia)

Many participants also noted that the sampled tours represented the kind of travel they were currently enjoying or had always enjoyed doing, among whom were also repeat customers of the participating companies. In addition, these active and 'enriching' (P3) tours were compared with going somewhere more 'familiar' (P19), namely Europe, particularly Italy and France, and with staying in capital cities to 'switch off' (P3) and 'just wander around' (P19) at the end of a tour. Furthermore, the motivation to explore the destination and 'get every little tiny bit out of it that I can get' (P13) was also communicated by others when they spoke about how actively they spent their free time: 'doing all of them [optional activities]' (P12); 'join[ing] up with the guide and hav[ing] a look at the night life' (P1); and 'walking for another couple of hours' (P19) after the tour. They did, however, also acknowledge the importance of having 'parts of it where we were able to relax' (P2), such as having minimum two-night stops and an opportunity to 'spend a bit of free time by pool and just catch your breath' (P4).

As the quotes above suggest, for the tourists in this study the idea of fun was to have holidays that stimulate the mind and the senses albeit to various degrees, as will be discussed further. This may explain why only two participants (P5 and P12) spoke about having fun in the interviews, in contrast to the twelve who indicated it as one of their motives in the multiple-choice question, and why P7 hesitated when attempting to fill in her questionnaire during the interview: 'I suppose I should put 'having fun'? Seems a bit dreary if I don't'. These findings reaffirm the secondary role of relaxation among tourists highly motivated by cognitive activity (Packer & Ballantyne, 2004), while simultaneously supporting the importance of some degree of relaxation in culturally motivated travel (Jovicic, 2016; Pearce & Lee, 2005). The rest of this section examines more closely which aspects of culture the participants were interested in, within the context of the discussed tours, and how they preferred to engage with them.

More than half of the participants referred to culture as something to be experienced and consisting of different elements of interest, demonstrating product-based thinking (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). Two broad groups of interests reflecting this perspective and the differences between them were effectively summarised by P7 (Myanmar) and P3 (Turkey), as shown in Table 7.14. The first group aligned with the perspective on culture as 'social' and 'day-to-day' (P7), or 'current' and 'contemporary culture' (P3). The second group of interests was encompassed by the theme of 'past culture' and its focus on history (P3). A notably different perspective on culture as a system of shared meanings, values and patterns of behaviour was expressed only by P19, closely resembling Kluckhohn's (1951) definition quoted in Chapter 2.

While the grouping of cultural interests by the time focus (past or present) may appear as the simplest and most obvious way of grouping tourists, it was how many of them explained where their motivations lay. The emphasis placed by P7 on the social nature of culture is also found in the meaning of 'contemporary culture' as 'way of life' proposed by Richards (2001). Drawing on Richards (2001), from here onwards this view on culture will be referred to as 'present culture', as the middle ground between the two descriptions provided by P3 and P7. As for 'past culture', besides its link to history and cultural heritage, which will be closely examined further, the differentiation between 'lower case' culture and 'higher culture' (P3) was found only in one interview, pointing to the erosion of this dichotomy from tourists' perceptions and notions of culture (Smith & Richards, 2013a).

All participants, including those who wanted to 'visit places related to personal interests', 'develop knowledge of the history of the place' (Table 7.13.), and who travelled with specialist operators, could be categorised as general cultural tourists. This group travelled with relatively broad interests in mind, wanting to learn about different aspects of the places they visited, as can be seen from Table 7.15. Even P3, who was much more interested in the history of Turkey than its 'contemporary culture', arrived several days earlier before the start of the tour to explore the markets of Istanbul with a local guide, and 'to chat to her about a whole lot of things to do with accommodation, social customs, food, what they ate, and so on'. Here, it should be noted that the purpose of Table 7.15. is to communicate the spectrum of the participants' cultural interests and clarify what the term 'culture' meant to them. That is why it combines the themes that emerged not only from discussions of primary and secondary motivations, but also from the narrations of specific activities and encounters, that is what the participants were interested in during the trip and what fell within their travel motivations.

Table 7.14. Meanings of culture: Tourist perspectives.

Meaning of culture	P3	P7	P19
Present culture (also social, contemporary, current)	Rather than the <i>current culture</i> , which we were obviously exposed to, my main interest and focus on this kind of trips is the historical context and background... <i>Contemporary culture</i> is quite interesting. When you go to Indonesia, that's what you engage with, but if I go to somewhere like Italy or France, the different food, the different way of doing things is interesting but, in terms of the overall cultural theme, the kind of art, the kind of concerts they like to have, how they interact socially, you don't get exposed to huge amount of that in four weeks anyway. They [C3] don't really spend time looking at <i>current</i> society... They are not primarily, I don't think, focused on engaging with <i>contemporary</i> lower case [questioning] culture of ordinary people's interactions <i>day to day</i> .	It's usually, a lot of it is just the <i>day to day</i> stuff, the social. I've got <i>social culture</i> , but is there such a word? So that side of it, how people live: the school system in a country; I guess, the level of education and literacy levels; and yeah, people's rituals, religion, beliefs, and their shops, and how they live their <i>day-to-day</i> life. I like walking into their clothes shops or furniture shops and just seeing the difference between the furniture they may buy or the clothes they may buy compared to us	
Past culture	My interest is really more in the <i>past culture</i> than the present culture... The C3 are cultural in a sense that they look at <i>history</i> ... If you look at the details of the itineraries of C3, you will see that it's historical sites, cultural institutions. It's not about going spending the weekend with a normal family kind of thing.	I just couldn't stop asking the guide questions about, I guess, the social structure, and the place, and the people, and the <i>history</i> of it... While you are there, you are just so full of this interest in the cultural stuff, the <i>history</i> .	
System of meanings, values, and shared patterns of behaviour			I don't think culture is about material objects and tangible aspects, but how they [locals] interpret them and perceive them, and how it comes to impact upon their effective understanding of culture. I think it would have an effect to be part of something which has fabulous history, and I think this brings about their shared patterns of behaviour and interactions, or their effective understanding, and they learn over generations through their socialisation, so that they become a more cohesive group.

Given that most participants spoke at length about their interest in ‘the way people approach things’ (P14) and ‘the way people live their lives’ (P1), the discussion of findings on their interests in the ‘present culture’ has been organised around the dimensions of culture according to Littrell’s definition (in Richards, 2001, p.7), as cited in Chapter 6. Although this definition is closely aligned with the language used by the participants, some of the wording was modified and additional sub-dimensions were introduced to better reflect the findings (Figure 7.1.). The theme of ‘living conditions’ was introduced and was combined with Littrell’s ‘what people do’ under ‘how people live’, a common tourist motive (MacCannel, 1976) and a phrase found in many interviews. The theme of ‘what people are like’ was added as an emergent dimension, closely related to ‘what people do’, and ‘what people make’ was changed to ‘what people create’. While both wordings of the latter are synonymous, the revised one more effectively communicates the meanings of both ‘artistic and intellectual works, activities and practices’ (Ivanovic, 2008, p. 75) and appears more specific and inclusive than the understanding of ‘making’ as ‘artworks, artefacts, cultural products’ (Richards, 2001, p. 7). These dimensions were not applied, however, to Table 7.12. to avoid repetition due to the intersections between them.

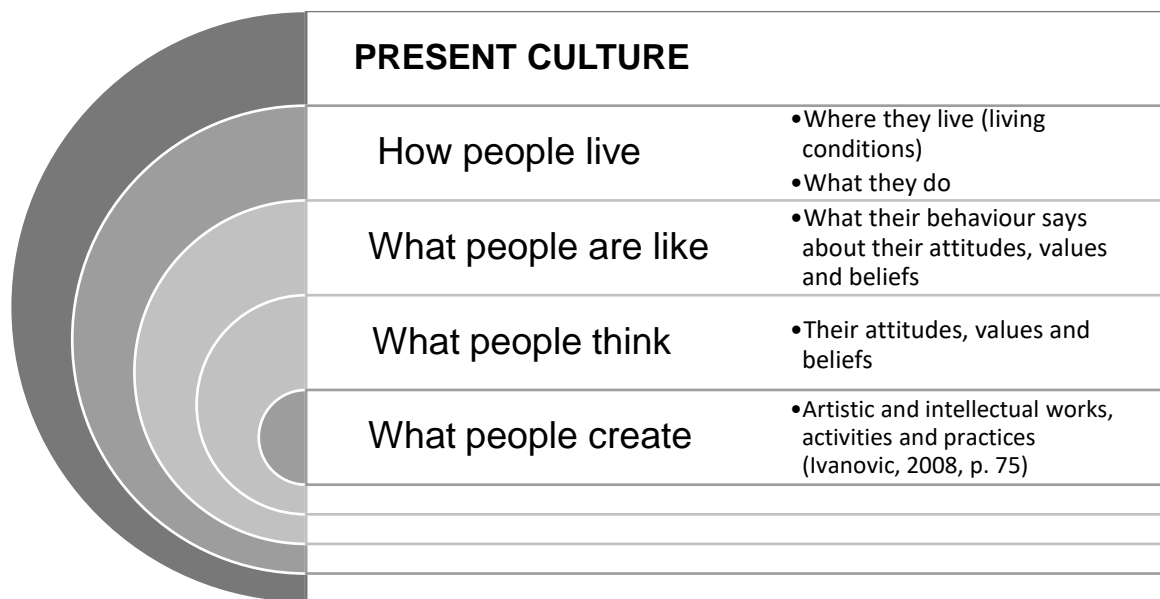


Figure 7.1. Dimensions of present culture.

The interest in ‘how people live’, the most prominent theme, was found to include not only ‘what people do’, such as everyday activities and associated normative behaviours, or, as several participants phrased it, ‘day-to-day life’ (P7) or ‘day-to-day culture’ (P15), but the quality of living conditions also. Socio-economic conditions were the most discussed in relation to a mix of destinations, but particularly South Asia. Underpinned by the development discourse, the interviews about Japan, Iran and Turkey contained expressions

of admiration for such advancements in transportation means and road infrastructure, while a concern for low living standards was expressed about India and Sri Lanka. The second most prominent sub-group of themes was the political situation (political regimes and military conflicts). Here, it should be acknowledged, however, that in some cases, even though the participants were interested in 'how people live' and spoke about it in the context of experiencing a different culture, it remained somewhat unclear whether they saw it as part of culture or not. For example, P20 reported that 'to go and see the different way that people live and what they eat and drink and their culture' was more attractive to him than nature-based experiences, and P8 advised that she travels because 'I'm interested in other, obviously, other places, other cultures, other people, other ways of life'. Nevertheless, overall, the findings seem to support the literature on the broadening meaning of culture (Richards, 2001a; Waterton & Gayo, 2018).

As can be seen from Table 7.15., in terms of 'what people do', participants spoke about a number of different life domains and behaviours. The labels for both the organising themes (e.g. living conditions, social structures) and the sub-themes (e.g. pollution, class system) were either InVivo codes, retaining the participants' language (e.g. pollution, class system), or were close descriptions of what the participants spoke about (e.g. social structures). Among the least popular themes were language and traditions, while the dominant ones were dress, religion and spirituality, social structure, and gender relations. The last two were found to be closely related when discussed in the context of gender inequality, but not all participants who spoke about gender relations framed their answers in terms of social order, and vice versa. Food, a theme mentioned in many interviews as a cultural interest, was found to be quite peripheral in terms of its importance to the participants. Of particular interest to the participants was what the locals wear, eat and buy; how they spend their leisure time; how they set up their homes; what is different about their transport system; how they order food, and how they teach at schools. In other words, a majority appeared interested in the 'different ways of doing things' (P5), including 'how they [locals] approach religion' (P14) in terms of actual rituals, ceremonies and service, rather than assessing the hosts' 'economic wellbeing' in terms of what they can afford and the quality of it, and what it says about the countries' level of socio-economic development. Overall, however, the majority displayed an interest in both the living conditions and actual behaviours. In regards to 'what people create', this aspect was the least discussed across the sample.

Observable behaviours are informed by the underlying attitudes, values and beliefs. To some degree, many participants shared some interest in these elements of culture, as they commented on the 'pervasiveness' (P4) of religion in people's lives in India, Sri Lanka and

Myanmar, and its importance in Russia, Turkey, Egypt and Iran; the role of close family and community ties; friendly and hospitable attitude to tourists; treatment of ethnic minorities, older people, and people with disabilities; work ethic, and other observations. In this sense, many spoke of their impressions of 'what people are like' based on their observations of their behaviours and evidence of their actions, as well as direct experiences of how they or other people around them were treated.

The quotes below illustrate these processes of meaning-making:

... the beauty of some of the monuments and national parks and things like that, but even just little parks. You'd see people, you know, trimming trees, a bit like full scale size bonsais: people with scissors, you know, trimming off the leaves to make the tree look more beautiful. That appreciation of aesthetic beauty, I think is something that we don't have as much of in our society perhaps. (P1, Japan)

I use a walking stick, and I was quite surprised at every, every single time we went somewhere, a chair was offered me. It really, really surprised me. Now, people would push in, sit down on the tram or the bus or wherever we were, on the train, and then I would sort of hobble in a bit and without exception, I've got to say, every single time, I was really amazed. So that's more than I would get here. And it was almost always men. (P12, Turkey)

As can be seen in Figure 7.2. below, observation was found to be the preferred mode of engagement, even though majority of the participants selected 'meeting the locals' and 'meeting new and varied people' as their motivations in the questionnaire (Table 7.13.). For half of the participants from all four companies, organised contact opportunities and unplanned encounters were the highlights of their trips, but as P14 summarised it, mainly 'it was 15 days of observation'. Several participants, mostly who travelled with C2, a generalist tour operator, actively looked for opportunities for interaction with the locals. Just as many from a mix of companies advised that they were limited, noting the superficial and contrived nature of brief interactions with shopkeepers and hotel staff, who they perceived as 'part of the tourist tribe' (P20), in contrast to 'contact with ordinary people' (P5). These findings suggest that while older tourists may, indeed, be less interested in social interaction than in sightseeing (Ramires et al., 2018), their approaches to travel can also differ substantially.

Table 7.15. Cultural interests.

Theme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SR	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
LIVING CONDITIONS																									
Environmental																									
Pollution					✓									✓											✓
Noise																			✓					✓	
Smell																			✓						✓
Political																									
Political regimes			✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓		
Military conflicts			✓			✓								✓	✓		✓			✓			✓		
Socio-economic																									
Economic wellbeing		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Commercial activity					✓		✓																✓		
Health and healthcare				✓	✓					✓			✓											✓	✓
Education		✓								✓						✓				✓				✓	
Population density	✓																		✓					✓	✓
Infrastructure						✓							✓			✓	✓								
Technology	✓																								
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES																									
Transport	✓		✓											✓											
Food	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		✓	
Shopping		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓											
Recreation	✓										✓	✓				✓	✓								
Local media					✓																		✓	✓	
Home life									✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓			✓			

Table 7.15. Cultural interests, continued.

Theme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SR	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN
DRESS AND APPEARANCE			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓
SOCIAL STRUCTURES																								
Wealth distribution								✓											✓		✓		✓	✓
Class system		✓						✓											✓				✓	✓
GENDER RELATIONS									✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY TIES		✓												✓					✓		✓			
RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OTHER ATTITUDES AND VALUES																								
Appreciation of beauty	✓						✓																	
(Dis)respect for older people and people with disabilities														✓					✓				✓	
Hospitality	✓		✓											✓					✓			✓		
Gentleness						✓													✓					
Friendliness			✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Happiness/Positivity				✓	✓						✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	?	✓
(In)tolerance				✓	✓			✓						✓				✓	✓				✓	
Work ethic	✓																			✓				
Martyrdom																							✓	

Table 7.15. Cultural Interest, continued.

Theme	1	2	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
	JP	SL	TK	SL	IN	SR	RU	MY	MY	IT	MX	IR	IR	CU	TK	IR	TK	IN	SL	JP	EG	IR	IN	IN	
TRADITIONS	✓																		✓						✓
LANGUAGE							✓												✓		✓				
INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC WORKS AND PRACTICES																									
Traditional performing arts		✓																						✓	
Crafts			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓										✓
Opera							✓																		
Ballet							✓																		
Dance				✓														✓					✓		
Art				✓	✓		✓			✓				✓											
Literature							✓																✓		
Festivals and events					✓																				
Music							✓							✓				✓							
PAST CULTURE																									
Built heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
History		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			?	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		

As reviewed earlier, the itineraries varied by the amount and frequency of free (leisure) time, not only between generalist and specialist tour operators, but also among the tours by the same companies. For example, the tours to India by C2 and to Russia by C3 offered substantially more free time than some of the others, and three out of four participants who had travelled with them (P6, P15, P21), spoke about making the most of those opportunities. The responses of those who had gone to Iran and Sri Lanka (P4, P10, P13, P19) with the specialist tour operators about having little free time were also consistent with the itineraries. At the same time, full free days were not even acknowledged in several cases, while those who had none and who noted that ‘there was not a lot of down time’ (P7), chose to ‘escape a few half days’ (P7) to go for walks on their own, or spent the little rest time that they had participating in optional day tours.

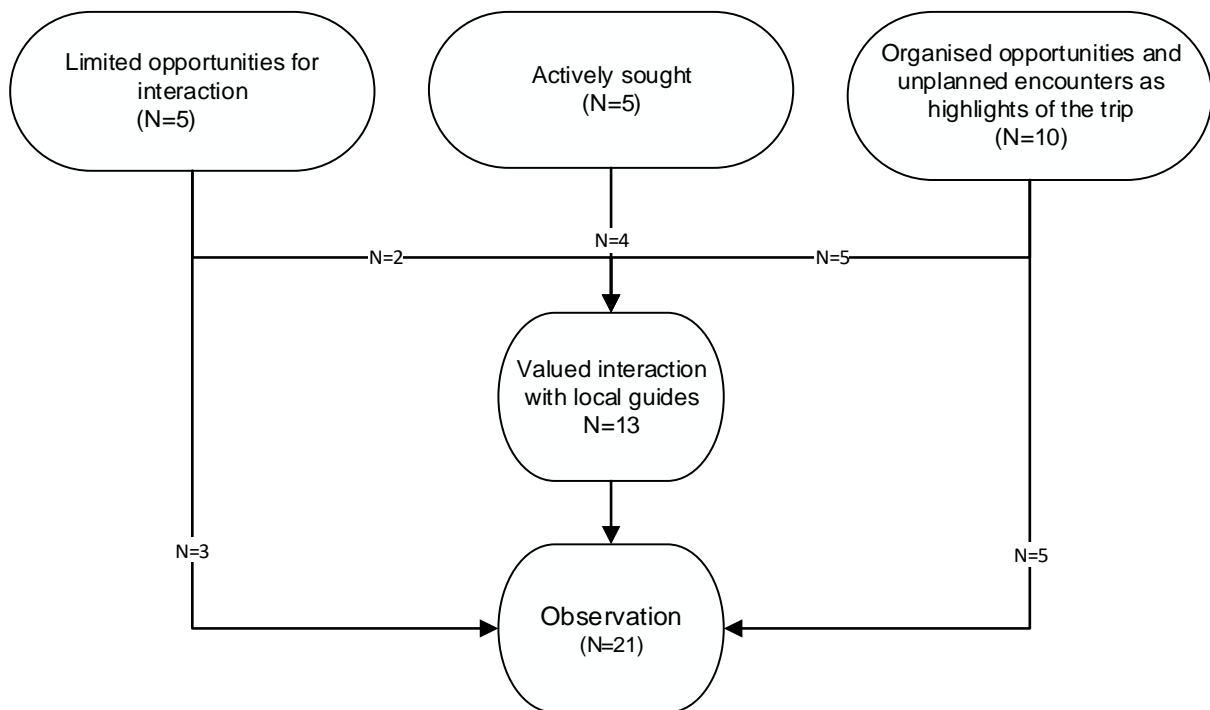


Figure 7.2. Perspectives on opportunities for interaction with locals.

Where the different perspectives converged was the interaction with local guides. Consistent with tour guiding literature (Cohen, 1985; Walker & Moscardo, 2016) and the benefits of small group tours reviewed in Chapter 2 (Shackell, 2016, May 5), a large group also emphasised the value of the knowledge they gained from interacting with the local guides. Seeing them as ‘locals’ but not necessarily as ‘typical representative[s] of the host country’ (Holloway, 1981, p. 388), the participants stressed the benefits of learning about the ‘viewpoints of the average person’ (P12), as well as their ‘personal viewpoints’ (P12) on private matters such as religion, marriage, and having children (Walker & Moscardo, 2016).

In the countries such as Myanmar and Mexico that the participants considered as developing, some noted that theirs 'is one perspective' (P7), often of 'University educated' (P9), 'middle-class' (P7) representing the minority. Others observed that 'a guide is always going to be a bit more circumspect' (P16), inclined to sound more positive and 'proud' (P11) when it comes to domestic matters.

Despite the diversity of perspectives, several participants were also found to share P19's explicit realisation that the knowledge of the past can be used to understand the present, and how people's relationship with their past tells others what they value and believe in, or 'what people are like'. They commented on the importance of learning 'what they [hosts] look upon as part of their society' (P20) with 'cultural pride' (P6) when visiting cultural heritage sites, and 'the origins of particular architectural styles or particular customs or particular food, the fact that those go back so far' (P3). Overall, however, relatively few displayed an active interest in finding out for themselves 'what other people think' than 'how they live' or 'what they are like'. Those who did, stated that gaining a better understanding of the hosts was central to why they travel, emphasising the importance of 'deal[ing] with people' (P15) and 'relat[ing]' (P7) to them through direct interaction; trying to understand what makes them 'tick' (P13), and 'see[ing] things from other people's perspectives' (P6).

In many cases, however, the participants' experiences of the countries' present culture and history appeared to be somewhat disconnected, as they talked separately about them, without drawing links. As far as the interest in the past culture is concerned, drawing on Poria's (2013) typology, two thirds could be categorised as 'must see' tourists, interested in the main attractions and gaining 'a pretty general, broad look into what this society was about' (P20), including a general interest in history. Even when learning about history was not a primary reason to travel and was mentioned only briefly, many still reported that it was an important aspect of their trip. Only two participants openly acknowledged that to them the history of their respective destinations was of little interest (P12, P16). Several participants reported travelling to 'develop my knowledge of the history of the place' (Table 7.13.), but only a group of four displayed the distinctive characteristic of Poria's (2013) 'must learn' type of tourist, motivated by developing their substantial pre-existing knowledge of the history of their respective destinations (P3, P6 Russia, P10, P14). Among them, three travelled with specialist tour operators.

Despite the differences in the strength of interest to learn about history, most participants spoke about 'appreciation of the beauty' (P1), 'historical significance' (P18) of the places they visited, or both. Reflecting the dominance of ancient and medieval sites on the

itineraries, many expressed the strongest fascination with the oldest attractions, particularly those who had travelled to Turkey, Iran, Egypt and Mexico, pointing out 'amazing [artistic] achievements' (P10) of prosperous ancient civilizations. Four participants also drew comparisons with Australia, noting that 'in Australia we don't have that, I guess, not ancient history' (P19); and on one occasion even questioning 'what history, what culture do we have?' (P15). The long history of 'the Aboriginal community' was acknowledged only by P15, who expressed admiration for their family and community ties and 'their affinity with the land', and by P2 who clarified that such 'long and interesting history' as in Sri Lanka was 'not in our Western society' in Australia. Only three participants travelled with some interest in 'contemporary histor[ies]' (P6) of Russia, Turkey, and Japan, and just as few shared their impressions of local museums (P3, P6, P12).

In summary, the findings suggest that the group tourists examined in this study, while seeking escape, did not seek relaxation in the mental sense, and that the escape/relax motive in Pearce and Lee's (2005) TCP scale may need to be divided into two factors in future quantitative studies when applied in similar contexts. The participants were found to opt for cultural, rather than nature-focused or beach holidays, illustrating a persistence in travel preferences, indicative of serious cultural tourism (Stebbins, 1996). This enduring quality of motivation for cultural holidays may explain why their specific travel interests came through not so much the discussions of travel motivations but of the details of the actual experiences, examined in Chapter 8.

7.4.2. Stimulation and Security

In contrast to the interview findings about the importance of mental stimulation, few participants explicitly framed their answers regarding travel motivation without prompting around the notions of excitement (P4, P7), adventure (P5, P7, P18) and 'exploring the unknown' (P3), comprising the stimulation factor in the TCP scale. Out of the thirteen participants who chose at least one of the four stimulation indicators used in the questionnaire, eleven did not bring them up when talking about the tours. As for those who did not select any of the TCP stimulation indicators in the form, seven out of eight also did not mention them in the interviews, making it a great majority in total (18 out of 21). Several conjectures as to why this was the case are proposed below.

First, these motives were found to share meanings with several other travel motivations, suggesting not only a spectrum of preferences for the degree of unpredictability in the experiences among the participants, but also a certain undecidedness in reporting those preferences. When asked to clarify how they understood these stimulation-related motives, a

third repeated what they had said earlier about their motivations for novelty ('experiencing something different', 'having fun') and host-site involvement ('learning new things', 'meeting locals'). They shared the view that 'it's all an adventure', including going to Hobart (Tasmania, Australia), as noted by P5, because 'it's new and it's different', and because there is always some learning involved. An element of 'surprise' in discovering new places (P20) while 'remain[ing] open' (P6) was another recurrent theme.

Some also offered answers suggesting their readiness to cope with a degree of unpredictability. Several participants referred to the 'challenge' of 'going into an underground city and little tiny areas and things' (P14); feeling 'outside the comfort zone' when travelling alone for the first time (P11); 'interacting with street vendors' (P15); or 'going out and exploring whatever city you are in or looking at something that the locals do that's common to them' (P20). One participant also referred to the 'adventure' of being prepared to do something '*really* out there, *really* out there' (P18), such as going to Egypt.

Second, most participants were found to seek certainty and controllability, as they spoke about the 'ease and convenience' (P16) and the added security of travelling on a group tour as important considerations in choosing to travel to their respective destinations. Seeing that security is a typical hygiene factor according to Herzberg (1950), it was initially excluded from the questionnaire form. In the interviews, however, it emerged if not as a motivational theme, then as an influential one, and was combined with 'ease and convenience'. These findings seem to support the observations shared by Ramires et al. (2018) and the results of Kazemina et al. (2015) who found that seniors tourists choose package holidays to reduce risk and uncertainty. It is important to consider, however, that the countries to which the participants had travelled were not mainstream destinations, as discussed in Section 7.3. Moreover, majority of the participants continued travelling independently but chose to go on tours to those destinations because of anticipated differences in physical and cultural conditions. Therefore, when discussing travel preferences, any attributions to physical age should be made with reservation.

In addition, while being 'looked after' was a common description, few participants employed it in the sense of the physical comforts provided. Those who did (P5, P13, P17), explained it by their age and declining level of physical fitness. As P17 summarised, 'most of the tours that I go on, I suppose, because of the age factor, there are a lot of older people going on organised tours because it's easier than going, well, backpacking, so it's fairly sedate'. Many more explained the decision to go on a tour by the perceived difficulty of making travel arrangements for destinations with cultures and languages which they considered 'a bit too foreign' (P1); with restricted accessibility and unfamiliar local transport systems; and by the

benefit of having a guide who can resolve problems. The comment by P2 illustrates these commonly mentioned reasons:

I don't think you really have that option [of independent travel] in places like Sri Lanka, or India, or China, or Japan. You really need to go on an organised trip, I think, because they are not as easy to navigate I think transport around the country like Sri Lanka is not highly efficient and developed. I mean there are trains that you can take, but they don't run to the same regular schedule that you need as a tourist, and I think there is a little bit of risk. (P2, Sri Lanka)

Regarding motivation for 'having physically active experiences', although only one participant mentioned it among the reasons to travel, the importance of being physically active during travel was emphasised by several more, and only two explicitly stated that they were not looking to exert themselves on this level too much. In the light of the literature on female solo travellers (Brown & Osman, 2017; Chiang & Jogaratnam, 2006), the themes of security, women, and solo travel mentioned together raise the question why the sample was skewed towards women. As far as the specifics of solo travel by women are concerned, little was found to state with certainty that the female tourists joined group tours due to feeling particularly vulnerable as women-travellers. Some participants of both genders were more concerned about crime and health risks than others, but feeling safe was important for all interviewees, and many reported how pleased they were to find out that the places they had visited had felt very safe. Only P2 and P18 drew explicit connections between their gender and the potential risks of travelling as women on their own in Sri Lanka and Egypt. Those who drew the least attention to the subject of security were also all female participants who had gone to India (P4), Italy (P8), and Turkey (P12, P14). Some women talked about the limitations of travelling solo (without a travel companion) even when on a tour (P11, P18) and the social and educational benefit of being with a group (P21, P7), but few drew explicit connections between their gender and potential risks.

Without knowing the gender breakdown of the clients of the recruited companies or of the outbound trips from Australia to the discussed destinations, it is difficult to comment with certainty why more women were recruited than men. The diversity of destinations and the small size of sub-groups of participants per destination further limit the comparison, but it does not appear to be due to gender-specific security concerns. As reported in Chapter 7, both men and women explained that they preferred to travel with a group to less familiar destinations. This consideration was further highlighted in the interview with P8 who had travelled to Italy and who contrasted this highly popular destination among the participants with her travel 'to places like Syria or to Uzbekistan'.

Third, as can be seen from the quotes above, while noting that ‘there is an element of adventure in going somewhere totally different and seeing and learning’ (P19), a small subset of participants also contrasted these ‘conducted tours where we are looked after’ (P19) with more adventuresome experiences they had had in the past. The nature of these adventure experiences ranged from catching trains in Italy where they ‘never [used to] run when they said they would’ (P5) to ‘backpacking through the game parks of Africa’ (P17); ‘working in a very remote village [in India], helping to build a school and make mud bricks’ (P19); and trekking in the Himalayas (P1, P19). While these experiences are notably different, they also share the characteristics of what Varley (2006) described as ‘original adventure’: undertaken independently (not with a tour), physically strenuous, and involving a higher chance of something going wrong, and consequently a stronger impetus to independent problem-solving. In contrast, as P20 noted about his tour experience of India, “you need to be pretty adventurous to do it by yourself’ but also added that while him and his wife were not “the iron man” doing physical stuff’, for them adventure was also about experiencing a ‘different culture’.

These negotiations of the meaning of adventure are reminiscent of the soft-hard, or play-frontier adventure reviewed earlier (Pomfret, 2006; Williams & Soutar, 2005) and may have contributed to the differences between the questionnaire and the interview responses, not only for those participants who had had both types of experiences in the past, but also those who may have been influenced by the discourse around cultural travel as soft adventure. These findings raise the question if it is the common perception of tours as safe and relatively easy and offering ‘limited real contact’ (P5) and not the travel mode itself, as suggested by Reisinger (2013a), that prevents tourists from recognising opportunities for having unpredictable, adventuresome and potentially transformative experiences on group tours despite their added security. Group tours can be very much about ‘sit back and let someone do the worrying’ (P20), but as some of the findings suggest, it is a matter of tourists’ attitude how stimulating they choose to make those tours. Furthermore, the findings support the decision to inquire about the place of risks in tourists’ travel motivations through conversations about having ‘daring’ and ‘adventuresome’ experiences. The participants’ comments on physical risks and the importance of safety indicate that asking directly about ‘experiencing the risks involved’ (Pearce & Lee, 2005, p. 231) may have narrowed down the scope of the conversations to their understanding of risk as ‘danger’ (threat to physical well-being).

7.4.3. Personal Development and Self-Actualization

With few additions and exceptions, it was found that the same participants who were either motivated by stimulation or spoke about enjoying a degree of unpredictability in their tour experiences were also motivated by personal development and self-actualization. The rest of this section focuses on these two motivations and their relationships with host-site involvement and several emergent themes, and further illuminates the blurred boundaries between travel motivations.

As can be seen from Table 7.13., among the participants who indicated that their travel was motivated by personal development and self-actualization, the majority selected the items referring to better understanding of oneself, sense of accomplishment, self-confidence, and 'gaining a new perspective on life'. Some also selected 'developing my personal interests'; but very few chose skill development and 'being creative'; and no one acknowledged 'working on my personal/spiritual values'. The interviews helped understand some of reasoning behind these answers, as well as provided additional insights. In particular, seeking clarification on some of them contributed to identifying two recurrent themes found in both prompted and unprompted discussions of travel motivations for personal development and self-actualization: travelling solo (without a travel companion) but as part of a tour group, and learning as expansion of knowledge about the destination. Two other prominent themes, intersecting with the other two, which will be discussed further are autonomy and 'getting outside the comfort zone'.

Given that these two themes, 'personal development' and 'self-actualization', were borrowed from the literature, it was important to consider their scope for analysis, since neither of the words were used directly by the participants, and their place among the participants' motivations could only be glimpsed from the narrated memories, as also found by Noy (2004). Similar to 'learning about other cultures', these themes involve a degree of ambiguity. Pearce and Lee (2005) conceptualised personal development and self-actualization as distinctive motivations, defined by (Pearce, 2011, p. 46) as 'self-development of a personal kind' and 'getting a new life perspective'. The literature review, however, revealed that motivation for personal development is commonly used as an umbrella term for several other themes, including transformation, personal growth, self-actualization and expansion of knowledge about others. The cross-over is also found in the TCP scale in the items 'knowing what I am capable of' and 'understanding more about myself' (Table 7.13.), both of which speak to the authors' understanding of personal development as personal growth. Although personal growth is not defined by Pearce and

Lee (2005), Pearce and Packer (2013, pp. 400-401) explain it in terms of a wide range of changes in values, skills and competencies, and behaviours.

While the analysis was informed by the dimensions of personal development and self-actualization as conceptualised by Pearce and Lee (2005), one of the aims of their study was to 'identify a broad range of travel motive items for pleasure travel in general' (Pearce & Lee, 2005, p. 227). Therefore, it was particularly important not only to pay close attention to how the participants communicated these motivations, if at all, but also to find a common denominator for recognising these and closely related motives. Drawing on the literature (Grabowski, 2013; Lean, 2015; Noy, 2004), references to self-change were chosen as one.

Motivation for learning is a central component of self-development (Pearce & Lee, 2005; Falk et al., 2012), and in this study, it was found to apply to a significant majority of participants. In addition to the results on the motivation for host-site involvement and the learning which occurred in this process, the discussions around 'gaining a new perspective on life' revealed that even when it was not mentioned as a reason to travel in the interviews, when asked directly, some still spoke about travelling with a general underlying interest in travel as 'education' (P13), including becoming 'more open to ideas' (P14):

Interviewer: One of the things you mentioned in response to motivation was that you are interested in gaining a new perspective on life, when you travel.

P8 (Italy): Well, that's because what travel is, isn't it? I mean why would you travel unless you were wanting to see, have another way of looking at things. Why would you bother? I mean I'm fascinated by other countries and other people's religions, of course, but that doesn't apply, you know, doesn't translate into a new [looking for words] ...I just find it interesting, as in, you know, learning. Basically, it's a learning process.

Interviewer: From what you've said, it sounds like you view everything as a learning experience and, therefore, you are open to grow with that experience. Is that right?

P19 (Iran): Absolutely, yeah. I don't know the word 'grow', but it just means that in life you have a greater acceptance of what happens, whether it's your neighbours or the people in the shop, or someone who might be rude to you...I think they are all learning, everything that happens to you, doesn't matter where you are, is something towards the whole of who you are.

Similar findings from the analysis of backpacker narratives are reported by Noy (2004, pp. 87-90) who describes them as 'claims for cultural capital' and 'undifferentiated personal change', with some attitudes, such as general 'openness, tolerance, and patience', more clearly defined. Although several participants also spoke about wanting to visit places related to their personal interests, 'knowing yourself' did not emerge from those interviews as a motivation. The excerpts above also illustrate how some participants were probed directly for the relevance of self-change to ensure that it was not simply overlooked. As Noy (2004, p. 87) observes, references to personal change 'are located inconspicuously within the narratives', and when participants, like P8, found it 'difficult to be specific' throughout the interview, a more direct interviewing approach became particularly necessary.

In a third of the interviews, however, learning through host-culture involvement did emerge as a context for personal development and self-actualization, and it is these interviews that were included in Table 7.12. under these overarching themes. The interviews with P7, P15, P18 and P20 stood out from the rest as they travelled with a similar intention, albeit for different personal reasons. Although their motivations were somewhat differently phrased, it appeared that, in essence, they were all seeking 'to get out of your comfort zone' (P15).

Indeed, both P15 and P20 felt apprehensive about travelling to India, but their earlier trips to China and Sicily, acting as steppingstones in their 'travel career' (Pearce & Lee, 2005), gave them the confidence that they could cope with it. Having 'survived China' with its '1.2-1.3 billion people ... and the cultivating of deformed people for begging purposes' (P15), and having found that Sicily 'was a complete opposite' (P20) of its image as an unsafe destination, they thought it was time to let go of 'negativity of what's going to happen' (P20), and 'just go and have a look' (P15, P20) at those destinations.

The trips of the two female tourists, P7 and P18, were largely motivated by the pursuit of autonomy as they attempted something they had not done before. For P18 it was her first ever independent international travel which took her 'a lot of courage' to undertake, and for P7 it was a first group tour and the first time she travelled on her own for an extended period of time. Two other female participants reported becoming more confident solo travellers in their own unique ways, but only P7 and P18 sought to 'have own experiences' and explore what they were capable of while also knowing that they can enjoy the relative safety of the group tour environment. The personal reasons behind their search for independence and development of associated travel skills, however, were notably different from each other. Resonating with the understandings of adventure by Little (2002) and Richards and Wilson (2006), for P7 it appeared to be motivated by the pursuit of enjoyment gained from problem-solving on solo explorations during leisure time and the freedom of decision-making. She

wanted to be 'in charge' of her 'own experience', rather than 'experience it as a couple', meaning herself and her partner with whom she had always travelled before. She also reported that she knew 'it would be a challenge' for her, as an 'introvert' and 'not a group person', to travel in a group. For P18, it was also about regaining her independence as someone who had 'never done anything independently' from family or friends, but ultimately about facing own 'demise', regaining control over her life, and finding 'inner peace' (Table 7.13.), as she faced a manageable but a life-threatening illness. She travelled 'to find a bit of headspace, just think 'how lucky I was that I was still here', and shared that if she 'could survive that [trip]', fearing for her safety in light of a recent plane crash, 'then there was no turning back for me; I could face anything'.

Autonomy was a factor that had been excluded from the multiple-choice question but emerged from the interviews. Although only three participants (P7, P18, P12) spoke about it as a central motive, ten others emphasised the importance of having a degree of flexibility, freedom of choice and free time to explore the destination on their own while travelling on a group tour. In line with the previous research (Moscardo, 1996; Smith 1994; Van Winkel, 2012), it is during free time that many of the recalled moments of problem-solving, that is using and developing skills and abilities and confidence acquired, and it is the lack of autonomy that frustrated the participants at times:

It was more of a guide: 'let's go and have dinner here', and I said 'I don't want to have dinner there. I would like to go on my own'; 'Oh, no, no, you have to come with us'. 'No, I don't want to go there'. You know, I wanted, maybe, some guidance as to where might be a good place, what to eat, what's the local specialty. (P12, Turkey)

My attitude is, obviously, fit in the tour, but I was paying good money for it, and if I don't want to do something. ... One of the things is that we'd been probably to too many forts, so we decided that we won't go to one of the forts and we went to a few locations. (P20, India)

In regards to the relationship with host-culture involvement, the language barrier in Myanmar and India were seen by P7 and P15 as opportunities for overcoming their introversion and becoming more confident in interpersonal interaction. In addition, both P15 and P20 were also apprehensive of facing the crowds and chaotic traffic in India, and witnessing a cremation ceremony at Varanasi was 'completely' outside of the comfort zone for P20, but it was also aligned with his earlier mentioned motivation to experience a very different culture. For another four participants, host-site involvement was aligned with motivation for gaining 'a sense of accomplishment' (P3), 'a new perspective on life' (P6, P13), and 'inner

harmony/peace' (P4), as they gained 'intellectual satisfaction' from learning about history (P3); aimed to gain a better understanding of the locals (P6, P13); and escaped the stress of daily life, leading to a 'more relaxed view on life' (P4).

In particular, in contrast to the participants who spoke about general learning in terms of broadening their minds, P6 and P13 were able to define their learnings. Having her assumptions about Russia as the Cold War enemy 'challenged' on her first visit in 1973, she left the country with mixed feelings, reflecting on her own naivety and coming to terms with the realisation that the news reported in Australia could not always be trusted. She then travelled to Russia again in 2015, feeling nervous but keen 'to see how life had changed' and to compare her experience with the Western news reporting of modern Russia. The interview with P13 was the second example where 'gaining a new perspective on life' emerged as one of the reasons for travel, which he expressed indirectly as an open answer to the multiple-choice question. There he noted that his trip to Iran was motivated by seeing 'Australia itself and its culture in a clearer light', and, as he explained in the interview, he was able to fulfil this interest by gaining a sense of how Iran dealt with the problems very similar to those experienced by Australia, such as education and public transport. These differences in the interpretations of 'perspective change' are consistent with the literature discussing the differences in the tourists' accounts of more and less personally meaningful experiences. It notes that stories of the latter tend to focus on 'general facts and knowledge' (Bosangit et al., 2015, p. 11), or semantic memories, rather than episodic, or 'event-specific' (Tung et al., 2017, p. 854).

To summarise, many participants travelled to expand their knowledge of the destinations and other ways of life, some with specific interests in mind, but fewer anticipated their travel to have some 'significance to the self' (Bosangit et al., 2015, p. 7). Among the latter were also those who chose to test their limits and were motivated by knowing what they are capable of, and by the excitement that comes with getting outside the comfort zone and venturing into the unknown.

As for the participants' individual characteristics, the findings highlight the relevance of gender and the importance of revisiting the influence of previous travel experience. Regarding gender differences, in both the questionnaire form and the interviews, the need for personal development was more explicitly acknowledged by women. Even when male participants raised related themes and acknowledged feeling 'apprehensive' (P3), 'reluctant to go' (P20) and 'afraid' (P15), unlike the female tourists, men did not explicitly frame their answers in terms of the need for growth or gain. Instead, they recounted the stories of their

accomplishments through 'mastering' (P3) and 'surviv[ing]' (P15) in new environments by being 'smart' (P20):

The first time is always interesting because you don't know how the practical things work in a place until you've seen them and done them. So that's one of the bits of satisfaction you get when you *master* those things. (P3, Turkey)

We'd go to a town, and I often just, sort of, go out free ranging by myself and managed to *survive*. I wouldn't class myself as an extrovert. If the need arises, I can, in short bursts, be forthcoming. (P15, India)

We've never had any illness. No one on the trip to India got any illness, so if you are cautious and you are a bit *smart*, it's possible. (P20, India)

These recollections echo the masculine characteristics of experience narratives by male backpackers, identified by Noy (2004), which emphasise risk-taking and strain, albeit in these examples in a more subdued form due the cultural tour context, in contrast to adventure experiences. However, unlike his female participants, the female tourists in the present research were more open about acknowledging the need for specific personal change.

Regarding previous travel experience, it has been previously found that more experienced tourists are less motivated by self-development (Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce & Lee, 2005). The findings reaffirm this knowledge, as only a third of the sample were found to seek personal development and self-actualization in some form, despite overall travel experience, prior knowledge of the destinations, and self-assessment as experienced travellers. Among them, two participants, highly motivated by personal development and self-actualization, not only had the least experience in terms of the number of destinations visited and reported contact with significant cultural difference, but also acknowledged that themselves. However, as far as recollections of actual experiences, many others still perceived the whole destinations or some of their attributes as significantly culturally different to Australia and highly novel to them and required the support of the tour environment. Further commentary on this finding is offered in Chapter 8.

7.4.4. Relationship-seeking

Relationship-seeking was another prominent theme in the multiple-choice answers; however, out of twelve participants who selected this factor in the questionnaire form, five did not bring it up in the interviews as a motivation theme, except for mentioning in passing

that they travelled with someone else. In addition to discussing their travel motivations, the participants were invited to comment on the social dynamics of the trip and conversations among group members. As also supported by the findings on the importance of autonomy, previous travel experience and preferred travel mode, the attitudes and behaviours reported by the participants were more of independent rather than group tourists, in contrast to the group nature of the travel mode.

With the exception of four female participants who were partly (P5, P8, P10) or strongly motivated (P21) by 'meeting new and varied people' on their trips, majority travelled first as individuals or private groups (enclaves of couples and friends, or of both) and second as members of a group. The information about who the participants travelled with is recorded in Appendix D. Consistent with recent studies (Kazemina et al., 2015; Torres, 2015), for many participants travelling with a nice group of people was an important contributor to their overall trip satisfaction; however, social interaction with strangers was not a primary motive. As P10 summarised a shared attitude, 'It's not like I want to make a new best friend, but I just want to have an enjoyable time with a group of people'. Social motivation was more pronounced among widowed, solo female travellers, but even they asserted their independence, saying that they did not want to appear 'too needy' (P7) by 'attaching' themselves to anyone in the group for too long. Furthermore, the security of travelling in a group and socialising were interrelated motives.

Nevertheless, five female participants started their answers about travel motivation with social reasons. Relationship-seeking was found to have the strongest influence on P11's decision to travel to Cuba as she based it entirely on the interests of her brother in cars and cigars and not on her own, even though she ended up enjoying some aspects of the Cuban culture. Four other women (P2, P4, P8, P14) also wanted to travel with friends and family, as well as to learn about the history of the countries. In addition, P5 and P15 (male, solo traveller) advised that making lasting friendships were very positive outcomes of their trips. In the course of the interviews, three additional reasons emerged: following the tour leader who the tourists were already familiar with (P4, P8); travelling with an expert tour leader with whom there was no prior relationship (P10); and going to places where friends, family members or colleagues were from (P4, P16).

The findings illustrate the importance of distinguishing between the three main social reasons for group travel, summarised in Chapter 2, Table 2.12: companionship, socialising (sharing interests and making new friends), and spending time with family and friends. In this study, the second reason was found to be of the least importance to the participants. It was also found that tourists travelling in organised groups do not automatically seek 'groupness'

and that they should be segmented based on a combination of sociodemographic, psychographic, and behavioural characteristics (Moscardo et al., 2001). Not only tourists' age (Torres, 2015; Wilson et al., 2008), gender and family status (Kazeminia et al., 2015), but also currently or previously preferred travel mode, and level of independence are important considerations for understanding the attractiveness of the social aspects of group travel. These results also further support the evidence in existing literature about tour leader attachment and the importance of tour leaders as a differentiation point (Cheng et al., 2016). As for the influence of personal connections, that is friends, family and colleagues on travel motivation, it is also not an entirely new theme. At the stage of research design, the three motivation items relating to the strengthening of existing relationships were excluded from the questionnaire form to limit its length but emerged from three interviews.

7.5. Conclusion

The tourists who responded to this study shared several common characteristics of cultural tourists. They were tertiary educated, able to afford to travel regularly on extended mid to upper-mid range tours or independent trips, lasting between 7 and 35 days, and motivated by the mental stimulation of experiencing cultures significantly different to Australia. Significant majority were particularly widely travelled in terms of geographic regions (3 to 7) and the number of countries (more than 11 and minimum 6); and were interviewed about the destinations that very few Australians, including those in their 30s (Core Data, 2016), had been to between 2015 and 2017 (TRA, 2017b). High novelty seekers, aged 57 to 81 but mainly in their 60s and 70s, they represent a segment that according to the literature (Crouch et al., 2016; Huang, Beeco, et al., 2016; Pearce & Lee, 2005; Ramires et al., 2018) comprises approximately between 20% and 50% of the cultural tourism market, depending on the sector.

Whilst the tourist motivation and travel mode findings are somewhat consistent with prior research, suggesting the secondary role of social interaction and personal development and the importance of comfort and security for senior tourists, they also highlight the many ways in which tourists aged over 50 can differ and can defy age-related stereotypes. Despite getting older, the participants presented themselves as a mentally and physically active group who were aware of their age but were not stopped by it from having active holidays, in most instances several times a year, including the discussed trips. Although having a physically active holiday emerged as a distinctive travel motivation only from one interview, it was found that in addition to the rich cultural programs of the analysed tours, the participants were prepared to cope with the physical demands of multiple stopovers and potential health risks, as well as take part in physically demanding activities. While travelling on tours, many

participants also emphasised the importance of autonomy: opportunities for independent decision-making and free time.

Minor differences were observed in the cultural interests of those who had travelled with specialist and generalist tour operators, even though the itineraries of the former were more focused on the past and included fewer days with free time. With some exceptions of stronger motivation for learning about history, most participants shared omnivorous interests in experiencing different aspects of the present and past culture of the destinations, with strong emphasis on 'how people live'. More significant diversity, however, was found in the motivations for interacting with hosts; perspectives on the availability of such opportunities; motivations for experiencing a degree of unpredictability, and for personal development. While cultural travel was perceived by the participants as contributing to active living and general knowledge gain, a third from a mix of companies emphasised personal development implications of host-site involvement. Among them were also those who were proactive about meeting and interacting with the locals, compared to the majority who sought to gain exposure through observation, organised or unplanned encounters.

The amount of free time included in the programs should be taken into consideration, but key differences were found in the participants' approach to culture contact and personal circumstances that motivated a small group to 'challenge' themselves and 'get outside the comfort zone', including dealing with introversion and becoming more confident solo travellers. The latter theme emerged from several interviews with female participants who were also found somewhat more open to acknowledging the need for personal development than men. No other distinctive differences in previous travel experience and travel motivations by gender were observed, although twice as many women volunteered to participate in the study as men.

Chapter 8 The Place of Challenge in Group Tour Experiences

8.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 results have highlighted a relatively high coping potential of the participants, based on their travel experience, as well as education and the life experience associated with their age (57-81). Even the least experienced among them joined the analysed tours with considerable travel experience in terms of the number of the countries visited and trips made, although some had been to more geographic regions than others. The least visited regions were the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, reflecting the outbound tourism data for Australia for the time when the analysed trips were made (TRA, 2017b). Regarding motivation, both organised tour activities and many unplanned encounters were largely congruent with their travel motivations, including with explicitly stated motivations to get outside the comfort zone and to experience challenge. They were also aligned with the preference for a combination of group activities and independent exploration. To address Objective I of the study, Chapter 8 draws on the aforementioned findings about the participants individual-level characteristics, as it analyses the findings pertaining to Objective 1.1. on the situational context of the trips and the participants' responses to it. To comment on the place of challenge in the travel experiences of group tourists in the concluding section, each of the findings sections builds on the previous ones.

Perception of substantial effortfulness is a central characteristic of challenging experience that differentiates them from benign-positive ones: 'A challenge appraisal indicates confidence that, with effort, the demands of a stressful situation can be overcome' (Skinner & Brewer, 2002, p. 679). The need to apply coping (adaptational) effort is triggered by stressful events, also referred to as demands. Hence, analysis of such events, recalled by the participants, and how they coped with them was a critical stage in interpreting the data, presented in Section 8.2. In the literature the term 'demands' is used interchangeably with 'stressors' to refer to stress triggers. However, because the conversations about demanding situations were not explicitly framed around the notion of 'stress' either by the participants or the interviewer, the term 'demands' was seen as more appropriate for discussing the stressfulness of the narrated encounters with cultural differences in the chapter. Given the number and the diversity of the destinations and the participants' interest in culture as ways of life, Section 8.2. discusses a wide range of external demands, most of which emerged as

cultural differences⁶. Tour setup formed a part of the conversations about challenge, incorporating effort factors specific to the tour environment but also those crossing over with destination-level demands such as heritage interpretation and behaviours of local guides. The number of themes addressed in Section 8.2 is further expanded by the discussion of several coping strategies, that is how the participants coped with these demands, and overviews of personal stakes. The latter group of themes is examined more closely in Section 8.3 that addresses personal significance of the demanding events, a core meaning-component of challenge as a stress appraisal and a psychological state. This section brings together the results on motivations with the findings on other personal stakes.

Section 8.4 addresses Objective 1.2 by discussing the meanings assigned by the participants to the word 'challenge'. It examines the links between challenge, comfort zone, and adventure, as key themes that emerged from the analysis of travel motivations, and between mental and physical challenge. These findings are combined with the results on the participants' overall evaluations of their trips, or cumulative appraisal, in terms of perceived challenge. Together, these results help clarify the participants' relationship with the notion of challenge, and more specifically between effort and culture learning; compare it with their familiarity with the state of challenge; and offer additional insights into the importance they assign to feeling challenged during travel. Drawing on the findings discussed in Sections 8.2 to 8.4, Section 8.5 aims to explain why some of the discussed touristic experiences were found to be more closely aligned with the challenge state than others. To construct the argument, it considers the results on anticipated and perceived gains. The chapter is concluded with a brief summary of key findings and the final statement on the place of challenge in group tour experiences.

8.2. Coping with External Demands

To help visualise the connections between the different levels of analysis described further and the main thematic groups, Table 8.1. was created. Given that challenge calls for 'substantial efforts' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 36), it was important to differentiate between more and less effortful experiences. In quantitative research, amount of perceived effort can be assessed using self-assessment measures, asking participants to recall specific situations where they 'felt a strong motivation to actively do something' in response to the situation, or to invest physical or mental resources' (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988b, p. 307). In this study such direct questions were not included, and the analysis was informed by the

⁶ An earlier version of this research appeared in Tikhonova, Butler & Kim (2019). I conducted and analysed the interviews and wrote the first draft that required some conceptual and editing input from both co-authors. My contribution to this publication was 70%.

following indicators of stress and effort: emotive language, effort-implying states from the tourism literature, coping strategies, personal stakes, overall trip evaluation (cumulative appraisal), and structural interview cues mentioned in Chapter 6. Here, it must be acknowledged that some confounding of stressfulness and effortfulness was difficult to avoid as a result. For example, where rejection was a coping response to a source of stress, it may not have involved as much effort as in trying to resolve cognitive dissonance signalled by distancing, emphasising the positive, or explicit critical reflection. Nevertheless, sufficient detail was still gathered to conclude that those experiences had demanded a substantial degree of coping effort in response to external demands.

In addition to the adjective-based appraisal scales reviewed in the previous chapters, the gradients of effortfulness of touristic experiences have also been interpreted based on a wide range of words referring to different effort-implying states and processes, such as surprise, interest, confusion, questioning, reflection, introspection, disturbance, disorientation, disagreement, dilemma, cognitive dissonance, struggle, shock, and crisis. The last seven of them have been linked interpretively in prior qualitative and conceptual research to considerably higher degrees of stress and cognitive effort. Other, more ambiguous terms were also taken into consideration: stimulation, discomfort, difficulty, tension, demand, stress, strain, and challenge. In all instances, however, the degree of effort associated with these words and adjective-based indicators had to be inferred from the context.

Since stressful (demanding) situations mobilise coping effort for 'minimising, avoiding, tolerating, and accepting the stressful conditions, as well as attempts to master the environment' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984, p. 142), how the participants coped with the encountered demands, provided valuable context. In particular, attention was paid to how cognitively and behaviourally involved the participants found themselves in the recalled situations, and if any issues central to their experience remained unresolved. The interviews were coded for coping strategies, with reference to stress and coping literature (Folkman and Lazarus (1988), Folkman and Lazarus (1985), Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, and DeLongis (1986); the acculturative stress framework (Berry, 2006a), transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957; Orams, 1994); and tourism and leisure research engaging with some of that literature. As shown in Tables 8.2. and 8.3., the meanings of some of the strategies were modified to reflect the interview context, and additional meanings emerged from analysis.

Table 8.1. Coping with external demands: Summary of main thematic groups.

External demands	Emotional response(s)		Coping response(s)		Participants
	Main	Outliers	Main	Outliers	
RELIGIOSITY AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES	Unease/anxiety, frustration, curiosity, admiration	Anger	Questioning, distancing, emphasising the positive	Critical reflection, participation	P1, P3, P4, P9, P11, P12, P14, P15, P18, P20, P21
RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS	Unease/anxiety, anger, empathy	Curiosity	Rejection, emphasising the positive, wishful thinking (avoidance), seeking social support (information)	Questioning, critical reflection	P3, P6, P7, P10, P12, P13, P14, P18, P19
WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER RELATIONS	Frustration, empathy	Anger	Opposition, acceptance, emphasising the positive, seeking social support (information)	Confrontative coping	P9, P10, P12, P13, P18, P19, P20
LIVING CONDITIONS	Unease/anxiety, guilt, cognitive dissonance, empathy, admiration	Shock, frustration	Avoidance, acceptance, accepting responsibility, giving back, emphasising the positive, distancing, seeking social support (information)	Participating, seeking social support (help), rejection	P4, P6, P7, P11, P15, P16, P18, P20, P21
SOCIAL STRUCTURES	Unease, empathy, anger, dislike	Curiosity	Opposition, distancing, emphasising the positive	Questioning, critical reflection, confrontative coping, seeking social support	P6, P15, P18, P20, P21
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AND CASUAL INTERACTIONS	Anxiety, excitement, curiosity	Anger	Participating, seeking social support	-	P3, P6, P7, P12, P14, P15, P18
SIGHTSEEING	Enjoyment, frustration, boredom	-	Participating, questioning, avoidance	-	P2, P5, P6, P7, P11, P12, P13, P19, P20
PHYSICAL DEMANDS	Varied	Worry	Participating, acceptance	Avoidance	P2, P4, P7, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, P16, P18
IN-GROUP INTERACTIONS	Varied	-	Varied	Seeking social support	P2, P6, P7, P11, P12, P13, P15, P18, P20

Table 8.2. Coping strategies: Emotion-focused coping.

Strategy	Definition in literature	Modified (M) or additional (A) meanings
Accepting responsibility	Blaming oneself for what happened (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988)	Recognising responsibility for creating the situation, contributing to it, or for improving it (M)
Critical reflection	Involvement in questioning the premises of one's own responses to external realities, and willingness to revise those a-priori assumptions and view those realities from a different perspective (Mezirow, 1991)	
Distancing	Disassociating oneself from the situation by minimising thinking about it (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988)	Denial (Lazarus, 1990) of being affected while emphasising one's travel experience (A); engaging in 'rationalization' (Schuster et al., 2006, p. 100) of not being responsible for creating the situation, contributing to it, and/or improving it (A)
Emphasising the positive	Reappraising the situation as more positive by trying 'to look on the bright side of things', and recognising personal growth (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 157)	Looking for similarities between home and host culture (A); romanticizing a negative or difficult situation, including by culturalising it (interpreting it as a cultural experience)
Opposition/Rejection	Discounting of new dissonant information to restore consonance (Orams, 1994; Hottola, 2004)	Opposing a situation, event, behaviour or idea through covert disagreement with or disapproval of it that sometimes results in rejecting it, as a way to reduce cognitive dissonance (M)
Questioning	Testing validity of a claim or assumption through argumentation, a 'process of dialogue in which implicit claims are made explicit or contested' (Mezirow, 1991, p. 68)	Doubting if something is valid or invalid, that is right/wrong, important/unimportant, acceptable/unacceptable, or necessary/unnecessary (M)

Table 8.3. Coping strategies: Problem-focused and mixed coping.

Strategy	Definition in literature	Modified (M) or additional (A) meanings
Problem-focused coping		
Confrontative coping	Resisting and fighting back by 'standing one's ground', or 'trying to get others to change their mind' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988, p. 468)	Openly questioning the situation, or expressing disagreement (A)
Giving back	Making donations of various kind, and other 'act[s] of giving' (Sin, 2009, p. 495)	
Participating	Seeking reduction in anxiety by 'tackl[ing] the task that is causing' it (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988, p. 468)	Seeking reduction in anxiety through active participation (M)
Mixed coping		
Acceptance	Acceptance as secondary appraisal of the situation as unchangeable, or accepting responsibility as a coping strategy (Folkman et al. 1986)	Tolerating a situation as something that should be accepted and/or managed through action in situ, including compliance, or through anticipatory planful problem-prevention, but not resisted (M)
Avoidance	Wishful thinking ('wish that I can change what is happening or how I feel'; 'wish that the situation would go away or somehow be over with') (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 157); and 'escaping the stressful situation through [other] thoughts, behaviors, or substances' (Jordan et al. 2015, p. 503)	Avoidance of people, new or recurrent situations, and discussion topics due to anticipated stress (threat to physical and/or psychological wellbeing) (M)
Seeking social support	'Seeking out help or information from others who may be able to address the stressor directly' (Jordan et al. 2015, p. 503)	

Finally, coping effort depends on how invested a person is in the issue associated with that situation. This was established through the analysis of personal stakes. Although the participants were not asked directly about what exactly was at stake when stressful effort-demanding events were discussed, their answers about travel motivations and experience outcomes, as well as unprompted comments on personal and professional interests, attitudes, values and beliefs over the course of the interviews offered sufficient insight into the personal relevance of the narrated events. They were also invited to comment on their overall evaluation of their trip and whether they found it easy and relaxing or not.

As far as specific demands (effort stimuli) are concerned, they form four broad groups: socio-cultural, socio-economic, and political, as characteristics of the society of origin (Ward et al., 2001), and tour setup. However, the actual boundaries between the first three groups of stimuli were found to be quite blurred, with the themes of religion and politics uniting many of the factors. For this reason, instead of following the structure of the four main groups, the discussion of findings has been organised into sections that aim to communicate the dominant themes and the links between them.

8.2.1. Religion and Politics

8.2.1.1. Religiosity and Religious Practices

The discussions pertaining to religion involved differences in beliefs, values, norms and practices between Australia and eight destinations, excepting Japan and Italy. Reducing the meaning of religion to a single definition that would apply in all contexts 'is difficult, if not impossible' (Poria et al., 2003b; Sharpley, 2009b, p. 240), but a review of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to defining it, as found in Oman (2013), is outside the scope of this thesis. In its broadest sense, religion has been approached in tourism literature as a system of beliefs and practices, and, as Sharpley (2009b, p. 240) and He et al. (2013, p. 842) add with reference to other literature, 'relative to sacred things'. As far as the meaning of 'the sacred' is concerned, Oman (2013, p. 39) helps clarify this common definition by noting that it refers to 'a divine being, divine object, Ultimate Reality, or Ultimate Truth'.

In addition to beliefs in higher or divine powers and how these beliefs are practiced, religion closely intersects with many private and public life domains. As reviewed by Tarakeshwar, Stanton, and Pargament (2003) and Poria et al. (2003b, p. 340), 'evidence for the influence of religion on behaviour is found in areas such as parental attachment, clothing styles, eating and drinking, the use of cosmetics, social and political views and sexual behaviour', making it difficult to separate religion from culture, politics and other areas of life, particularly in

Islamic countries where ‘the boundaries between the spiritual and secular are transcended’ (Jafari & Scott, 2014, p. 2). In this study, recollections of contact with other religions formed two intersecting sets of answers: differences in religiosity (importance of religion) and in actual religious practices, and relationship between religious beliefs and other life domains.

As far as differences in perceived religiosity and religious practices are concerned, these themes emerged from the interviews about a mix of destinations, but as demands requiring coping effort only from conversations about Cuba and Mexico, Turkey and Egypt, and India. Religiosity was a descriptive code, derived from the participants’ references to the importance of religion to the hosts and how ‘religious’ they found them, based on direct and indirect contact with local religious practices. A wide range of emotional responses from general unease (psychological discomfort) and frustration to curiosity, enjoyment and admiration, as well as a mix of positive and negative affect were found in the comments about Islamic calls to prayers in Turkey and Egypt; and encounters with religious practices dealing with death in Mexico, Cuba, Egypt, and India. Diversity has also been found in coping strategies and personal stakes, but this set of responses shares the distinctive personal relevance of the cultural differences discussed.

Although well equipped, in theoretical terms, to cope with the situation, P3 acknowledged still having been taken aback by the visibility of Islam in Turkey, despite expecting that ‘Turkey would be quite Islamic’ and having ‘lived and travelled in Islamic countries before’. ‘It gets you’, he noted, pausing immediately after, and proceeding to justify his reaction by saying, ‘although, I’ve not been in a city where I’ve heard so many different mosques going half an hour apart’. As he continued recounting his impressions of Turkey, he acknowledged that while ‘I’m often informed about things but not too often shocked or surprised’, one of the things that surprised him ‘slightly’, was that ‘it didn’t feel to me very much Asian or Middle Eastern itself, as I expected, notwithstanding all the calls to prayer at night’. Another participant with much less travel experience and little prior knowledge travelled to Egypt as the first Islamic-majority destination in her travel career and appeared to be more unequivocal, as she recalled her frustration: ‘It’s constantly, all day, is the calling to prayers, and you can hear it; it’s this hum all over the country constantly because they do it on loud speakers. I was just ‘seriously?’ (P18). Frustration and anger are closely related emotions of different intensity that correspondingly signal perceived goal impediment or more significant harm (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). As can be inferred from these comments, the contact with this auditory aspect of practicing Islam may have caused physical discomfort (actual harm) to both participants. In turn, it may have intensified the emotional discomfort (Hottola, 2004). However, further analysis suggests that the

psychological reaction to it may have also been exacerbated by the general unease felt by them and several more participants about Islam.

The 'quite Islamic' (P3) atmosphere of both Turkey and Egypt was felt not only in the calls to prayers. Indeed, 'the number of mosques in Istanbul' was found 'interesting' by P3, and the 'quite noticeable' presence of women covering their hair and body in line with Islamic dress norms was observed by P3 and P12 outside the 'cosmopolitan city' of Istanbul, and 'everywhere' in Egypt by P18. Comparing her recent trip to Turkey with her first visit around twenty years ago, P12 was 'surprised' to find people there 'becoming more religious than they were before', and P18 concluded from her observations and interactions with the local guide that Egyptians are 'very religious'. In both cases, those conclusions about local religiosity and its covert questioning were inextricably linked to the sharing of impressions about restrictive dress norms for both local women and female tourists, as will be discussed further in the context of religio-political effort factors.

Surprise and interest are known as positive emotions (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988). Indeed, when responding about what surprised them on the trip, many participants recalled the aspects that 'impressed' and 'amazed' them, such as the degree of Turkish and Iranian hospitality, and respect for older people in Turkey and Japan that they had not experienced in Australia. At the same time, as illustrated above, P3 and P12 also employed both words and their derivatives to narrate psychologically more taxing experiences to which they responded with a mix of curiosity and questioning, but which they would not categorise as definitively unpleasant. As P12 added, after recalling being 'thrust a scarf to cover up' at the Blue Mosque, 'I sort of thought 'oh, wow!', feeling the need to clarify that she was 'not upset about that' but rather 'just quite surprised that was different this time'.

The presence of mild anxiety was also signalled by the sense of relief. A pleasant emotion (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988), it can indicate benign-positive appraisal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), as well as 'a cessation of misery or anxiety' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 241) following a resolution of a pressing concern, and it was implied in some of the comments about surprise. Comparing his visit to Turkey with his earlier contact with the bustling side of South East Asia, P3 felt the need to re-emphasise the positive side he had noted during the trip. He repeated that 'the vibe in the streets [of Istanbul] was much more European, much less Asian', reporting later that him and his wife 'certainly added Istanbul to the list of cities we would be happy to go back by ourselves'. Another participant who had travelled to Turkey, when asked about the cultural differences between Turkey and Australia, advised 'I was interested in Islam' but also that 'I probably don't look for differences. I look for similarities'

(P14). She then continued with the example of a reassuring similarity in how often people pray in Turkey and in Australia:

Our guide sat us down and give us a little lesson on Islam and we started to say, well how often do you go to the mosque, and he says, 'you know, weddings and christenings, and occasionally when somebody, you know, feeling low or something'. A lot of things that they were doing, because it has been a secular country, it's changing a bit now, a lot of things they were doing just felt the same way that we approach, perhaps, religion? (P14, Turkey)

As illustrated above and noted by Ellsworth and Smith (1988, p. 295), 'although surprise may often be evoked under pleasant circumstances ... it is quite possible to ... be surprised by unexpected unpleasant events'. In culture shock literature, surprise has also been grouped together with anxiety (Oberg, 1960; Furnham, 2010). In line with this literature, the answers implying surprise and describing experiences as 'interesting' were coded under 'curiosity', 'unease', or both, depending on their underlying valence, communicated directly or inferred from the surrounding context and paralinguistic cues.

A degree of unease was also present in the narrations of contact with public expressions of religiosity during 'actual or symbolic encounters with death' (Sharpley, 2009a) in Hinduism and forms of Christianity different to what the participants were used to. Cremation rituals in the city of Varanasi, India, were found 'confronting' (P4) and 'outside the comfort zone' (P20), as the participants recalled the details of seeing 'dead bodies floating down the Ganges' (P4). In an interview about Egypt, P18 expressed conflicting feelings about her visit to a Coptic Orthodox monastery where she found 'beyond my realms of comprehension' the practice of intercession, that is praying to the saints and not to God directly, and felt unsure about participating in the veneration of the local saint and his relics by 'touch[ing] the coffin and writ[ing] on a piece of paper what you wish for'. While admiring 'people who have that religious passion', she simultaneously questioned the validity of their beliefs, both as a raised Catholic and as someone who later became disillusioned by religion and religious authorities all together: 'It's just so lovely to see people that really believe this stuff'.

In the interviews about Mexico and Cuba, the participants spoke about the syncretism of 'non-Christian beliefs and celebrations'(P9) and Roman Catholicism (Watanbe, 1990), inciting images of pre-Hispanic 'voodoo' (P1, P11) spiritualism and 'witchcraft' (P1). Describing it as 'truly weird', P9 recalled the experience of watching the local women 'kneeling on the floor, with candles ... stuck to the stone floor ... literally on their hands and knees praying' while men 'were drinking alcohol in the church!', and soon after moved on to

sharing a memory of a 'nicer' experience. A similar, 'particularly bizarre' encounter but of a somewhat more macabre, 'very confronting' nature was recalled by P1 when he was asked if in the past, he had had more challenging experiences than his trip to Japan. In response, he recalled watching the parishioners of the church in San Juan Chamula 'blind out of their minds, on some sort of local drink' engage in animal sacrifice, and compared it with the 'pretty tame' cultural experience of seeing the Japanese bow [to their guests] as the plane left'.

Here, personal relationship with religion and its influence on how religious devotion of others is perceived was found intertwined with distinctive sensitivity to 'corporality of any kind', characterising Western society (Demarest & Woodfill, 2012, p. 131). Manifested in aversion to 'death, flesh, and blood' (Demarest & Woodfill, 2012, p. 131) that have been moved 'into a 'back region' of death industry professionals' (Stone, 2009b, p. 31), it stems from 'the dread of death, the denial of which was said [by Becker] to motivate all human enterprise' (Lazarus, 1990, p. 234). However, contemplation of death (Stone, 2009b; Werdler, 2015) was a peripheral theme. Besides P15 who was moved by the cremation ritual as 'the end of life journey', only P4 drew explicit connections with her personal situation, reflecting on losing her parents at the end of the trip and wishing she 'could have gone the Indian way' and cremated them if she 'had a free choice' (P4). Despite being unsettled by the physicality of the observed scenes, the participants were also able to enjoy them, feeling 'inspired' (P4), or finding those experiences 'confronting but in a fascinating sort of way' (P1). While struggling to understand, as a former Catholic and now a Lutheran, how anyone could be considered 'the next thing to God', P18 found it a 'really lovely' experience to participate in the ritual of making a wish over the sacred relics and was grateful for the opportunity. In these examples recollections of the positive aspects emerged as sharing of positive memories, without the additional meaning of 'looking for the silver lining' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 157) found in the examples about Turkey.

The passing of time and the consequent reappraisal of those events as less stressful and more positive is one likely explanation of the mixed evaluations. Those who had 'premeditated' (P15), feeling apprehensive before the trip, also noted that these experiences were 'not as challenging as we had expected' (P20), and 'more exciting than challenging' (P15). However, the mixed evaluations also highlight the possibility of simultaneously perceiving benefit and feeling existentially threatened by a situation (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984), and consequently experiencing a mix of positive and negative emotions (Nawjin & Biran, 2018). Indeed, talking about feeling confronted, astonished, and intrigued at the same time, these participants oscillated between the accounts of unease, curiosity, and, in some

cases, even, admiration. The latter reaction was particularly prominent in the narratives about India, Varanasi.

In India, Varanasi is considered 'as the holiest of all cities', whether this perception is seen as rooted in Hindu belief (Sharma & Rickly, 2018, p. 44), or in the romanticised Orientalist 'mainstream representations – both Western and Indian/Hindu' (Zara, 2015, p. 29). Indeed, 'the holiest place in India' is how P15 described it:

There are 24-hour/day cremations. If you've got to go to Nirvana, you've got to come to Varanasi and be bathed in the Ganges, and the body is left to the side for a couple of hours to dry out, and then it's put on a funeral pyre, and ashes are spread into the Ganges. So, it's a putrid river, but they bathe in it. They immerse themselves in it [pause]. So everything about it is just, you know, it's the end of life journey, and it's just [lost for words]. (P15, India)

Acknowledging that 'for starters, it's an amazing spectacle' (P4), they also expressed admiration for the "pervasiveness of the religious experience' (P4) and 'the spirituality' (P15, P21), revealing how deeply emotionally involving and meaningful they found this experience:

What's amazing is to look at the crowd who are *all* Indians (you know, there is an odd tourist group sprinkled amongst them), and to see that sort of wrapped, you know, the way the kind of go with it and the way they are just wrapped in the experience, and to also see the way the families are getting involved with bringing bodies down to burn them on the cremation pyres. (P4, India)

While it is possible that some participants chose not to share their anxieties over reflections on their own mortality, the calm with which many acknowledged their age and physical limitations in other sections of the interviews further suggest that these encounters did not cause major distress. At the same time the contrast between the evidence of unresolved unease and the emphasis the more widely-travelled participants placed on being able to distance themselves from their surroundings suggest a presence of stress during the trip, which they were not ready to fully acknowledge. Instead, they emphasised their prior knowledge and travel experience; spoke about surprise; advised not feeling 'worr[ied]' or 'offend[ed]' (P9); or presented themselves as 'quite relaxed', somewhat impartial observers of 'how other people and their ways to treat death and what they do with it' (P20), contradicting their other descriptions of how they had felt. These examples are indicative of what Lazarus (1990, p. 239) terms as 'counterphobic' coping by creating 'a superficial picture of courage, boldness, or fearlessness instead of fright or anxiety'. Similar affirmations

of invulnerability in the presence of significant cultural differences were made by several more participants, making up two thirds of the sample in total.

The diversity of contexts and the small size of the sub-groups of responses make it difficult to claim distinctive patterns. The responses have been found to differ notably by religion, from more favourable reactions to Hindu and Coptic Orthodox practices, to distinctive unease around Islam, and the questioning of religious syncretism of Cuba and Mexico in the middle of this spectrum. The interviews about India revealed little conflict with personal beliefs. As will be elaborated on further, those encounters were perceived as rewarding, despite the closeness with the subject of death. In regards to the mix of Roman Catholicism and pre-Hispanic rituals, while it was described as somewhat difficult to accept, particularly in Mexico, the participants were still able to distance themselves psychologically from the experiences in which they were also much less involved physically than those tourists who attended cremations in Varanasi. As for the experiences of Turkey and Egypt, what sets them apart is how difficult it was even for the more experienced participants to disassociate themselves from the observed differences, as will be discussed further in the context of religion and politics.

However, despite the heterogeneity of the situational factors and the participants' personal circumstances, majority did speak about questioning the validity of the observed cultural realities and noting the more positive aspects of the same situations or their whole experiences. Lazarus (1990, p. 224) notes that the words used for expressing emotions 'often refer to action tendencies or coping processes', and the choice of coping strategies here suggests a moderately taxing effect of contact with religious practices and prominence of religion, uniting these eclectic narrations of encounters with significant cultural differences. In particular, directing attention to another aspect of the tour experience was found to be applied not only to relieve stress but also to defend the self-image as educated and tolerant individuals in the case of the more experienced participants across all the destinations mentioned here. While it is possible that the interview situations may have triggered these defensive responses, their structure also suggests that this type of coping had occurred during the trip.

Collectively, the narrated encounters touched on a range of personal stakes, including ideas about appropriate behaviour in the church, women's rights, concerns about own mortality, and spiritual void. However, the ones shared by the majority were personal relationship with religion and for a smaller group of participants their self-image. In regards to personal relationship with religion, it was found that contact with religious practices and prominence of religion impressed on not only those who were recently or currently religious or who

described themselves are more 'spiritual' (P15, P21), but also those who identified as 'non-religious' (P4, P9, P12) or having more 'secular' (P3, P14) views. These findings will be examined more closely once all key effort stimuli have been addressed.

8.2.1.2. Religion, Government, and Human Rights

The political factors of political regimes and military conflicts in a mix of destinations were questioned by half of the interviewees. Most of the emotionally charged memories involving these themes focused on the issues of controlling governments, human rights, and the influence of religion on both in Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Russia, and Myanmar, and were of predominantly distinctively negative valence. The theme of human rights also featured in two interviews about the recent civil war in Sri Lanka (Buultjens, Ratnayake, & Gnanapala, 2016) and Tamil refugees to Australia but briefly and without links to religion. As a sub-theme of human rights, women's rights and interests were of particular importance to the tourists who visited the three Muslim-majority destinations, and to one male tourist to India. 'Religion' and 'government' as In Vivo (emic) codes were derived directly from the interviews, and the descriptive term 'human rights' was borrowed from Chisari (2015) who discusses the links between these civic rights, Australian values, and human rights.

What the interviews about the Islamic destinations, Russia and Myanmar had in common was the shared concern with by the participants who represent Western tourists from 'liberal-democratic nations' (Chisari, 2015, p. 573) with government 'regimes', perceived as authoritarian and exercising various degrees and forms of undue 'control' over their people. The participants spoke about 'powerful religion control' (P10) of 'theocracy' (P13) in Iran; officially secular but perceived as 'Islamic' (P3) government, headed by a 'pro-religion' (P14) President in Turkey; a highly debated form of presidential democracy with a mix of monarchic and communist past in Russia (McNair, 2000; Pizam et al., 1991; Vice, 2017), described as 'not a Western democracy' (P6); and the military government (junta) in Myanmar that was about to 'handover power' (P6) in a democratic election, the preparation for which was witnessed by P6 and P7. As illustrated by some of these quotations, where the difference with Australia in the political situation merged with culture from the participants' perspective was in the perceived influence of religion in Iran and Turkey, and to a lesser extent in Russia. Although P6 'felt very nervous going back to Russia' in 2015 following her contact with the Soviet regime in 1973, she 'wasn't challenged in the same way', and learning that 'when the [Russian] president is elected, he is blessed by the Patriarch' was met with curiosity about the 'resurgence of the church' in Russia in general, rather than with suspicion. As for Myanmar, attitudes to its government were discussed separately from difficult encounters with religion.

As Jafari and Scott (2014, p. 4) observe, not only tourists but also 'some scholars in Western society may take for granted the separation of religious beliefs and legal and political systems, but this duality is not universal'. The Islamic Republic of Iran was formed as a result of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 that saw the overthrowing of a pro-West, secular, constitutional but authoritarian monarchy by a mixed opposition that was soon overtaken by the 'ulama', a powerful class of Shia clergy (Ahmed, 2011; Mahdavi, 2002; Rolston, 2017). It is governed by a hybrid system of constitutional theocracy (Maranlou, 2015), where the power has been shared between an elected President and unelected but constitutionally supported religious Supreme Leader on the principle of 'the clergy's divine right to political leadership' inscribed in the Constitution following the Revolution (Ghobadzadeh & Rahim, 2016, p. 456). The participants' visits to Iran in 2015 followed the 2013 Presidential election that signified a positive shift towards political reform. As observed by Ghobadzadeh and Rahim (2016, p. 450), it saw 'an elevation of a moderate candidate running on a reformist platform in a regime dominated by conservative clerics' who had suppressed freedom of speech and movement, particularly women's rights, for many years with the help of the Revolutionary Guards and religious police (Koo & Han, 2018; Tavakoli & Mura, 2016). The analysed trips also coincided with the lifting of some of the economic sanctions imposed on Iran by the UN Security Council (Ghobadzadeh & Rahim, 2016): 'I thought that would be *really* interesting [to see], and the fact that two sanctions had been lifted with Iran. You know, there were lots of things happening there' (P19).

Turkey's geographic location and history have determined its image as a 'crossroads' (P14) between the West and the East:

I think the links to other countries in the history of Turkey with the Greeks and the Romans, and the Turks themselves as they moved in waves into places like Bulgaria and Romania, and then had been defeated by Austro-Hungarian armies, and then another wave comes across and does something else. I think Turkey as a crossroads is really very interesting. (P14, Turkey)

The different perceptions of Turkey as both a European destination (Jafari & Scott, 2014) and a Muslim-majority country more closely associated with the Middle East (Hazbun, 2010; World Bank, 2018) were also reflected in the different regions it was assigned to in the brochures by the participating tour operators. In contrast to Iran, Turkey is a secular state, headed by an elected President. However, as reflected in the interview excerpts below about the Turkish presidential and parliamentary elections of 2014-2015, not only tourists as the outside observers, but also some members of the Turkish electorate were increasingly

concerned with the growing influence of Islamic conservatism on Turkish politics (Esen & Gumuscu, 2016; Koo & Han, 2018):

The change from a secular country, I think, could be a disappointment. Our guide was from the western side of Turkey. I think, Erdogan thought that Izmir, the area in the west, lost him an election at some stage because they are more worldly, more secular, more Westernised than perhaps the eastern side of Turkey. (P14, Turkey)

When we went to the provincial city where, I forgot its name, but where the founder of the Dervishes [religious order], there is a big mosque and the tomb it's on, that's an area that votes very heavily Islamic in Turkish elections. It was quite noticeable; the women in more traditional, err, costume, including some burqas. That was interesting. (P3, Turkey)

Establishing how 'pro-religion' (P14) or 'Islamic' (P3) Turkish government was at the time and why is outside the scope of this analysis. However, as also the case for Iran, this brief literature review helps position the participants' responses within the relevant scholarly discourses, and beyond the critique of the media-constructed tourist gaze (Urry & Larsen, 2011). One of these discourses concerns the manifestations of authoritarianism by the Turkish President elected in 2015 and his party, including the silencing of the media, as recalled by P14:

I think the Prime Minister or Premier, he is very much pro-religion, but he is also, I read newspaper articles. I think there is a journalist, a Turkish-Dutch journalist, who said something nasty about him, and she's been arrested and then released and told not to leave the country. (P14, Turkey)

Among the large group of participants who travelled to Turkey, Iran and Myanmar, with the exception of P12, who was not interested in 'politics or wars or anything like that', majority disapproved of the current government regimes in the host settings. Some were more open about voicing their views, expressing strong dislike for and disapproval of a number of issues: 'Islamists in the army and what's happening with the Kurds' in Turkey (P3), referring to the long-standing 'conflict with the Kurdish minority' (P14) in southeast Turkey; and the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-1988, and frequent reminders of those 'who had been killed in the war' on 'billboards that were in every town and village' (P10); and pictures of the former religious leaders, interpreted as saying 'we are the top dogs, and don't you forget because we are still in charge' (P10).

While all four examples voice the participants' condemnation of military conflicts, perceived as initiated by the visited destinations, the last two also refer to two particular realities of the 'mundane' life in Iran (Rolston, 2017). The first one is a practice of remembering service people and civilians who died during military conflicts. In Iran it has taken on the additional meaning of 'the culture of martyrdom' (Gruber, 2012, p. 71), grounded in the 'analogies to the politico-religious mission and tragic death of Imam Hoseyn at the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE'. Promoted by the proponents of the Islamic Revolution in both business and government and publicly manifested in many visual forms, including in the 'photographs of people from that area or that village who were killed in that [Iran-Iraq] war' (P19), the idea of martyrdom has been used to legitimise the Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war as 'standing firm in the face of adversity' and 'fighting in the path of God' (Gruber, 2012, p. 71). The second reality is the ubiquitous monumental murals with portraits of the leaders of the Revolution and the war.

Explicitly described by Rolston (2017, p. 1) as 'state propaganda', appealing to the more religious Iranians and justifying the human losses, it is this perceived purpose of this imagery that was strongly disliked by the tourists. In two interviews, the participants also referred to the opinions expressed by locals. As P9 advised, their local guide and, 'he said, other educated local people' disapproved of what he told the group were the representations of 'war victims' as 'war heroes'. Similar feelings were noted by P10 whose group was invited 'into a private home' where the family 'were desperate for change in Government'. In Australia, individual freedoms and peacefulness belong to national values, represented in the core civic values that form part of the citizenship test (Chisari, 2015). Although the tourists did not explicitly name these values, it was clear that they interpreted the Turkish and Iranian government actions as violations of these principles, and the photographs and murals as reminders of those violations: 'So it's a long way from being a free democracy when you've got this part of government and they've got the revolutionary guard. And they've got the moral police - let's imprison a few people who get in the way!' (P10). Rolston (2017, p.3) argues, however, that while heavily politicised, the images should not be dismissed as 'religious fanaticism' and depictions of 'fanatical ayatollahs' (religious leaders), given the significance of the deep religious belief in martyrdom in Shia Islam on which they are grounded.

In the interviews that focused on Myanmar, the participants expressed empathy for the plight of the local residents living for many years under a military regime which devastated the country:

One got angry really because the generals had been in total power for 60 years, and all they've done was make fortunes for their own families. They've done nothing for the

people. People don't have access to health services or basic things like electricity and they live really *really* desperate lives, and you just kept thinking about what might have been done in the country that is very rich in natural resources. And the generals shut down the universities, for instance. There is very little education available. I mean there are schools all over the country, but they can't have teachers because the government won't pay the teachers. (P6, Myanmar)

In addition to watching the news and prior reading, the main source of knowledge about the extent of control exercised by the Burmese government over its people was not only what the local guides shared with the participants but also how they behaved. Both P6 and P7 noted a 'level of nervousness' (P6) and hesitation with which they 'opened up' (P7) to their groups after getting to know them better. Although, as P7 remembered, their guide did not 'want to get political with people, she 'chose her audience after a while', and the guide who travelled with P6 had to warn her group that 'there are things I will say to you on the bus that I would not say on the streets of Yangon'.

Other participants were less direct in their recollections. Some comments were framed as concerns for the well-being of 'young army people' (P14) being killed in the conflict with the Kurdish minority and the war with Syria; and about government 'propaganda' (P19) of military actions. In other instances, the participants spoke about their hopes for or evidence of positive changes, which they actively looked for by 'hav[ing] discussions' with their local guides (P14); 'just watching people in restaurants or in the street' (P19), or even reading the local 'English language newspaper' (P19). Regardless of the differences in the emotional intensity of the comments, collectively, all of the participants who raised the themes of religion, governance and human rights, including P12, showed an interest in seeing Iran becoming and Turkey remaining more secular, and all four countries, including Myanmar and Russia, becoming more democratic and open to the West, politically, economically, and socially:

The couple of times we were able to get an English language newspaper they [Iranians] read around time, would be government controlled, so all the stories were very positive, very little international news, except for where it involved Iran and other countries where there was maybe trade interaction or all sorts of various things that happened between countries. And obviously, since sanctions were lifted, there were more and more companies becoming involved, looking more at tourism, more at trade, all sorts of things. Always very positive, so you read them, and we got the feeling that Iran was really going somewhere. You know, they want to be more part of the outside world than some of the closed countries that you do travel through at times. (P19, Iran)

It was a very dark and grim place [in 1973]. Now, I'm not saying that one should judge a country on solely on its economic prosperity, but I was just, you know, just amazed at how the country had changed from an economic perspective, but more importantly for me, uhm, what I felt was much more openness. I'm not naive enough to think that everything is fine. You know, we are not talking about a Western democracy here, but I was amazed at how much the country has opened up. (P6, Russia)

Similar to the contact with religious practices and expressions of religiosity, learning about and witnessing manifestations of very different political systems, their close relationship with religion and the consequences of their decisions presented no direct threat to the participants' physical well-being. However, to the exception of Russia, the combination of coping with these differences in Iran, Turkey and Myanmar by rejection, wishful thinking and emphasising the positive with expressions of empathic concern, anger or vicarious outrage and very little questioning suggests persistent anxiety as apprehension of 'an uncertain, existential threat' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 235), and feeling for the injustice inflicted upon others. Feeling hopeful while may appear as a positive state can indicate 'fearing the words but yearning for better' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 96), and that is what the participants' responses suggested. Some of the likely personal stakes implicated in these reactions can be summarised using Lazarus's (1990, p. 220) description of possible general sources of anger that fit the narrated impressions: 'cherished values and meanings to which we are committed – for example, a basic fairness, integrity, and a just world'. Others include the already mentioned secular and democratic views, as well as the importance of autonomy and preference for lower power distance found in the concerns with undue governmental control.

8.2.1.3. Women's Rights and Gender Relations

In the interviews about Iran, the conversations about government violations of individual freedoms intersected with the theme of women's rights and within it with the theme of gender relations that were also raised in the interviews about Turkey (P12), Egypt (P18), and India (P20). These descriptive codes were used to group together participants' references to women's interests (individual freedoms) and 'rights' and to relationships between men and women in different contexts, and to code discussions around these themes.

Here, the example on India, although not related to politics, helps highlight the difference in the strength of emotional response when a cultural difference is taken more personally. In contrast to being able to 'observe' Varanasi cremations 'as a visitor rather than as someone who is trying to say it's right or wrong', P20 'challenged' their local guide's belief in the fairness and value of the arranged marriage practice concerning the guide's young daughter.

Having a daughter of his own and believing in her right to choose who she wants to marry, he was prepared to forgo the non-judgemental approach and openly disagree with the guide, asking him 'in 20 years' time, what makes you think you are going to have a say [in who she wants to marry]?'

In regards to Muslim destinations, linking the themes of controlling regimes, violation of women's rights and gender inequality were the comments about the veiling requirements for local women and female tourists as a significant cultural difference and a challenge, which was not mentioned at all only in one interview with P14. In selected mosques in Egypt and Turkey, and everywhere in Iran, including Iranian airspace, women are required to dress in accordance with the Islamic principle of modesty inscribed in the holy book of Qur'an: to cover their arms, legs and chest with loose clothing and, most importantly, their hair, usually with some form of a headscarf, commonly known as the 'veil' among Western tourists and the hijab among Muslim women (Almila, 2018). The last element of clothing is legally enforced in Iran by the 'moral police' (P10), and it is this requirement that incited strong disagreement among several female participants directly affected by it in all three destinations, even though they were well informed about it:

I sort of thought, 'wow, we are being quite odd here that we are not covered' and in fact the tour guide said, 'please be respectful'. We had to [pause]. I was always doing it anyway, cover cleavage and shoulders and not shorts or short skirt. I totally disagree with it but no, it's not my country. (P12, Turkey)

The dress code and having to constantly cover up wasn't something I wanted to put myself through or, in fact, thought that I should. It [wearing headscarfs] is a big part of women's daily life in Iran but not a welcomed necessity. It's a rather annoying nuisance, a rule invented by men. (P9, Iran)

It was a pest. I didn't care for it at all, but I knew it was the case, and I wanted to go to Iran, so that was part of the price. (P10, Iran)

Veil-wearing by women is a cultural practice deeply rooted in religion (Almila, 2018). It spans many centuries and cultures and is still found in Christian societies (Wagner, Sen, Permanadeli, & Howarth, 2012). What makes it a particularly complex topic is that it is also highly politicised and divisive, as it's been used to advance different viewpoints on Islam and Islamic societies. For Muslim women wearing the hijab, as it has been identified in the literature, is not only an expression of adherence to the principles of modesty (Jafari & Scott,

2014), but also an instrument of women's liberation, affirmation of their cultural identity, and a fashion accessory (Wagner et al., 2012).

As noted by Ahmed (2011), Koo and Han (2018), and Almila (2018, p. 5), a combination of forces - the 'essentialising discourses' of women as oppressed 'sexualised victims' prevalent since the era of colonial expansion into the Middle East and the spread of political Islam - have made the hijab the ultimate symbol of threat to secularism and its individual freedoms, not only in the West but also in Turkey. Its legal enforcement in Iran and Saudi Arabia have faced strong resistance by both Muslim and non-Muslim women fighting women's oppression by theocratic government regimes and patriarchal Islamic societies (Koo & Han, 2018; Tavakoli & Mura, 2016).

Gender inequality, religiosity, and government control, manifested in veiling as a form of oppression were also the themes dominating the participants' accounts. The physical 'challenge' (P9, P10, P18) of having to cover the full body in hot weather made it more difficult to cope with this difference in dress norms: 'Sometimes I did feel a bit hot. It's easier for men. They can have bare arms, but you have to keep your arms covered' (P10). It was found, however, that the intensity of the reported discomfort varied not so much by the differences in the local expectations and weather conditions but by how personally the tourists took both the direct experience of having to veil, or the behaviours and interactions they observed around them. Those women who felt that it restricted their own freedom and exposed them to unequal treatment were more open about voicing this perspective than others.

One interview particularly stands out, where the themes of veiling and gender relations dominated the longest conversation about predominantly one country: Egypt. Identifying herself as 'a bit of a feminist', P18 related her observations of gender inequality in Egypt to how her own brothers living in England who treated their wives 'like they were the lower in the pecking order'. She also could not come to terms with the interpretation of modesty shared by her local female guide. The strict standards for what is considered as dressing modestly for women and the idea that it is women's responsibility to dress and behave in ways that do not distract men, conflicted with her own self-concept as a 'modest person', as well as with her view that it is men who should 'take ownership' of their behaviour. Although she was the only tourist interviewed about Egypt, the concerns she voiced about 'the lack of women's presence in Egypt in nearly everything and everywhere' were also shared by a group of female travellers interviewed by Brown and Osman (2017). This interview helps illustrate the extent of tourists' possible personal (ego) involvement in particular issues and

demonstrates how qualitative research dealing with seemingly unique and subjective stories can offer insights into external realities and shared experiences of those realities.

While it should be acknowledged that P18 had the least experience with Islam, most other interviews, including the two male tourists, as illustrated earlier in the analysis of P3's response, echoed the main themes in some way. Despite having been to Turkey, Morocco, Libya, United Arab Emirates and Indonesia (Table 8.4.), the participants, particularly in Iran, looked for examples of Westernised clothing choices as signs of resistance to the rules among the local women in how they dress, and ultimately as evidence of similarities between them and the hosts. In particular, some comments about Iran were structured as comparisons between the older and the younger women as representing the old ways and the modernisation welcomed by the tourists:

... of course, all the women were wearing hijabs and some all in black, but lots of the young people, they weren't as [pause], they did show their hair, shall I say. (P10, Iran)

Well, the people are very friendly. OK, there is a ruling bureaucracy that imposes all these conditions, particularly on females, but it's pretty obvious that when you look at the way women act, that they know they cannot go the whole lot, but boy, they certainly give it a good twist, and by revealing more of their hair than they should and make up to the max, tight-fitting clothes, you know, all that sort of stuff. (P13, Iran)

And their young people, they are not, err, or generally the girls, they are very pretty, but they are not dressed [pause]. We had to wear scarves, we had to wear clothing to our ankles and to our wrists, and but there is none of, in the younger 20-30s age group, those scarves sit at the back of their head [smiling], and they are always all beautifully made up. Yeah, and very attractive, and they do abide by Iranian dress in that they cover their back side, that come down to the thighs, more or less, uhm, but they can be very fashionable and certainly quite body shape revealing [laughing]. Uhm, they, look, I just found them to be generally very nice people. (P19, Iran)

Here, it is important to revisit the point made earlier in the literature review that tourists' attitudes to hosts can differ from their attitudes to the destinations as a whole, and to their cultures (Dixon et al., 2005; Reisinger & Moufakkir, 2015). All participants, despite what they said about the political situations in their respective destinations, the role of Islam, and Islamic dress norms, spoke very positively about the local people, with friendliness, genuineness and hospitality being the recurrent themes.

Table 8.4. Previous travel experience: Middle East and Africa.

Country	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P8	P9	P10	P12	P13	P15	P16	P17	P19	P20	P21
Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Ethiopia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iran	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jordan	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kuwait	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Morocco	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
South Africa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Syria	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Turkey	-	1	-	2	1	1	1	-	1	5	-	-	1	-	1	1	1
UAE	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uganda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Zambia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Total trips	1	1	1	3	2	1	6	1	2	6	1	1	3	5	3	1	1
Total countries	1	1	1	2	2	1	6	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	3	1	1

Even P18 who found the gendered social order 'claustrophobic' and 'suffocating', reiterated on several occasions how 'very kind and considerate' she found Egyptians throughout her trip, and P19 reported that 'Iranian people are possibly the friendliest people I've ever met!'. In addition, the theme of tolerance, earlier discussed in relation to Sri Lanka, was also raised by P12. Despite disapproving of the strict dress norms for women, she expressed her admiration for how 'in Turkey people live in harmony with everybody: atheists, Christians, Jews, Muslims', and that she 'would hope that other countries become more and more Muslim' to 'show' those who 'hear these reports about Islam and fundamentalist Islamic movements and terrorists' that it is possible for different religions to co-exist peacefully with Islam.

These are significant learnings revealing an alternative perspective on cultural difference as learning lessons highlighting what the tourists felt was missing in Australia. It comes in contrast to the difficulty-focused discourse dominating the literature, and it should not be dismissed as patronising othering. However, as can be inferred from the interview excerpts quoted up to this point, the participants still felt more comfortable around people and places that they saw as reflecting their values. This longing for familiarity among the differences and the feeling of ontological security that it brings is quite expected (Cohen, 1972; Graham & Howard, 2008).

Similar to the examples of relief discussed earlier in the context of surprise, finding some sameness between Australia and Egypt in the relationship between Egyptian men and women was framed by P18 as a welcomed break, whether it was when visiting a Coptic community, or a crocodile farming village:

I met some really lovely people there [in the Coptic church]. That was *fabulous*, that was *really* good because the women were just dressed normally, they didn't have scarves on or anything like that but they all wear clothes. Like it's so hot but they've all got suits and covered up.

I felt because it was probably more, because women and men worked together, uhm, I think there is more of an easier rapport, I felt. Because the women were more visual than the men, whereas back in Cairo there was more men. In the hotel in Cairo, the Hilton, the first day we were there, all men were on the desk. And then the next day we went, there were all women.

Similar memories of observed interactions between men and women in public spaces in Iran were shared by P9 and P10, and P12 pointed how respectfully men treat women in Turkey.

Therefore, when noting the predominantly highly positive impressions of the local people, it is important to consider that those impressions were often shared when thinking about perceived similarities as a way of coping with stress through emphasising them as the positives. The interview with P9 helps illustrate this separation particularly well. In contrast to her earlier comment about the dress norms that she made at the start of the interview, when asked later about the significance of cultural difference now that she had been to Iran, her answer was that the difference was 'very superficial' and 'imposed'. She did not change her view about the headscarf rule as a form of oppression and male dominance but advised that the way Iran is portrayed in the media is a very inaccurate representation of 'what the people are really like': 'The ordinary people are just very unfortunate that they have such government and some are prepared to be critical of it' (P9).

Most of the cultural encounters of politico-religious nature discussed up to this point were met with little hesitation about feeling disapproval that persisted through the post-trip stage, right up to the time the interviews were conducted, illustrating how enduring certain attitudes can be, even when their triggers are described as valuable 'deep insight[s] into the local culture' (P9). In most cases these encounters did not present significant harm, except for the physical discomfort experienced by female travellers. However, the mild anxiety implied in some answers, as well as avoidance of travel in one instance all together, and strong disagreement with some of the local ways, despite the effort applied to comply with them, were indicative of threat appraisal, irrespective of the participants' previous travel experience. The evidence of discomfort around the prominent role of Islam was found in the emphasis placed on not being 'anti-Islam' (P12, P18), and the contradicting answers of not being 'worried' (P9), yet feeling angered by being forced to comply with local norms; and being 'fine' (P10) with the headscarf requirement and even recognising its aesthetic and practical value, yet later noting that it was 'a pest'.

Aside from P9 reporting a change in perspective on Iranians as much nicer than how the media portrays them, during the interviews only three participants engaged in critically reflecting on their assumptions about what they witnessed: P19 in Iran, P18 in Egypt, and P6 in Russia. In contrast to P9 who advised that the 'challenge' of her trip was the decision itself to go to Iran and to 'abide by the rules', even though she found these rules 'pointless', P19 replied that there 'were no great challenges' on her trip and that she had 'travelled and experienced such a lot' that she 'just accept[s] what is', without judgement. Indeed, similar to P10, she too pointed out that 'you are no different from anyone else wearing a scarf, and you don't even think about it, really, and you never have a bad hair day!'. However, her diminished reaction to the Iranian regime, its propaganda and the headscarf requirement

was not neutral. She cared enough to seek advice and reassurance about the flexibility of the hijab law towards tourists from an Iranian woman in Australia. She also framed her impression of seeing the images of Iran-Iraq war victims as an unresolved dilemma, reflecting on the possible meanings of what she observed both from her own perspective as a Western tourist and from the perspective of Iranian people:

Quite often in the towns that you went through, religious, there would be photographs of people from that area or that village who were killed in that war, and one hotel we went to had little cards, like more the size of playing cards, and they had a photograph of someone on them, and it had his name, and then on the back was his story. And it was to honour their dead. I can't really see that happening in Australia, frankly [pause], just on a village-basis. We have this sort of thing at the War Memorial in Canberra or maybe in the RSL club or whatever, but it's just a general. So where do you draw the line between 'is it propaganda or is it just honouring' in more emotional people, I guess, as opposed to Western cultures which are not quite as an emotional group of people? (P19, Iran)

On the contrary, both P9 and P10 who also travelled to Iran, left with the conviction that what they saw was purely pro-regime propaganda. In both instances, contact with those cultural realities demanded some meaning-making effort, but only P19 demonstrated willingness to question her own views, engaging in a critical step in transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990). In the case of Russia, P6 actively sought to learn what Russians thought about their government 'because one becomes aware of the media biases here in the West because we get a particular picture of Putin, and what's happening'. From 'chat[ting] with shopkeepers', asking questions to the national tour leader, and making the most of organised interaction opportunities she learnt that 'there was this sense of very strong support for him, and a feeling that certainly he's actually brought stability and you know, economic prosperity', and that 'that he is actually giving back more of a sense of national pride by standing up to the West'. The interview with P18 was different from the other two in that she was still coming to terms with the differences that she found hard to accept, particularly in women's dress norms. It was the first time she spoke to anyone about how deeply she was affected by the trip, and towards the end of the first interview hour she acknowledged feeling exhausted by the 'arguments' she kept having with herself:

[The tour guide said] something about going to Mecca, finding God in an extreme form. I don't know. I just find that all a bit bizarre, really. I do, I do. I just can't justify it in my head, and I have all these arguments all the time. They wear me out, actually. Arguments with myself about how everybody is entitled to dress how they like. I

understand all of that but then that little niggle underneath about, uhm, who, why you think that, that you should dress that way? (P18, Egypt)

As she emphasised early in the interview, 'I have nothing, obviously, no racial prejudice towards Islamic religion at all but I found it very claustrophobic for me towards women'. However, the arguments she referred to, revealed an ongoing struggle to reconcile her understanding of the importance of respecting the choices of her local tour guide and other Muslim women in Egypt with profoundly disagreeing with the reasoning behind them. Furthermore, as can be inferred from the emphasis she placed on how educated her guide and her family was, she was also disoriented by the realisation that educated people can choose to become deeply religious. This common misperception of a simple direct relationship between higher education levels and lower levels of religious participation (Schwadel, 2011) also came through the interviews with P9 and P19 who commented how sophisticated local women looked regardless of conservative clothing. A very similar comment was made by P18 about her local guide, while P12 concluded from the popularity of the hijab that the opposite processes were occurring in Turkey.

Despite the uniqueness of some of the analysed events and the differences between the participants, several points of comparison can still be proposed about this group of responses. First, differences between the participants in the strength of commitment to the shared values could be suggested as influencing tourists' sensitivity towards certain situations or their aspects (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984). While all women arrived prepared having own scarves and complied with the local rules, several felt that the headscarf requirement violated their rights, and some chose to be more accepting of the local conditions. However, unless the strength of commitment to women's rights emerged elsewhere in the interviews, it is difficult to comment on its endurance. For example, similar to P18 who disapproved of the gender inequities observed among her relatives, P12 brought up the theme of women's rights in relation to education and employment, advising that she prefers to 'help programs that help women', even though if it may sound 'sexist'. The fact that P14 and P19, however, did not raise this theme anywhere in the interview, does not imply that it was not as important to them as to others. Furthermore, the effortfulness of these contact events varied not only by how personally invested the participants were in the situations touching on their values and beliefs, but also whether or not they were affected directly. As far as dress norms are concerned, male participants could only relate only their observations.

Second, accessing the perspectives of the local guides and the locals emerged as seeking social support in the form of insider knowledge. However, in contrast to the experience of

P18, whose local guide was not only highly educated but also a devout Muslim, the local guides and the host families of most of the participants who visited Turkey and Iran reported the views and behaviours on politics and religion with which the tourists were able to identify. Although these similarities were met by the tourists as pleasant surprises that helped them overcome initial apprehension and experience empathy and sense of closeness in its place, they also reinforced their pre-travel attitudes towards the governments of those destinations, the influence of Islam on domestic politics and other aspects of life, and the need for change.

Third, the three participants who applied conscious effort to reflect on their assumptions were also the ones whose travel motivations or personal interests and circumstances aligned with such reflexivity: P6 was among the few tourists motivated by perspective change; P19 described herself as someone interested in 'philosophies and ways to live your life'; and P18 was a formerly deeply religious person motivated by personal development and making the trip to Egypt about turning to her own 'spiritual self'.

Fourth, while closely linked to the concerns for human rights, the responses about veiling and oppression of women's rights are distinguished by examples of contradicting statements and the need to emphasise the absence of any negativity towards Islam. The perceived need for offering these clarifications when engaging in the discussions of dress norms, which could also be explained by individual choice, rather the fault of the 'system[s]' (Lazarus, 1990, p. 224), or in this case regimes, further speaks for the participants' shared stake in seeing themselves and being seen as tolerant individuals respecting other cultures.

Certainly, in the light of the particularly pronounced defensiveness in the recollections of contact with Islam, the potentiality of a degree of the Islamophobia among Western tourists noted by Willson and Maccarthy (2016), and Jafari and Scott (2014) cannot be ignored. When sharing memories of contact with political factors and their influence on the lives of the locals, the participants largely focused on the influence of religion as forced by the government on the oppressed, appearing to ignore the fact those governments share religious beliefs with some of the devout Muslims. This finding highlights the distinct discomfort of tourists from Western democracies around Islam and the fact that in some societies religion plays a much bigger role in different aspects of people's lives not because the governments force them to, but because they choose to (Jafari & Scott, 2014; Rolston, 2017). Here, the interview about Russia stands out as despite having questions about the current government, P6 demonstrated willingness to see the situation in Russia from the perspectives of the locals who support it. Beyond the differences in attitudes to specific religions the personal stakes activated by these experiences are addressed in Section 8.3.

8.2.2. Living Conditions and Social Structures

Many mentally taxing experiences were discussed in the context of contact with difficult living conditions (environmental and socio-economic), predominantly in India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Egypt and Russia of 1973, but also to a lesser extent in Cuba and Mexico. The environmental factors included pollution, noise and smell, and the main socio-economic stressors were found to be difficult economic situations, including the state of healthcare and education; certain livelihood activities engendered by them, such as crime, street hawking and begging, and those leading to water pollution; and population density and overcrowding. As stated earlier in Chapter 7, 'living conditions' is another descriptive code, combining together participants' references to 'how people lived' and their evaluations of the quality of life in such conditions. The specific conditions the participants identified (pollution, noise, smell, poverty, healthcare, population density, crows, crime) are discussed further.

Economy and culture are closely interlinked (Smith, 2016; Walker & Moscardo, 2016) and this understanding was reflected in the all-encompassing meaning of culture held by the participants, as discussed earlier in the results on travel motivations. Sharing his impressions of the differences between Sri Lanka and Australia, P16 reported that although he thought 'there is nothing that's different between human beings', some aspects of life in Sri Lanka still stood out:

I think the first thing that strikes you is, of course, that it's a third world country, and the poverty and how much that influences their culture because they have such limitations of it. We visited some families in their own little homes, and you could see, you know, what a struggle life was for them [pause], compared to Australia. (P16, Sri Lanka)

Several participants also drew connections between economic deprivation and the cultural value of strong family ties in India, Egypt and Cuba, which, they thought, helped the locals cope with adversity, based on what they learnt from the local guides and from visits to private homes:

So actually, in some ways, the poverty is sad, but the culture that they live in is great for them because they look after each other's children; they build each other's homes; they live together; they look after their old people. There are no retirement villages or anything, so the old people are looked after. (P18, Egypt)

The literature problematises the linking of culture, economy and politics by the tourist gaze as trivialising 'culturlization' (Smith, 2016, p. 160) of what are serious societal issues, particularly in developing countries (Crossley, 2012b; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Indeed, in

several instances, recollections of home visits and contact with such behaviours as street hawking and littering placed them 'as part of an aesthetic and cultural framework' (Crossley, 2012b, p. 247). Dwelling on positive memories, the participants would bring up 'simple' (P4, P16) life in the rural communities of Sri Lanka and India; 'little fruit and veg shop at the end of the corner, rather than supermarkets' (P11) in Cuba; 'difference between the clothes or furniture they [the locals] may buy' (P7) in Myanmar; and the admirable 'enterprising' nature of people in India who 'were always at you to buy stuff' (P4). As for the behaviours of which the tourists disapproved, littering and water pollution in India and Egypt were interpreted as lack of environmental concern rather than as perceived lack of personal control over the situation and 'the reality of scarce economic resources' (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002, pp. 244-245), noted only by P11 about Cuba. However, as illustrated by the interview with P21, some of these conclusions may have been influenced by the local guides. Similar to the influence of the local guides in Iran and Turkey on tourists' perceptions, rather than deepening her understanding of the local context surrounding littering in India, the advice offered by the local guide to P21 contributed to reinforcing her pre-travel assumptions:

I think one thing that worried me is that the Indian people don't respect their country. They would just walk along the road and throw rubbish on the road, whereas if they can control the rubbish themselves, it would cut down the problem all along. We all just walked around going 'why don't people pick things up?' We talked to the guide about that and how rubbish and people throw stuff and everything like that, and he said 'it's just the way'. That's all it is. It's just the way they handle it. And people live in this squalor. For example, you saw people washing in a river, this commercial business washing for other people. The water was bright green! It was sad. The buffalo were 100 metres up stream. And of course, on the other side of the river was a dump, and everything was leaching out into the water, syringes and rubbish, awful stuff, and people are bathing in it, washing clothes in it. It's just, you can't get your head around it. (P21, India)

Furthermore, while romanticizing the simplicity of life outside of Australia, the same participants felt simultaneously confronted. Some explicitly noted that the 'shock' that they experienced 'was not so much cultural as economic' (P16); that 'one should not judge a country solely on its economic prosperity' (P6RU); and that 'it's a challenge to look past the poverty and the sadness in those people's lives' (P18). A synonymous term, 'life shock', has been used in culture shock literature to describe 'sudden and direct exposure to the less desirable facts of human life, from which the people in Western societies often are shielded by social security and state institutions' (Hottola, 2004, p. 454). Based on these examples

and the considerable homogeneity of the sample in terms of age, education levels and travel experiences, it could be surmised that other participants were also at least partly aware of the difference between culture and economy.

Here, it should be pointed out that the reported strain appeared mostly psychological rather than physical, stemming from the meanings assigned by the participants to their experiences of the external conditions. Few participants drew attention to experiencing any serious physical discomfort caused by any of the socio-economic factors. Except for noting that the underdeveloped road infrastructure was 'physically a challenge' (P7) in terms of long transits on the bus, anticipatory coping through planful problem-prevention and attitudinal acceptance of some of the inconveniences were the more common answers. When asked if they experienced any challenges on their tour, several participants spoke about 'doing the research' and taking a range of precautions before and during travel and treating potential health risks and occasionally falling sick as part of the experience. Equipped by previous experience of travelling in Asia and looking for more stimulating experiences than 'turning up in Singapore for the fifth time' or going to Malaysia with its 'reasonable style of living' (P7), they also came to accept that it was not going to be the same as in Australia, as 'it was, obviously, third world, which was no problem' (P5).

However, even though in most cases the participants did not talk about it directly, the physical and cognitive fatigue caused by the differences in the physical environment could still be implicated from the context. Contrasted with the orderliness of Europe and Japan, the noises, the smells, the traffic, the chaos, the 'mass of humanity' (P20) – all continuously tested the participants' ability to cope with the difference, particularly in India, repeatedly described by the tourists as 'overload of the senses' (P21):

My initial term was sensory overload Just the density of people. Not so much in the sense of smell. There was only once, because everyone talks about the smells, whatever, but it was only one place we visited where I found the smell was offensive and that was at high school. It was more the colours, the noise pollution, my God! Just the sheer numbers of people and how they make the traffic work. (P15, India)

Although this different atmosphere was part of their motivation to travel, occasionally the bustling side of Asia mentioned earlier in the context of comparison with the 'Southern-European' (P3) feel of Turkey, became too much. A failed attempt to cross the road in Delhi on the very first day was described as a 'disaster' by P20 who made no further attempts to explore India on public transport without the guide, including rickshaw rides. A similar negative experience was shared by P18 who, as a solo female traveller, found her mobility

significantly restricted by the local traffic conditions in Egypt which prevented her from 'walk[ing] even four lanes across the road to go to the beach' without the hotel security insisting on assisting her. It is noteworthy, however, that in both instances the participants were not assisted by their guides, unlike P15 whose increased confidence after the first guided rickshaw ride enticed him to go out on his own on another one. Despite his introversion and having much less experience with Asia than P20 and even P18, he was able to have a positive experience. The guide's timely support appears to have been an important contributing factor, but the differences in motivation to leave the comfort zone and connect with the locals could have also played a part.

Furthermore, while some participants were able to learn to cope with some of the differences 'over the years' (P4), many, even among the most experienced travellers, found not only 'abject poverty' (P15, P18) but also the less severe but still 'very dark' and 'grim' time of economic depression in Soviet Russia of 1973 exceptionally 'challenging' (P6). The difference between the intensity of physical and psychological discomfort was effectively captured by P4 when explaining why she had avoided travelling to India 'for many years'. She recalled asking herself two questions: 'Am I going to feel confronted by people whose standard of living isn't as high as mine?' and 'Can I cope with the plumbing?' Another participant, while motivated by the 'challenge in the mental sense' of 'go[ing] to different places and 'look[ing] at different versus the same' (P20), was 'reluctant to go because of the general view of health conditions'. However, as P4 acknowledged, it was the first concern that really deterred her from going. A similar reason for avoiding travel to India was shared by P15 who 'put off going for decades', feeling 'afraid that all the deformities and the poverty, and the begging would (I am a sensitive soul), be disturbing'.

Indeed, as Crossley (2012b, p. 253) observed about volunteer tourists in Africa, 'poverty presents a challenge to the lifestyles, materialism and indulgences of affluent Western subjects and can therefore induce feelings of guilt or unconscious anxiety as the Self is threatened by this spectre'. Furthermore, as noted by Lozanski (as cited in Crossley, 2013, p. 129), 'the uncertainty of how to respond to beggars appropriately can subject travellers to a state of vulnerability'. Although the term poverty was not used by all participants in this study, Crossley's (2012) observation accurately summarises the typical self-interests as the key personal stakes threatened by such difficult encounters, and the tourists' emotional responses to the inequalities between themselves and the locals, including local guides, as well as among the locals. What follows is how this internal conflict experienced by the participants during travel presented itself during the interview.

On one hand, several participants acknowledged feeling 'often like a horrible rich tourist' (P20) in the face of the difference between them 'driving around in an air-conditioned bus and other people just living on the side of the road' (P7). The discomfort was further intensified, in some cases, by the lack of control over tipping and other donations, the 'act[s] of giving' that commonly help relieve 'the guilt of being in a superior position' (Sin, 2009, p. 495). The excerpt from the interview with P20 provides an example of such internal dialogue:

The other thing that was rather confronting when we were in rickshaw, we were told we weren't allowed to pay them any more than probably the equivalent of a dollar, and they peddle for a couple of kms, and it was pretty hard going, and you sort of think, hang on: on one hand, we are thinking a dollar is nothing, we should give him 5 or 10, whereas the guide is saying, no, don't give them any more because that will create a problem, and there will be fights and that sort of stuff. So from a cultural point of view, you are a little bit unsure of what to do. On one hand you are saying it's not fair this poor little bloke has to peddle like hell to transport these rich tourists down the track. On the other hand, they are saying don't give them anymore because it will upset the equilibrium of what people will be paid. (P20, India)

On the other hand, they did not discuss how their own travel contributed to this disparity. Similar to volunteer tourists (Crossley, 2012a, 2012b; Sin, 2009) and despite the acknowledgement of not only discomfort but also guilt in fewer cases, the participants engaged in a combination of defensive strategies to cope with the unresolved cognitive dissonance during the interview. However, unlike the voluntourists seeking personal transformations, these travellers did not choose the destinations deliberately for the contact opportunities that would threaten their self-image as individuals with a 'strong sense of fairness' (P15), and would remind them that 'you don't need anything of what you think you need in life' (P11), or 'how lucky we are [in Australia], and how soft it is here compared to what people in those countries have to struggle with' (P16). On the contrary, with few exceptions, these learning benefits were pointed out as an after-thought. Even though many shared these realisations, it was more about developing general awareness and 'having a better feel for it [the destination]' (P16) than personal development. The only exception could be P7 who deliberately chose to travel to Myanmar for the challenge of travelling in a developing country, but even she wished that the situations of 'people watching', where her tour group was taken to places where they could see 'people who were working really, really hard and obviously in very poor working conditions', could have been 'kept to a minimum'.

Unlike budget travellers, the group tourists in this study had to deal with the internal conflict of trying to reconcile the guilt of being able to afford to travel comfortably with wanting to

travel that way, when others around them struggled. Several participants resorted to talking about contributing through 'the tourism dollar'. In one instance, these unresolved dilemmas led to a second interview with P20 who emailed to the interviewer with the words 'I have been thinking about our discussion and realised I probably omitted some things I could have mentioned in regard to cultural differences and challenging experiences'. The examples he mentioned were then explored in the second interview and related to his group's visits to a family home in a small village, a school, and a small women's clinic – the contact opportunities offered on the tours to India and Sri Lanka.

A strategy widely discussed in tourism literature and frequently mentioned in the interviews is the searching for the evidence of 'the happy poor' (Crossley, 2012a, p. 91; Pearce, 2012). As exemplified in the following set of quotes, in some interviews the acknowledgements of guilt, discomfort or sadness were closely followed by observations of how happy and also healthy the locals appeared. In others the latter were framed as pleasant discoveries and perspective change on the relationship between happiness and poverty, but also on happiness and wealth as a reflection on life in Australia, which somewhat contradicted the earlier mentioned reflections on being lucky to live here:

I've still got a lot of friends who say 'you are going to India?! Oh my God! It's so horrible!'. And I say, you know, really, you can't deny any of that confronting stuff, but there is also an amazing, I cannot describe it [pause]. There is an amazing positivity in the way that people just get on, you know. They just do it. (P4, India)

I found a lot of that confronting but I also found that incredibly enjoyable. There was some sadness but the people themselves, regardless of being poor, were quite happy [with surprise]. (P15, India).

The best thing of all was that we went into families and sat and had lunch with them. That was a terrific experience, and we went to the schools. That was to see the kids and everything, and how good the kids were. Our kids wouldn't have a bar of these schools. They were so, little primitive chairs and desks and no air-conditioning, you know. How soft we are compared to how tough life is for these people, and in a lot of ways they seemed a lot happier than we are. Certainly, Australians would not tolerate their lot in life, but they all seemed, well, superficially, they all seemed a happy integrated society. (P16, Sri Lanka).

Drawing on the literature on tourists' recollections of contact with poverty (Chang et al., 2012; Crossley, 2012, 2012a; Pearce, 2012; Raymond & Hall, 2008), this line of thinking

could be interpreted with considerable confidence as self-defensive emphasising of the positives to ease the burden of the sense of guilt for holidaying amidst the struggle of others and seeing it as a 'moral lapse' (Lazarus, 1990, p. 232). However, the research outside of the tourist studies critiques such conclusions and provides evidence that observations of happiness in poverty can also be grounded in objective reality. Qualitative interviews with slum residents and homeless people in Calcutta and America (Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2001, 2006) support the quantitative findings by Camfield, Choudhury, and Devine (2009) on the quality of life in Bangladesh that the satisfaction derived by people living in poor conditions from their social relationships plays a very big part in their life satisfaction.

Anticipating and accepting, two other common and closely linked strategies, were implied in the recurrent comments about 'los[ing] the shock' over time (P16) due to having 'enough sort of experience in Asia and perhaps third world countries to not be phased at all by anything that was happening' (P2); and 'run[ing] with the flow' (P20). By preparing themselves mentally for what was to come, some participants were particularly successful at 'short-circuiting', as Lazarus (1990, p. 163) describes it, the feelings of anxiety and guilt. This was evident in the language they employed to describe their impressions, as well as how consistent their evaluations were and how little they spoke about the local socio-economic conditions all together. Unlike P15 who raised the subjects of poverty and inequality very early in the interview as one of his strongest memories, or P20 whose feelings about them led to the second interview, P2 and P5 were very brief and quite neutral in their recollections. As Lazarus (1990, p. 163) explains, 'an emotion such as anxiety is not experienced when it is expected, because the threatening meaning has been made benign, usually by some kind of ego-defensive process'. Indeed, instead of referring to anxiety or guilt, P21 (India) and P9 (Mexico) spoke about sadness. While their responses were more emotive than the impartial listing of objective differences by P2, according to Lazarus (1990, p. 250) sadness will occur only if there is no blame involved, while the other two emotions 'are centred on dealing with the agency responsible', as illustrated by the earlier quotes.

Table 8.5. Previous travel experience: Asia.

Countries	P2	P4	P5	P6	P7	P9	P11	P15	P16	P18	P20	P21
Cambodia	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
China	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-
India	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
Indonesia	10	5	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Japan	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Laos	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Malaysia	-	-	1	-	15	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Singapore	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thailand	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Vietnam	1	1	1	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	1	1
Total trips	15	12	9	2	31	-	4	1	4	3	5	2
Total countries	6	5	4	1	5	-	4	1	3	3	5	2

However, as the interviews revealed, in many cases, despite multiple visits to several developing countries in Asia (Table 8.5.), the feeling of discomfort was never permanently resolved but was dulled during and after the trip by the layers of most likely the same defensive intellectualisations that were voiced during the interviews to help relieve some of the guilt. This was particularly visible in the shifting of the narratives between acknowledgements of psychological discomfort and claims of no longer 'get[ting] things like culture shock' (P4), or contradicting accounts of how confronting, yet enjoyable and stress-free the experiences were. The set of quotes below was gathered from different parts of the interview with P15 in the order it progressed, to illustrate this process:

Interviewer: So how different did you find the culture of India to Australia?

P15: I found a lot of that confronting, but I also found that incredibly enjoyable

Interviewer: How did you cope with some of the things that you saw?

P15: I loved it! I loved it. There was nothing confronting.

Interviewer: Was there anything that you questioned or didn't quite understand in what happened that you observed; that you disagreed with something or perhaps needed clarification from the guide?

P15: The thing I found the hardest to come to terms with (and this was in China as well) is on the one hand the abject poverty and on the other the ostentatious world.

Interviewer: Did that help you, because one of the things you mentioned was a gaining a new perspective on life, did that have any impact on it?

P15: When I left India, and I was on the plane, I was feeling similar to the way I was when I left China. When I left China, I said, 'well, there is no way I'm going back. I've done that'. I wasn't impressed by it. So initially I had a similar reaction but then once I got back home, I couldn't get it out of my mind.

Interviewer: So what comes to your mind when you hear the word challenge in relation to travel?

P15: Challenge, uhm, yeah, uhm [looking for words], well, density, population density. I hate crowds so me anything with uhm large numbers of people I find challenging.

Some of the rationalisations also involved references to having little or no control over the deprivations experienced by the hosts, and with that attempts to lessen personal responsibility in order to ultimately resolve the cognitive dissonance in favour of the status quo. The presence of unresolved dilemmas in these post-travel interviews supports the conclusions drawn empirically by Folkman and Lazarus (1988, p. 473) that 'the reduction of distress achieved cognitively through distancing and positive reappraisal may be difficult to sustain'.

Furthermore, it will be a fair assessment to note that overall, despite feeling conflicted, the interviews revealed a lack of problem-focused coping during the trips, consistent with some of the literature (Sin, 2009). Besides tipping; bringing stationery and other small gifts to schools; and handing out hotel toiletries to people begging for them in the streets of India, Egypt and Cuba, few participants in this group engaged in any substantial charity, such as the additional one-day trip made by P12 from Turkey to the Greek island of Kastellorizo to help Syrian refugees. Other examples of giving back included P6 giving away 'almost everything that we took [with us to Russia] because [pause to collect thoughts] we found our richness very difficult in the face of their [pause] lack, if that makes sense?'; P15 helping his group pay for their local guide's dinners so that he could join them; and P21 donating extra money to the local medical clinic.

Part of the narrative of contact with poverty were also memories of local social structures: 'class systems', a collective term borrowed from the interview with P2, and associated economic 'inequality' between the locals, a word used by several participants. As in the case of most of the other themes discussed in this chapter, the label 'social structures' was first introduced in Chapter 7 and emerged from the interview with P7 who described her interest in 'social culture'. Similar to the experience of inequality between themselves and the locals, the tourists found local inequities unsettling, empathising with the disadvantaged and feeling

troubled by the observed injustices. Unfair wealth distribution was one of the sub-themes. With disapproval and disbelief, the participants recalled the striking contrast between the 'mega-rich mansions' in the outskirts of Cairo and the 'crammed apartments' of central Cairo or the adversity of rural areas (P18), and the 'expensive apartments in high-rise buildings' of Mumbai and its vast 'slum dwellings' (P15). The opulence of heritage sites in India and Myanmar was another issue that was also found to be difficult to understand. While reflecting on the 'cultural pride' assigned to such sites, P6 reported that seeing 'so much gold' next to economic deprivation was an 'outside of the comfort zone' experience for her as a 'materialistic Westerner' who would rather see that wealth invested into 'a proper healthcare system'. Another participant was also stroke by the 'opulence and extravagance in this one building [the Taj Mahal]' and 'absolute poverty 20m away' (P21).

However, despite the participants' explicit evaluations of those experiences as emotionally 'difficult' and conflicting with the value of equality (Austin & Fozdar, 2018; Chisari, 2015), these comments were also part of the wider narrative about how they attempted to reduce the psychological discomfort during the trip by either further subtle shifting of the responsibility to the local conditions (Sin, 2009), or even by emphasizing the positives. This process is particularly visible in the excerpts from the interview with P6 and P15 who despite reporting feeling deeply affected, almost immediately integrated into their answers their impressions of the positive and negative external factors influencing the local situation:

It's a level of poverty that we don't see here, a very different level of poverty, and that certainly made me feel very uncomfortable Tuberculosis is a big problem and so is typhoid fever, especially out in the villages, but they don't have access to medical clinics. And you know, now the foreign investment is beginning to go into the country, uhm, one hopes that will actually lead to some improvements. I mean, some of the NGOs now actually go in to actually start providing some of this care. (P6, Myanmar)

It's just, everything about it [pause], not like we have, a sense of fairness, you think, well, I see all this poverty, how about distributing the wealth a bit more equitably? But you need the money for some of the other things, and willingness to do it, but whatever their government, I just don't see it happening. (P15, India)

Inequality connected to religious beliefs was another sub-theme that evoked strong disapproval from P6 in Myanmar and from the tourists interviewed about India who had faced the caste system, a Hindu conception of social order, also found in Sri Lanka but evaluated as a social issue only in passing by the participants who had travelled there. In both instances, in Myanmar and in India local guides played a central role. In Myanmar, P6

'found it disturbing' how 'very intolerant' their local guide was 'when it came to Muslims', and how difficult she found to 'match that with how open and friendly and absolutely charming' she 'found them [local people] in all other regards'. Given that P6 continued following the news and reading about Myanmar after the trip in late 2014, it is possible that some of the disapproval accumulated during the post-travel learning stage overshadowed the memories of the trip. Despite the disappointment, however, her comments also revealed a degree of reflexivity she had shown during the trip: 'Whilst it saddened me, you know, I tried to understand where that actually came from. It's naïve to expect that every people in other countries are going to completely share whatever cultural values you might have' (P6).

In regards to the caste system in India, the local guides from the same tour company (C2) played a part in eliciting considerably different responses. In one instance, the local guide, proud of being of the higher warrior cast, as recalled by P15, helped him arrive at the conclusion that 'at any level of the casts, no one, even the untouchables wants the cast system to change because everyone knows what's expected of them in their pecking order'. In another, the guide was confronted by P20 who disagreed with his belief in arranged marriage, describing it as 'chauvinism'. In addition to seeing it manifested in the guide's views on arranged marriage according to which people should not marry outside of their caste, P20 also witnessed his local guide 'yelling at the waiting staff to come and move the chair for him' at a bar, and displaying a somewhat similar attitude in interaction with on-site guides. Here it must be noted, however, that whilst these are important findings in relation to the roles played by local guides in influencing tourists' perspectives, intolerance shown by some groups and individuals does not necessarily implicate any religions or whole nations as inherently intolerant. The three examples also further illuminate the problem with the enactment of confrontative coping with cultural differences in group travel, and the inclination of tourists to direct their anger, indignation or less acute disapproval to whole systems rather individuals as a safer option. The latter was particularly discernible in the interview with P6 where she did not hesitate to criticise the government and militant groups but found it difficult to deal with a display of an undesirable behaviour by her local guide.

In summary, it was found that the participants' vulnerable selves were particularly exposed in the contact with difficult living conditions and inequitable social structures regardless of previous travel experience, uniting both more and less experienced tourists in their desire to travel despite sensing the unfairness of the inequality between them and the locals and feeling guilty for not doing enough to address it. It is also noteworthy that 'challenge' emerged as a prominent theme, compared to its less frequent occurrence in the other contexts. Although the participants provided a range of arguments to justify why it was not

something they could have a significant positive impact on, several findings suggest that it is the very realisation of their own responsibility and greater control over positive change that made this aspect of their travel particularly taxing. Those indicators included their explicitly stated internal conflict; the mix of coping through avoidance and acceptance (both attitudinal and problem-focused); and romanticizing the life in much less affluent countries, which emerged as another tourism-specific dimension of ego-defensive coping by emphasising the positive.

In addition, a noticeable difference was found in the coping with economic and environmental conditions, including unfair wealth distribution, and with religious intolerance and the Hindu caste system. The last two sub-themes closely intersect with the participants' concerns with human and women's rights discussed earlier that revealed much less hesitation in expressions of disapproval, compared to the recollections of encounters with religious practices. Finally, seeking social support, while effective for coping with stress, emerged as capable of having negative effectives on tourists' more nuanced understandings of the complexities of the encountered differences. The interpretive and managerial choices by the local guides were found to act as barriers to learning and action-focused engagement, and their behaviours and beliefs as triggers of opposition by the tourists, and both as requiring substantial coping effort.

8.2.3. Everyday Activities and Casual Interactions

The participants' interest in the everyday activities engaged in by the locals around the life domains of transport, food, shopping, recreation, media and home life, as well as the differences in language and communication norms were briefly introduced in Chapter 7 as elements of 'day-to-day' culture that they found particularly attractive. In contrast to what the tourists observed about others, this section discusses their own engagement in 'doing things practically by yourself' (P3) such as using the local transport, ordering food, and visiting local stores (not tourist souvenir shops), and interacting with the locals in the process. The little attention given to these factors by the participants and the consequent secondary relevance of these factors to the discussion of challenge is consistent with the literature, as discussed further.

As reported earlier, despite the busy tour itineraries, the participants were able to enjoy organised and unplanned opportunities for interaction with the locals as highlights of their trips. The latter type of interactions predominantly included situations where the tourists were approached by the locals who spoke some English. A third of the sample also ventured out on their own to enjoy brief moments of independence. However, while the social aspect was

mentioned as important by most of the participants in this group wanting to 'meet the locals' (P2), fewer spoke about putting in the 'effort to learn' (P18) a few words in the local language before the trip, from the local guides or by asking the locals 'to teach' (P15) them; practising what they had already 'mastered' before the trip (P6); or even about enjoying 'overcoming the language barrier' (P7) simply for the joy of brief interactions, or to 'get things done with a little bit of English' (P3), like 'ordering stuff and trying to read the menu, what it say' (P12), or 'figuring out from scratch is exactly how the local transport works' (P3). In summary, the tour environment minimised the need to purchase own meals or to use local transport without assistance. Most participants in this study enjoyed the fact that they were able to rely on the tour guides or the locals for speaking English, without having to cope with the language barrier. In addition to highlighting the role of the travel mode, this finding is also consistent with prior research on the peripheral importance of language differences as a source of difficulty for English-speaking tourists (Goethals, 2016).

As far as stress and coping effort are concerned, only three others recounted considerably distressing experiences of being 'pressured to buy something' at the local markets, shops and factories, and dealing with traffic. In most cases, however, unlike some of the unexpected or not fully anticipated demanding contact situations discussed in the previous sections, the participants were able to control the amount and quality of the interaction they had.

The sense of greater control enabled by this favourable condition also contributed to the enjoyment of independent explorations by those who sought the situations that would test their comfort levels but remain motivation-congruent and promising various personal gains. In particular, three participants (P3, P7, P15) willingly engaged in situations that challenged their interpersonal skills; engaged them in problem-solving; and pushed them to overcome the anxiety about navigating unfamiliar environments on their own and dealing with strangers of whom they had been somewhat apprehensive. The distinctive alignment between the anticipated stress, the eagerness to overcome it and their travel motivations for personal development, self-actualization and host-site involvement, characteristic of challenge stress (Lazarus, 1990, 2006), explain why all three cases have already been introduced earlier in the motivation results. Those specific examples included P15 being 'challenged by street hawkers and vendors' in India but managing to bond with them through repeated interactions initiated by him and by them; P7 pursuing a combination of challenges, including the 'excitement' of getting 'lost' and 'finding the way back' in Myanmar; and P3 overcoming the fear of 'the unknown' and 'com[ing] out cold' to use the tram in Istanbul to later enjoy the 'satisfaction you get when you master those things' and the freedom to 'wander around the

place'. In addition to greater freedom of choice, these findings highlight the difference between how occasional engagement in everyday activities in the context of leisure tourism, particularly organised, and out of own volition can be evaluated much more positively compared to independent or semi-independent international sojourners. The latter can have very little support and may have to 'start from zero' in terms of learning how to live in a new place on a daily basis (Chang, et al., 2012, p. 240).

One more participant spoke about enjoying similar benefits but as a result of reappraising a harmful situation as positive when she found herself having to shop locally to replace her stolen belongings and engage with the local authorities. Although she acknowledged feeling quite upset initially, she immediately added 'but we got to know about little shops selling things that most people don't' (P14). This may have been a case of much later positive reappraisal. However, the fact that she re-emphasised this point at a later stage and noted in a different part of the interview that the tour lacked the opportunities for interaction which she normally enjoys, suggest that the reappraisal may have occurred during the trip.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of these experience narratives, compared to most of the memories of contact with the other environmental factors, is articulation of either distinctive personally important goals, benefits, or both, in contrast to the general educational benefits. The second one is that, consistent with Cetin and Bilgihan's (2016) findings, in all four cases the effort applied was consciously perceived as part of the process. It was also interpreted as a welcomed step towards those desired self- and other-related outcomes, such as autonomy, mastery, increased self-confidence, culture learning and human connection, rather than as a 'price' (P10) to pay. Finally, the reported coping approach was highly problem- or participation-focused, compared to the emotion-focused strategies with ego-defensive undertones identified in the other contexts. The implications of these findings for the place of challenge in the analysed touristic experiences will be addressed further in the results on personal stakes, meaning of challenge, and cumulative appraisal.

8.2.4. Tour Setup

The category of 'tour setup' was the least discussed, both in terms of the number of the participants and how much attention they paid to it, but is, nevertheless, important for understanding the tourists' overall impressions of their trips, particularly by some participants. It includes the sources of stress internal to the tour environment, stemming from how the tours were organised and managed, as well as the interaction within the tour groups, rather than from the participants' contact with host cultures and environments. The themes of 'behaviour of local guides' and 'volume and relevance of heritage interpretation'

are the exceptions, as they, and the first one in particular, closely intersect with the characteristics of the host countries. Other sources of stress in this category do to but not to a lesser extent. Building on earlier observations made in the chapter, this section examines how the participants resources were taxed by these tour-related factors, and how they coped with the demands.

8.2.4.1. Sightseeing Fatigue

Sightseeing can be a 'mindless' touristic activity when there is limited interest in the subject matter, and it is difficult to establish personal connection; and when there is little control over what is seen, and little variety not only in terms of the types of sites but also possible modes of engagement with them (Moscardo, 1996). These characteristics have also been assigned to 'leisure boredom' (Barnett, 2005), although mindless sightseeing is not necessarily underlined by it. Combined with commonly experienced 'monument fatigue' (Smith, 2016, p. 39) from seeing too many places and objects, attempts to maintain attention under these circumstances by applying mental resources to process irrelevant and repetitive interpretive information, particularly out of a 'sense of obligation' (Poria, 2013, p. 348), can further increase the cognitive load. In the present study it was found that even those participants who were more learning than seeing-motivated suffered from 'object satiation and fatigue' (Patterson & Bitgood, 1988, as cited in Moscardo, 1996, p. 380).

Although not all participants in this study shared a strong interest in history, the majority had some interest in learning about both the sites and their wider historical context. Furthermore, they referred to making the effort to engage with what their guides wanted to share, understanding that 'it's not that you have to like everything you do [on the tour] but 'you can look at different areas they consider to be important to them' (P20). Still, over half of the participants, a mix of 'must see' and 'must learn' type of tourists and those in-between who travelled with specialist and generalist operators either reported information overload or noted that there was a significant amount of information to internalise.

Those who were particularly interested in learning about history, spoke about long and complex histories with 'oodles and oodles of different regimes and dynasties' (P13) and acknowledged that while 'it was not easy to take in to remember in any detail' (P2), and that they 'don't need to see another Buddha statue' (P6MY), 'it was [still] really interesting' (P2) and enjoyable for the most part. Others, while recognising that the local guides took them to more and more sites 'really worth going to' (P12) from their perspective because they were 'very proud' (P11) 'of their country and their heritage' (P12), still expressed frustration that 'you can't ever not see anything' (P11) and recalled feeling occasionally bored by hearing

about 'another bloody church' (P12), 'temple' (P20), or another building with 'bullet holes' (P11). Those, who saw these activities as contributing to their cultural capital, perceived them if not always enjoyable but beneficial. However, when motivation for learning was secondary and the interpreted themes triggered disagreement, sightseeing fatigue was particularly intense. Unlike P6 and P19 who reflected on their reactions to the sites which they questioned, P11 and P12 shared only frustration. As someone who enjoyed travelling to the US, P11 disagreed with an overly 'anti-American' messages and excessive emphasis on the revolutionary past, while P12's answers suggested she had a difficult relationship with religion in general.

While the level of enjoyment varied by motivation to learn and personal interests, what is common about these accounts of sightseeing fatigue is that all participants in this group, except P11 who travelled to Cuba, went on tours with ancient sites being the largest sightseeing component. Therefore, not only did they lack variety on some of the tour days while offering a lot of information for the tourists to take in a relatively short space of time, but the cultural and temporal distance also made it particularly difficult for some participants to establish a personal connection with those sites. As P7 reflected with sadness, 'historical facts, all these untold stories she [the local guide] would tell us about temples, pagodas, and their gods and their kings and their queens, and so on, that all goes, nowhere to keep it'.

In contrast to the culturally demanding situations analysed up to this point, the source of minor stress but considerable cognitive strain discussed here lies not so much in conflicting meanings and values in most cases, as in the conscious mental effort required to cope with the rising volume of information and gradually reducing meaningfulness of the experience. Not all accounts were marked by explicit stress indicators and, in the absence of stress-related questions, it is difficult to claim the presence of considerable stress. Still, as illustrated earlier, they were described as effortful. Furthermore, in some cases the frustration expressed by the participants through such emotive sentences as 'they do rehash their history all the time' (P11) and 'I got a bit sick of going to one church after the other' (P12), as well as references to boredom suggested negative affect and motivational incongruence; 'underutilization of personal resources' (Matheny et al. 1986, p. 506) and 'lack of involvement' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 58), but also overchallenge (demands exceeding personal resources).

8.2.4.2. Physical Demands

As far as physical wellbeing is concerned, some participants recalled examples of different degrees of challenge in terms of the severity of negative impact, most of which were from

their previous more challenging trips. Only two participants from the sample reported the challenges of getting 'terribly ill' (P16) and becoming a victim of crime (P14). The factors of 'crowds' and 'weather' were of concern to P3 prior to the trip; adhering to special clothing requirements caused some physical discomfort to the female participants who went to Egypt, Iran and Turkey; P4 and P12 suffered from chronic health problems that impacted their trips, but no trips were found by the participants to present 'any real danger' (P19). Even P18 who had to travel with an armed convoy near the Sudan border on the Egypt tour, advised that she was 'scared but not scared'.

Most answers focused on three types of physical demands: tight tour schedule; travel logistics; and physically demanding tour activities. Tight tour schedule was first introduced in the results on motivation for mental stimulation and the preparedness of the tourists to cope with the physical 'challenge' of 'need[ing] to be able to get up early and keep going and actually attain all the things that you want to achieve' (P14). As P13 described his particularly effortful but beneficial experience, 'We saw an awful lot. [Local guide] really pushed us, pushed us bloody hard, and we got to see lots. While I sort of grumble under my breath, we wouldn't have seen nearly as much if she hadn't pushed us hard'.

Closely related to the tour schedule is the factor of travel logistics. Although majority advised that a lot of those 'challenges were removed' (P15) by the fact of travelling on tour, some still pointed out the physical discomforts of long transits by air and train, but mostly coach. As addressed in the findings on motivation for security, many participants chose group tours for their safety and convenience and reduced physical strain, compared to independent travel. However, while all tours travelled on well-equipped coaches, some participants still found parts of their trips too long and rather uncomfortable. These comments were in the minority, however, as was P7 who was actually attracted to her tour by the opportunity to experience again the type of travelling when 'things are physically a challenge, you know, the roads and places to that you are travelling'.

The third type, physically demanding tour activities, also emerged from the discussions of the meaning of challenge and examples of challenge from the tours, but in contrast to the 'physically draining' travel previously undertaken by a third of the sample, such as trekking and long hikes, few participants spoke about similar experiences on the sampled tours. Among those few, P2 was disappointed that she was not able to complete the challenge she had prepared for, which was climbing the Sigiriya rock in Sri Lanka. She advised that their tour guide had not assisted her with the last few steps of the climb when she had taken a short break and he had left her behind. The other was P14 who recalled the moment she

chose to challenge herself by 'going into an underground city and little tiny areas and things like that whereas some people won't do it'.

These findings align with the current perceptions of cultural tours as 'soft adventure' characterised by little physical strain and risk (Varley, 2006). However, as far as tourists' age is concerned, they also support the importance of segmenting tourists by cognitive age (González et al., 2009; Le Serre et al., 2017), showing that the choice to travel on tours is not always explained by physical age and is not always permanent. The discussions of more and less challenging experiences have revealed that while some senior tourists do make a more permanent switch to tours as a less physically demanding form of travel, as they grow older, others join group tours only to considerably unfamiliar destinations or for social reasons, while continuing to have physically active holidays as both independent and group travellers on other occasions. The data has also shown that senior travellers are highly motivated to both learn about new places and maintain their fitness level and respond well to intensive tour itineraries both psychologically and physically, even in their late 70s.

8.2.4.3. In-Group Interactions

As reviewed in Chapters 2 and 4, in-group interactions among group members and between the group and its tour leader can be a vehicle for critical engagement and learning during travel, particularly in small groups. The second type of interactions, between the tourists and the guides, more specifically local guides, as Australian tour leaders have not been mentioned, has already been largely addressed in the results on motivation for autonomy and on the sources of stress related to the contact with religions, political systems, economic conditions and social structures of the host societies. In regards to autonomy, it has been found that despite choosing to travel on organised tours, the participants in this study resisted the attempts of the local guides to exercise too much control over their freedom of movement and choice of activities. Although only P7 and P18 were motivated by enjoying their independence from family members as a challenge they set themselves, several other participants also reported frustration bordering on anger with feeling restricted and spoke of confronting their guides and defying some of their requests. The guides' views and behaviours, reflecting prominent beliefs and values in their home countries, have also emerged as unintentionally taxing the participants' coping resources.

Characterised by Tsaur, Lin, et al. (2013) as 'interpersonal challenge' and described by P13 as 'social laboratories', in-group interactions among group members emerged in this study as sources of stress for some participants. For four of them, unpleasant social interactions comprised one of the main components of challenge in the context of travel. This line of

interactions, however, was given overall limited attention by the participants, even when prompted to comment on this aspect of their trips. The responses provided formed three broad themes: 1) the general enjoyment of travelling with like-minded people 2) examples of group discussions lead by tour leaders and/or where the participants were all interested in the same questions, and 3) in-group conflict of varied intensity. potential tensions were viewed as a source of challenge, that is of stress with opportunity for personal development, only by P7. The few others who spoke of unpleasant interactions with some group members, pointing to psychologically harmful experiences: feeling treated with contempt (P15), isolated by co-passengers travelling as couples (P11), and disgusted by the disrespect shown by co-travellers to the hosts (P11, P18). They tried to manage the conflict by speaking up about their feelings or avoiding these group members, which was difficult to do in the groups with less than 10 participants. None of the participants in these examples mentioned seeking the support of their tour leaders or local guides but did talk about making friends with other groups members and spending more time with them.

8.3. Personal Stakes

Personal stakes in one single situation can include a range of interests, commitments, and concerns, sometimes competing with each other. Given that in this study stress is understood as a subjective evaluation (cognitive appraisal) of a relationship between the individual and the environment in terms of its personal significance and implications for well-being, generalising about the personal stakes of a group of individuals narrating a diversity of situations can be problematic. Nevertheless, despite this limitation, it has been possible to talk about types of cultural encounters and core external demands discussed up to this point. As far as interpersonal differences are concerned, while in most cases this analysis cannot account for personality differences, a key factor in stress appraisal, it can draw on the similarities in cultural background, age, education and previous travel experience identified earlier.

Regarding the alignment with travel motivations, a significant proportion of the narrated experiences were evaluated by the participants as motivation relevant and congruent, even when occasional frustrations and harmful situations were recounted. Those who travelled with an explicit desire to experience significant cultural difference, or specifically find themselves outside their comfort zones were not disappointed, even amidst rare moments of boredom. Others were also able to experience the stimulation and adventure they sought. However, while all cultural experiences were perceived as contributing to general knowledge gain, the desired outcome shared by all participants, and some were particularly enjoyable, some of the narrated situations were given mixed responses, and others were characterised

by distinctive negative affect. The key personal stakes, some of which also incorporate core cultural differences reported earlier, and the relationships between them are visualised in Figure 8.1.

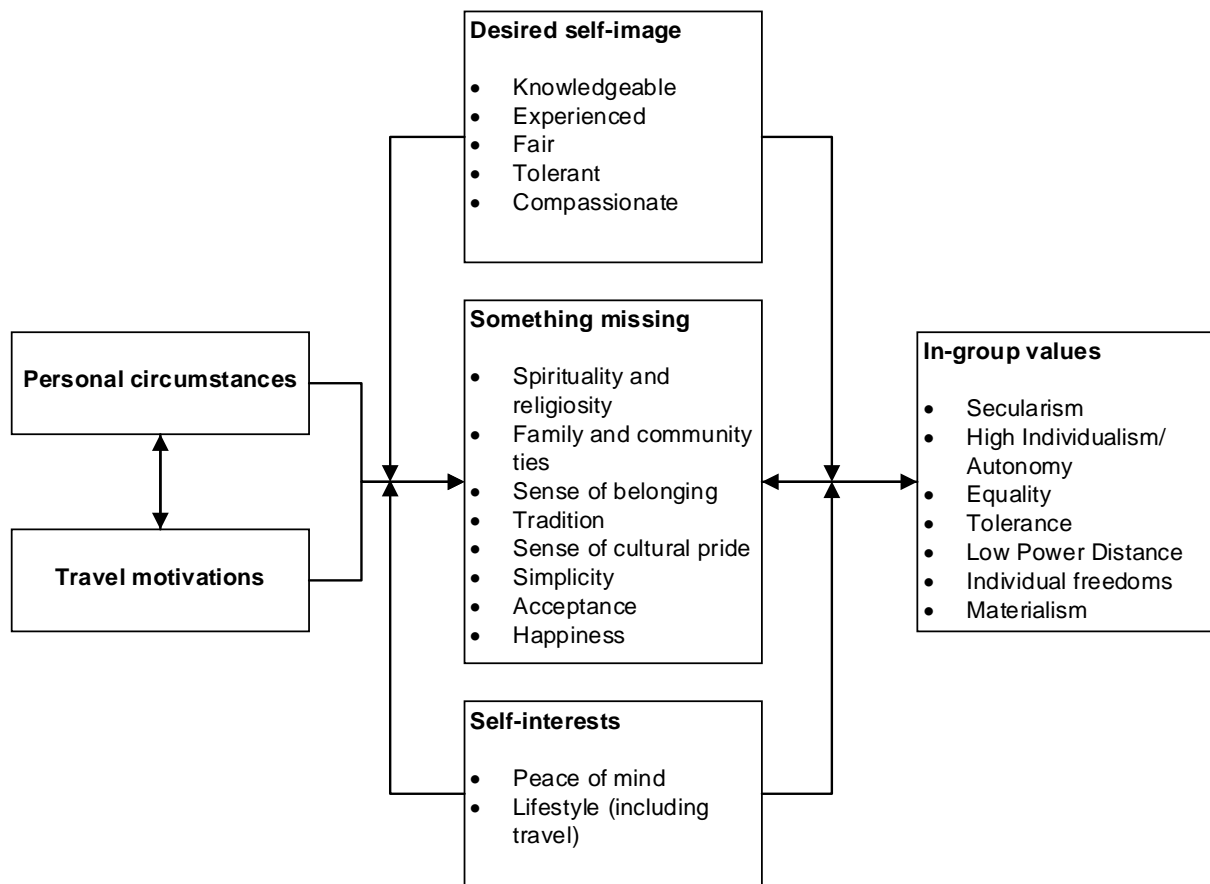


Figure 8.1. Personal stakes.

Robinson (2013, p. 28) points out that ‘the study of tourism is riven with paradoxes’. Underpinning the links between the six groups of personal stakes in Figure 8.1. is the paradox of difference: what attracts tourists to other people and places is also what can separate them. In this study, this paradox has manifested itself in a group of personal stakes termed here as ‘something missing’, a metaphor borrowed from Kottler’s definition of transformative travel ‘as a process that involves the actualization of “something missing” driven by “intellectual curiosity, emotional need, or physical challenge”’ (as cited in Robledo & Batle, 2017, p. 1737). Here, this phrase has been chosen to group together the significant cultural differences that the participants admired and felt were missing in Australia. These differences also form a group of personal stakes relating to what was important to them and what they were attracted to. What is paradoxical about the participants’ relationship with these stakes, to the exception of such positive qualities as friendliness, gentleness, hospitality, and work ethic, is that they were also found to be closely linked to the aspects of

life in the destinations that required substantial coping effort (religion, politics, living conditions, and social structures). Some of the examples include Buddhist spiritualism in Myanmar and allocation of resources to the construction and maintenance of golden temples, rather than healthcare; admiration for the strength of family and community ties in Egypt and questioning of the locals' religiosity; and the simple lifestyle in India and Sri Lanka and the emotional difficulty of witnessing poverty.

To the left of these themes are travel motivations and personal circumstances (health, employment, retirement, family, personal and professional interests, life goals) that have emerged as influencing the choice of the destinations and the reasons for travel, and which were found to be aligned with what was perceived as missing. To the right of them is a group of personal stakes labelled 'in-group values'. These values were affected by the contact situations that the participants questioned, opposed or even rejected, and underpinned the above-mentioned cognitive dissonances.

The term 'in-group' is used in the literature on intercultural contact to refer to the group to which sojourners (short-term travellers) belong, relative to the out-group with which they come in contact (Ward et al., 2001; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Compared to the alternative labels discussed further, this one has few connotations which require further clarification, has the broadest application, and is, therefore, the most inclusive. Although they cover the main value-themes discussed across the sample, the values these themes represent are not necessarily shared values, as not all participants spoke about them, directly or indirectly, as important to them in general or in the context of their group trips. However, given that many linked them to Australia or 'the West' and 'Western' ways of thinking and behaving, and that some of them (individual freedoms, equality, tolerance) have also been identified as 'the nation's 'core' civic values' (Chisari, 2015, p. 573) by the Australian government, it is possible that they were shared by the majority of the participants. Some of them (high individualism/autonomy, low power distance) have also been studied as 'Hofstede's dimensions of national culture' (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006, p. 18). Therefore, the alternative labels considered but discarded were 'Australian values', 'Western values', and 'national values'. Finally, the term 'Eurocentric' is also relevant to the discussion of these findings, given that they emerged from the narrations of travel experiences with elements of the discourse of 'othering' by a group of participants who can be classified as representing the 'white, Christian and European' majority of Australia (Chisari, 2015, p. 587). How strongly the participants were affected by the differences in these two areas, 'something missing' and 'in-group values', was found to be moderated by how important it was for them to maintain a desired self-image, and how dominant their self-interests were. Next follows a

more detailed discussion of the relationships between personal stakes grouped under 'in-group values', 'something missing', 'desired self-image', and 'self-interests'.

8.3.1. In-Group Values and Something Missing

It is understandable how some of the analysed tourists' impressions can be dismissed as typical examples of 'Othering'. as popular romanticised representations of South Asia as highly spiritual, 'intriguing' (P4) and mysterious (Bose & Jalal, 1998); orientalist constructions of the Middle East, including Turkey (Hazbun, 2010; Sharifpour et al., 2014), as highly religious and, therefore, 'traditional' (P3) and even 'fundamental' (P12); and disapproving gazing on indigenous 'spiritualism' as 'primitive' (P1) and unscientific (Seaton, 2009). Indeed, the similarities are significant. While the embodied experience of the Varanasi cremation ceremonies can be particularly traumatic (Sharma & Rickly, 2018), it was not explicitly described as such in this study. Although linked to memories of being 'taken a bit by surprise' (P20) by 'putrid' (P15) waters and feeling confronted by seeing 'dogs find in the river bits of human corpse' (P20), they were never directly characterised as distinctively dark. On the contrary, as P21 reported, "Something that I thought might be pretty gruesome, referring to the cremation site, I found spiritually very uplifting. It was a real spiritual experience. It was amazing'. The dominant images of India as possessing 'all-pervasive spirituality' were also found together with the sentiments for what was perceived as 'absent or underemphasized in Western religious practice' (Henderson & Weisgrau, 2016, p. 161). Several participants admired how practising faith in India and Sri Lanka functioned as 'a simple part of everyday life' (P4), be that seeing 'the little things they have by the roadsides' (P4); hearing the local guide pray 'every morning' (P15); or noticing 'more Buddhist flags around than national flags and other little things' (P5).

The admiration for the spirituality of the hosts was also shared by the participants who travelled to Myanmar and Russia, further illustrating the prominence of the themes of religion and spirituality as a cultural interest introduced in the findings on tourist motivations. Here, it is important to clarify that despite the literature differentiating between the two (Oman, 2013; Sharpley, 2009b), the tourists who travelled to India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Russia referred to religion and spirituality interchangeably when talking about religious practices and the strength of belief in divine or higher powers. In contrast, narratives of travel to Iran, Turkey and Egypt referred to religion, rather than spirituality. The one exception was P3's experience of a dance performance of the Whirling Dervishes in Turkey, originating in Sufism, 'commonly defined as "Islamic mysticism" or "Islamic esoterism"' (Hill, 2019, p. 3) and described by P3 as 'mystical' and 'atmospheric'. The times when the participants shared their impressions of Islamic religious practices were either when they questioned them or

looked for evidence of reduced religiosity. Furthermore, their surprise over the friendliness of people in those destinations conveys the extent of negative stereotyping even among well-travelled, tertiary educated and learning-motivated tourists.

At the same time, the notion of personal stakes in stress appraisal literature and Seaton's (2009) critique of the post-colonialist view on the interaction between the tourists and hosts from the position of superiority of the former encourage construction of alternative interpretations of the sources of the reported reactions. Stone (2009a) observes several characteristics of contemporary society: secularisation, individualisation, isolation, and moral confusion. The first two are processes that see to 'detach individuals, or at least loosen them, from any sense of obligation which they may have felt towards traditional and organised religious institutions which previously had provided a dominant framework in which to find solace, meaning and moral guidance' (Stone, 2009a, p. 61). A survey of the attitudes to spirituality and religion among 15 countries in Western Europe conducted by the Pew Research Centre (2018, p. 48) in 2017 found that 'a median of 53%' of the respondents identified as 'neither religious nor spiritual'. In Australia, secularism as separation of church and state is inscribed in the constitution (Australasian Legal Information Institute, n.d.). Furthermore, drawing on the 2016 Australian Census, Bouma (2018) notes a growing number of Australians who identify as having 'no religion' - 'the most numerous response category - more numerous than Catholics, in every generation until those over 70'. This steady trend in the reduction in religiosity has been accelerating in the recent years (ABS, 2017b).

In the present study, in addition to the expressions of secular views on the separation of church and state and interest in the spirituality of hosts, personal relationship with religion was stated directly by half of the sample. The categories used in self-descriptions included 'not religious' (P4, P9, P12), 'atheist' (P8), 'not practicing...spiritual rather than religious' (P15), 'interested in things spiritual' (P19), and 'have faith' (P21). In one instance, a formerly devout Christian identified as 'atheist' but also spoke about turning to her 'spiritual self' rather than 'to God' (P18) in a moment of crisis. A conflict with personal religious beliefs was brought up only by P18 in relation to Coptic Orthodox beliefs and by P11 who was disappointed to find empty churches in Cuba on Easter Sunday, concluding that 'they are [not] that big a Christian country or not as in showing'. Since the attitudes of eight participants remain unknown, within-sample generalisations cannot be made, but the composition of the known attitudes is indicative of their secularisation.

The combination of secularism and the need for autonomy and freedom of choice, as discussed in the findings on motivation, may explain the participants' questioning of the

close ties between governments and religion, and of living one's life in accordance with 'traditional meaning systems', rather than own 'self-development, convictions, and attitudes' (Stone, 2009a, p. 62). They do not explain, however, why the themes of religiosity and gender inequality dominated the conversations about Islam more than about any other religion, or why they were dominant in the first place. In addition to personal experiences with these issues in Australia, the answers to this can be found in their uneven reporting and misrepresentations by the mainstream media and in the government rhetoric (Austin & Fozdar, 2018; Chisari, 2015; Ewart & O'Donnell, 2018), but also in the lack of knowledge of the Qur'an and the history of Islam, acknowledged only by two participants, and the management of conversations about Islam by Australian tour leaders and local guides (Tikhonova, Butler, Kim, 2019). The findings on spirituality from the current study further highlight the participants' complex relationship with religion more broadly, and illustrate Stone's (2009a, p. 60) argument that secularisation and increasing individualisation can result in isolation and moral confusion 'due to the negation of dominant religious and moral frameworks'.

The findings on self-reported religious affiliation highlight 'spiritual' as a response category currently absent from the Australian census but found in other large-scale surveys. The census results are consistent with the 32% of respondents who reported being 'non-religious', that is as 'not identify[ing] with any religion or spiritual belief' in the national *Faith and Belief in Australia* survey (McCrindle Research, 2017, p. 5). The survey also asked questions about spiritual beliefs, finding that 14% identified as 'spiritual but not religious', with the most common responses being believing in 'an ultimate purpose and meaning in life', 'the inward journey of discovering the inner person', and 'a mixture of spiritual beliefs from major religions' (McCrindle Research, 2017, p. 22). These findings are consistent with how the participants who identified themselves more as spiritual rather than religious in the present study framed those comments around their interests in 'philosophies and beliefs and ways to live your life' (P21) and appreciating and 'enjoy[ing] spirituality' (P15) of others. Furthermore, the focus group results on the importance of 'self-awareness, bettering yourself' (p. 21) further highlight how the dominant understanding of spirituality identified by this survey intersects with tourist motivations for self-development and self-actualization, as conceptualised by Pearce and Lee (2005).

There is no, however, a single definition of spirituality, and in addition to meaningful life, such aspects of spirituality as 'connectedness' and 'direction in life' (Moal-Ulvoas & Taylor, 2014, p. 454) emerged from how the participants related external cultural realities to themselves. It is through the attributions of personal meanings that the links between the aforementioned

processes and their outcomes, and the themes of religion and spirituality and the other concerns grouped under 'something missing' became evident. In particular, some of the conversations about India, Cuba, Egypt and Iran were distinguished by the needs to belong and to feel happy, accepted, and at peace, which they were able to fill and fulfil to various extents during the encounters introduced earlier. Critical life events such as loss of loved ones before and during the trips; retirement; life-threatening illness; disappointment and disillusionment with church; children leaving home; and cultural identity crisis contributed to palpable spiritual void that they were able to fill, even if temporarily, to various extents during their trips.

The conflict between the rejection of religious authority and longing for a source of renewed sense of hope was particularly noticeable in the answers by P18. Simultaneously rejecting the idea of her life being ruled by Christian dogmas, as she grew tired of living 'in fear of hell and damnation', she found consolation in the devotion she observed in the parishioners of the Coptic Orthodox church. Similar feelings were shared by P4 who compared 'the Christian approach ... stifling and rather awful, you know, be good or you will be punished forever', with the 'non-judgemental approach' to religious practice she observed in India. Taken out of context, her first comment may be interpreted as an inaccurate overly romanticised misconception of India by a Western tourist, since the concept of punishment is also found in the Hindu belief in karma, that is 'future births being based on quality of actions in the present or previous lives (Bose & Jalal, 1998, p. 246). Indeed, although also subjective, a different impression was shared by P20 who found it 'brutal' and 'out of line' when 'one of the locals came up and said that you know, it's their own fault because it's bad karma from a previous life', referring to people with severe disabilities. However, the existential authenticity of P4's experience was highlighted in her earlier comments alluding to not having 'free choice' in how she, as 'not a religious person at all', would have preferred to manage her parents' passing.

Other findings point to the feelings of isolation that exacerbated or may have been exacerbated by the longing for a sense of community in what some participants described or alluded to as an individualistic society in Australia. 'It's all about people really, contacts', shared P11 about Cuba, 'they still have that in their towns with their neighbours, whereas my neighbours, I can nod to them, but I don't know them at all'. A similar observation was shared by P19: 'We are not really used to being closely lined with everyone, from our next-door neighbour to our local village, culture'. First noting that 'we are just different', she then continued to think of other examples, comparing her experience of having no one to visit her in an overseas hospital on a different trip and her children having 'their lives, their work', with

'the element of extended family, whether it's Turkey or Iran or Libya or India'. 'There is no concept of aged care facilities', she noted, 'everyone looks after everyone else; the old people, the sick people, they are looked after by their families, and that's the way of the world'.

Indeed, according to Hofstede's national cultural values, Australia scores very high on individualism (Hofstede Insights, 2019), further explaining the importance of independent exploration to the participants, despite them opting for group travel. As the same time, as noted by Kazemina et al. (2015) and Moal-Ulvoas and Taylor (2014), this longing can be felt particularly intensely by senior travellers following the loss of life partners, recent retirement, and the 'empty nest' syndrome. However, what underpins these discussions of cultural differences, even from the perspective of what is missing in Australia, is what they included in their notions of Australian culture. A crisis of cultural identity was expressed by P15, presenting another link in this chain of examples of loss and disorientation, connecting religious beliefs and practices to continuity of tradition and sense of belonging found by the participants outside Australia.' 'What culture do we have?', he asked, highlighting current confusion among Australia's Anglo-Celtic majority about 'Australianness' (Austin & Fozdar, 2018); their detachment from Australia's colonial heritage, as illustrated by earlier discussions of the participants' travel motivations, and the results of the *National Arts Participation Survey* (Australia Council, 2017); and, in their admiration of other cultures, the exclusion from the notions of what it means to be Australian of Indigenous Australians and of the very ethnic groups whose values and traditions the participants admired during travel.

8.3.2. Desired Self-Image and Self-Interests

Besides fulfilment of 'something missing', acceptance of difference emerged as a prominent line of discussion among those participants who emphasised their prior knowledge and travel experience and the importance of refraining from 'judgement'. Some of them applied it as a coping strategy to distance themselves from demanding situations by practicing what Robinson (2013, p. 32) refers to as the attitude of 'let[ting] go and allow[ing] ourselves to be taken into the differences we seek'. Others were found to state its importance as a defence mechanism to downplay the impact of the discussed differences on them. The least openly discussed themes, however, that permeated the interviews with both those who accepted or struggled to accept were peace of mind and maintenance of current lifestyle.

On the subject of acceptance, the literature offers several observations that may explain its prominence. Chisari (2015) and Peterson and Bentley (2016) note that defining equality, tolerance and individual freedoms as national values in Australia can encourage divisive

thinking that sees them as distinctive from the values of any other cultural group. In this study, however, the majority of the participants spoke about these values in terms of personal importance. In particular, religious tolerance was emphasised in the accounts of contact not only with perceived intolerance, but also with encounters of greater tolerance than what the participants had experienced in Australia. Furthermore, in this study greater acceptance of cultural differences could be explained by a combination of more extensive life and travel experience (Lean, 2015; Pearce & Lee, 2005), and by particular 'sensitiv[ity] to people's kindness' of senior travellers (Moal–Ulvoas & Taylor, 2014, p. 458). Related to the discussion of travel experience are the processes of globalisation and cultural homogenisation. As Smith (2016, p. 38) points out, 'as the world becomes more globalised, the homogenisation and standardisation of cultural experiences and activities are perhaps inevitable; hence people may need to travel further afield in order to experience differences', and to be affected by them.

Regarding the last point, two processes emerge as particularly pertinent to the focus of this study on demanding experiences: denial of vulnerability and maintenance of a positive self-image. As discussed in the results on motivation, as much as travel is about pleasure-seeking, tourists can also feel the pressure of having to have fun on holidays. Several studies have also observed that experiencing negative emotions during travel can be interpreted as a failure to have a good holiday and to gain an intrinsic return on tangible investment (Cetin & Yarcın, 2017; Nawijn & Biran, 2018; Vittersø, Vorkinn, Vistad, & Vaagland, 2000). The results of the present study suggest that the stakes can be particularly high for tourists who perceive themselves as more experienced. It was found that while for two thirds of the participants it was particularly important to appear non-judgemental, not everyone was able to genuinely 'experience things the way they are' (P1), 'observe as a visitor and not judge' (P20). Among them, several had difficulty reconciling the realisation of being surprised, not knowing or not anticipating something with their self-image as well-informed experienced travellers who seek further learning, and the feelings of unease with the importance of seeing themselves as fair and tolerant individuals.

Conflicting with this desired self-image and diminishing responsiveness to difference, not only to socio-economic but also cultural, were the participants' self-interests. Having authored several publications on cultural tourism, (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015; McKercher & Du Cros, 2003; McKercher et al., 2002; Moscardo, Dann, & McKercher, 2014), McKercher (2015, p. 87) observes that 'rather than the quest for self ... tourism can often be portrayed as a *quest for the selfish*'. Indeed, as the results on coping with external demands have shown, the right to continue travelling regularly and doing it in relative comfort emerged as a

prominent concern in the discussions of contact with poverty and inequality between tourists and hosts. Main evidence of it was found in the search for positive aspects, and the emphasis on making contributions to the local economies. On several occasions, however, no attempts to justify this lifestyle were found. On the contrary, in these instances the participants were found to be undisturbed. Here, the comment made by P19 helped bring together several brief remarks from other interviews, pointing to peace of mind as another important personal stake:

I think in general I have a broader acceptance of everything, that, you know, we are on this planet for a relatively short time. What's the point in getting so negative or bitter or fighting or anything? You reach an age and a stage where you know you are not going to change the world anymore, no matter what you do. It's just going to keep going. So if someone does something that's a bit frustrating or you don't agree with, ok, that's them, that's ok. (P19, Iran)

As much as the tourists in the present study were motivated by host-site involvement, many prioritised not only pleasure but also avoidance of unpleasant feelings, conflict and confrontation. On the one hand, it could be interpreted as a more mindful approach that offers a more hopeful perspective on acceptance of cultural differences. The notion of mindful travel (Moscardo, 1996; Tung et al., 2017) intersects with the subjects of reflection, transformative travel and spiritual growth (Robledo, 2015; Robledo & Batle, 2017), particularly among older adults (Moal-Ulvoas, 2017). Tung et al. (2017, p. 854) define mindfulness as 'a state of consciousness in which individuals attend to ongoing events and experiences in a receptive and non-judgmental way'. Psychology literature on mindfulness interprets acceptance as a conscious and mindful decision to accept what is in order to deal with the situation more effectively in a peaceful state of mind (Lindsay & Creswell, 2017). Therefore, it could be suggested, that many participants in this study were practicing a mindful approach to travel during the tours.

On the other hand, mindful acceptance does not imply ignoring. On the contrary, as Moscardo (1996, p. 381) notes, 'mindful people actively process information and question what is going on in a setting'. Furthermore, she observes that overreliance on prior knowledge can result in mindless experiencing. In the present study, the participants were found to have questioned their surroundings during the trips, but many while also emphasising the importance of remaining 'uncritical'. As for critical reflection on different perspectives, including their own, this coping strategy emerged as an outlier.

8.4. Meaning of Challenge and Cumulative Appraisal

Schuster et al. (2006, pp. 99-100) report that knowledge of 'the cumulative experience of hassles', that is stressful situations, is more helpful at understanding 'subjective stress' than analysis of those situations in isolation. In the present study, the participants offered summaries of their global impressions of their trips early in the interviews out of their own accord; in the second halves and towards the end of the interviews in response to the question about how challenging they found their trips; and when they compared them with more challenging previous travel experiences. Considering that in most cases the word 'challenge' was understood as difficulty or discomfort, the perspective found to be dominant in tourism and positive psychology research, these cumulative trip evaluations fell into three categories, in the order of increasing challenge: comfortable, somewhat challenging, and substantially challenging, or 'outside the comfort zone'.

What has also been found, however, is that whilst supporting some of the inferences made earlier in regards to perceived effortfulness, the overall trips evaluations in terms of perceived challenge were based on top-of-mind understandings of 'challenge'. While over two thirds of the interviewees immediately associated 'challenge' with actual physical harm, threats to physical well-being, and physical discomfort and strain, many of the episodic memories of mentally effortful experiences analysed above were found to be excluded from those global impressions. Building on the analysis of coping with external demands, the rest of this section reports on the different meanings of challenge held by the participants and discusses the differences between those meanings and the experiences they remembered.

To briefly revise the literature review findings, the simultaneous perception of substantial effortfulness and anticipated benefit is the key distinction between the perspectives on challenge as a source of physical or psychological discomfort, and as an appraisal of personal significance. To feel challenged means to feel eager, or 'enthusiastic...about the struggle that will ensue' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 76), whilst the reviewed literature on intercultural contact reports on challenging moments as moments of difficulty of various intensity (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016; Sin, 2009), sometimes followed by their positive reappraisal at a later stage (Christie & Mason, 2003; Pomfret, 2006).

Here, the word 'challenge' was found to have a predominantly negative connotation in the minds of most participants, strongly associated with unwelcomed (harmful, threatening, dangerous unsafe, overly difficult and uncomfortable, unpleasant), predominantly physically taxing events, largely absent from the sampled tours. The notion of 'misadventure' (Pomfret, 2012), or the 'bad trip' (Varley, 2006, p. 184), emerged from the statements about the

absence of 'negative occasions' (P10, P9), 'big problems' (P12, P14), 'real issues' (P21), 'nasty' (P5) or 'great challenges' (P19), 'real dangers' (P1), or 'bad things' (P16). Instead, those participants who characterised their trips to Sri Lanka (P2, P4, P5), Japan (P1, P17), Turkey (P12, P14), Iran (P10, P19), Mexico (P9) and India (P21) as having no, 'hardly any' (P2) or few 'little challenges' (P14), also described them in terms of them being 'comfortable' and 'easy'.

These findings support the observation drawn from the literature review that physically risky and demanding experiences are more strongly associated with the notion of challenge. They are also consistent with the results on travel motivations, coping with external demands, and with the literature discussing similar findings on the heightened concern among senior travellers for their physical wellbeing (Alén et al., 2017; Bauer, 2012; Kazemina et al., 2015). However, conclusions about this perspective on challenge as strongly influenced by age should be held off until a comparison with a younger demographic has been conducted on similar contexts in future research. Little difference in the risk perceptions and avoidance of travel to certain destinations has been found by ASIA (Core Data, 2016) between older and younger travellers. This survey and Reisinger and Mavondo's (2006) cross-cultural study on younger tourists indicate that cultural background may influence risk perceptions more strongly than age. Furthermore, speaking to the heterogeneity of the seniors market (Alén et al., 2017; Hung & Ju, 2016), the results have revealed that physically demanding walking holidays of the 'soft adventure' type (Patterson & Pan, 2007) were one of the meanings of challenge reported by the three participants who had recently undertaken such trips that they described as 'physically challenging' (P1, P10), but 'satisfying' (P2).

In regards to situations demanding mental resources, it is important to acknowledge that soft adventure activities such as walking can require mental effort in the form of 'mental fortitude' (Patterson & Pan, 2007, p. 34), to cope with physical exertion (Pomfret, 2012). In this study, however, the primary interest was in the mental effort required by inter-cultural contact, including intellectual effort demanded by what Ryan and Glendon (1998, p. 172) summarise as 'mental activities such as learning, exploring, discovering, thought or imagining'. Among the half of the participants who brought up examples of what appeared as mentally demanding situations or the feelings that were indicative of mentally challenging experiences, eight spoke about the sampled trips, and six of them described their experiences as somewhat or very challenging. Only P20 explicitly referred to 'challenge in the mental sense', but in all six cases mental effort occupied a central place in these participant-held notions of challenge (P15; P18, P20, P6, P7, P4). Consistent with their

accounts of the actual experiences, which they shared before the question about the meaning of challenge was asked, these few participants spoke about the 'challenge to assumptions' (P6); the challenge of 'experienc[ing] different places', including learning 'in-depth' about the local sights, no matter how 'boring' this may be (P20); 'trying to understand a different culture' (P15); and about the memories of emotionally taxing encounters with different living standards and systems of religious beliefs. In contrast, the participants who described their experiences as 'comfortable', advised that there were no moments of 'extreme culture shock' (P9), and that nothing was 'culturally challenging' (P1). In addition, experiences involving independent problem-solving, such as those discussed earlier under 'everyday activities and interactions', also featured in the answers about challenge.

Here, it is difficult to identify prominent themes, as less than half of the participants referred to specific examples, and those mentioned were also quite personal and eclectic.

Nevertheless, 'feeling confronted' did emerge as the most recurrent description of what 'challenge' felt like to many. Where examples were provided, contact with 'poverty', or less severe socio-economic situations, was the main context mentioned. Other examples of 'emotionally' difficult contact situations from the sampled and other trips included witnessing 'fear within the [oppressed] population[s]' (P16) and 'difficult political situation' (P6); and in one instance a visit to Gallipoli. As far as religious differences in religious beliefs and practices and gender relations are concerned, these themes were not nearly as prominent in the discussions of the meaning of challenge and challenging situations, with travel to Islamic destinations given the least attention. Among the participants whose memories of contact with Islamic beliefs, practices and social norms were interpreted as signalling considerable psychological discomfort, travel to the respective destinations was described as 'challenging' only by P9 who advised 'the challenge was to abide by local rules' and P18 who described her trip as 'extremely challenging'. Another aspect that was found to be discussed by only P20 in the responses on challenge and overall evaluations was heritage interpretation, both in terms of what was said and how it was delivered.

Regarding the valence of the recalled mentally challenging situations, this set of responses was characterised by higher variability both within and across cases (interviews) than the discussions of threats to physical wellbeing. Some participants, for example, referred to 'feeling confronted' as an unwelcome aspect of travel, describing it as 'awkward' (P19) and something that did not apply to them. Others noted that feeling this way was 'part of an overall experience' (P1) and of post-travel storytelling. As P12 summarised a common viewpoint, 'I love telling stories. These are the stories I can tell. What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger, I guess. I think it's what living is about - getting new experiences'. Among

them, two participants disassociated ‘challenge’ from ‘excitement’ (P15) and ‘inspiration’ (P4), even though they experienced both difficulty and enjoyment.

In addition to the dominant understanding of challenge as experiences or sources of difficulty that may or may not contribute to the overall experience, nine participants spoke about challenge (physical, mental, or both) in terms of more concurrent perception of difficulty and benefit. Although some spoke in general terms about their past trips, this finding still highlights how the meaning of the word ‘challenge’ can vary not only among individuals, but also for the same person, depending on situational context. The quotes below illustrate the main types of contexts to which this mixed perspective was applied, sometimes to more than one type:

Table 8.6. Meanings of challenge: Concurrent perceptions of difficulty and benefit.

Meaning	Quotes
Physically demanding touristic activities (P1, P2, P10, P14, P17)	I've done things that are physically challenging, sort of long trekking tours, walking holidays, things like that, but I enjoy them. (P1)
	One of the trips I did was climbing in the Dolomites. I knew it was a bit of a challenge to do it, but I really wanted to go on that trip. (P10)
Engagement in independent problem-solving (P2, P3, P7, P17, P18, P3)	Well, if it was something unexpected and you had to come up with a solution, that's what a challenge would be. Trying to catch a train in India when it was full and all that kind of stuff. (P17)
	While we were in the hills, I just went for a walk to a local market and just got lost and panicked a bit - couldn't find my way back - but that's all part of it. Eventually I just found my way back. I just asked. (P7)
Contact with socio-economic and socio-cultural differences, presenting challenge to assumptions and/or adaptational difficulty (P1, P6, P7, P20)	I don't think there is anything that has been too culturally challenging. I mean, I've been to places and seen things that have left me absolutely flabbergasted, but I enjoyed doing it and loved retelling it so much that it's certainly been worth it. (P1)
	Something that I find exciting and but also something that's got a bit difficult, a bit confronting, a bit difficult to do emotion-wise. (P7)

The overall underrepresentation of mental challenge in the participants’ overall trip evaluations and explanations of what challenge meant to them in the context of travel in general, as well as specifically to the sampled destinations, is a finding that can be partly explained by prior research. However, as pointed out above, it also contradicts some of the analysis of the episodic travel memories and, to a degree, the participants’ motivation for intellectual stimulation.

On one hand, older tourists with higher travel experience have been found to have lower motivation for personal development (Paris & Teye, 2010; Pearce & Lee, 2005), and, as found in this study, few participants saw host-site involvement as an opportunity for personal development and self-actualization. However, the results have also shown that motivation for host-site involvement closely intersects with the interest in intellectual stimulation, and, therefore, in applying mental effort. Yet, in the conversations about the meaning of challenge and overall trip evaluations, only one participant noted the effort required to take in large volumes of interpretive information, and very few revisited the situations where they deeply disagreed with some of the local values and views. In summary, while the participants were ready to acknowledge their concerns for health and safety and their physical limitations, their responses largely excluded the situations that challenged their intellectual (cognitive) abilities and readiness to accept alternative realities.

Two observations can be drawn from these findings. First, they highlight the importance of differentiating between different types of mental effort when it comes to cultural tourism: emotional reactions to unsettling contexts such as death, war, and adversity; intellectual (cognitive) effort applied to process and retain information; and the effort required to consider alternative perspectives and ways of life. Second, given the strong association of challenging experiences with 'overchallenge', or as Hottola (2004, p. 456) put it, 'overload shock', it is possible that most participants did not feel as if their capacity for learning and understanding was stretched by those circumstances. However, the analysis of their coping responses suggests that it was, and the findings on their relationship with getting outside the comfort zone offer further insights into the possible reasons for these discrepancies.

The notion of 'comfort zone' occupies a prominent position in the research on challenging touristic experiences (Lloyd & Little, 2010; Patterson & Pan, 2007; Pomfret, 2012). In this thesis, it has been discussed in relation to experiences of challenge-skill balance, or optimal challenges; misadventure (Pomfret, 2012; Varley, 2006); and safe exploration (Cohen, 1972; Tan et al. 2013). In particular, Pomfret's (2012) and Lloyd and Little's (2010, p. 376) analyses suggest that adventure tourists can find themselves stepping outside the comfort zone even when they feel that they are operating 'within their capabilities'. In the interviews, 'comfort zone' was mentioned directly and indirectly in relation to challenge and demanding experiences only by four (P2, P11, P15, P20) participants, but it was addressed more widely in the comments about feeling 'comfortable' and 'uncomfortable'. Drawing on these findings, direct questions about getting outside the comfort zone were used to explore their understandings of the word 'challenge' from an alternative angle.

Even those participants who sought to challenge themselves on occasion in the past, advised with pride that they never found themselves engaged in any touristic activity 'beyond [their] capabilities' (P1), emphasising the ability to 'manage everything quite well' (P2). This finding supports the observation shared by Lloyd and Little (2010, p. 380) that 'all people seek challenges that are optimal for their capacities and the skills to undertake these challenges'. What contradicts their findings, however, is that in most cases the idea of getting outside the comfort zone evoked negative associations similar to 'challenge', suggesting that tourist-held *notions* of being *outside* their comfort zone can also assume an inability to cope with the demands. In the light of the findings on defensive coping, these results further strengthen the conclusion that many participants were reluctant to dwell on negative emotions, underlying the unpleasant feeling that their views about themselves and the world were destabilised by their encounters with very different socio-economic and political systems, and cultures. The comparative analysis of overall evaluations and episodic memories also supports Folkman and Lazarus's (1985, p. 156) argument that summative stress measures can 'misrepresent how the person was actually feeling throughout the encounter and would bury important indicators of the person's ongoing evaluations of how well he or she was managing the demands of a stressful encounter'.

8.5. Challenging Experiences: Personal Gains and Missed Opportunities

Cognitive appraisal (evaluation) of a situation as challenging, that is substantially demanding coping resources but offering opportunity for personal gain with implications for the self from its outset, and reappraisal of a threatening or harmful situation as effortful but beneficial refer to different trajectories of the person-environment relationship that can result in positive outcomes. The conceptual framework guiding the analysis was developed based on the understanding of challenge as a positive psychological state in touristic experiences from the first perspective where 'to be challenged means feeling positive about demanding encounters' in the moment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 34). However, the results have shown that where tourists questioned, strongly disagreed with or rejected alternative worldviews, their relationships with those views more likely followed the second trajectory, if they were positively appraised at all. Drawing on the preceding findings, as well as on the results on perceived gains, the purpose of this section is to explain why some of the discussed touristic experiences were found to be more closely aligned with the challenge state than others. As Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 295) note, 'how people construe or appraise their ongoing transactions with the environment and how they cope, are never

directly examined, but only inferred', and the findings should, therefore, be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

For each participant whose whole tour experience or aspects of it were categorised as challenging, Table 8.7. summarises the main trip benefits and external demands; states whether the participants' evaluations of associated situations were indicative of perceived threat, challenge, harm, benefit, or boredom, or were assigned mixed evaluations in terms of perceived effortfulness and personal significance (i.e. demanding but beneficial) before, during and after travel; and includes interview quotes communicating the participants' overall trip evaluations. The analysis differentiated between the three stages to address the process assumption of the cognitive-transactional theory of stress underpinning this study's conceptual framework. It is acknowledged here, however, that the transactional and instantaneous nature of stress appraisal presupposes that it can be, in fact, difficult, if not impossible, to adequately note all the changes in evaluations over time. Furthermore, as far as categorisation by evaluation type is concerned, different types of stress appraisal 'can be conjoined in the same transaction' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 79). Consequently, the assigned categories should be interpreted as 'separated only for convenience of analysis' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 79). Lastly, post-travel data collection may raise the question about the blurring of the differences between the evaluations of the different stages. The participants, however, provided sufficient context and demonstrated considerable self-awareness when talking about the changes in their evaluations over time, to differentiate between the different stages. Validity of the analytical inferences was also checked against what the participants mentioned in other parts of their interviews. The following examples help illustrate these points.

Even though P3 felt 'intimidated' by the prospect of exploring Istanbul on his own by engaging in such an everyday activity as catching public transport, he also advised it was something he generally enjoyed doing during travel, and that he was prepared to go through that process, having 'mastered the basics' on other trips. As he explained, 'I'm a little bit apprehensive until the unknown becomes actualised, and that's both, if you like, the challenge and the satisfaction of visiting a place'. This anticipation of stress and willingness to put in the effort, including arriving several days before the start of the tour, in order to gain the desired sense of accomplishment and the joy of independent exploration, indicate a pre-travel appraisal of challenge, the state of challenge during the trip, and a post-trip evaluation of the experience as demanding but beneficial.

Table 8.7. Challenging experiences.

ID	Destination	Perceived gains	Effort stimuli	Stress appraisal			Overall trip evaluation
				Before	During	After	
MASTERY							
3	Turkey	Mastery; self-confidence; sense of accomplishment; autonomy and flexibility; knowledge gain (insider factor, local insight)	Everyday activities	Challenge	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	'No real great disjunction or culture shock'; 'More user-friendly and less challenging than I anticipated';
			Religiosity and religious practices; government regime	Threat	Threat	Threat	
15	Turkey	Mastery; knowledge gain (insider factor, local insight)	Physical demands	-	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	'It was relaxing, active, enjoyable'
			Crime	-	Harm	Harm	
			Everyday activities and interactions	-	Challenge	Benefit	
LEARNING ABOUT SELF							
4	India	Escape; self-actualization (perspective change; inspiration)	Religious practices; living conditions	Threat	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	"You can't deny any of that confronting stuff but...I always come away from India feeling inspired rather than challenged"; 'I was absolutely captivated'; 'Nothing unpleasant or nasty'
7	Myanmar	Having own experience; personal development (multiple); understanding more about myself; escape; stimulation; bonding with locals; knowledge gain (local insight)	Language barrier	Challenge	Challenge	Benefit	'Just exciting...the whole experience was really unique and a bit overwhelming...Not a relaxation'
			Living conditions	Challenge	Threat, Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	
			In-group interactions	Challenge	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	
19	Egypt	Having own experience; personal development (multiple); self-actualization (multiple); feeling lucky; knowledge gain (general)	Women's rights and gender relations	-	Threat, Harm	Threat	'I loved the experience I had...but there was no relaxing...it really was not a holiday. It was a cultural experience'
			Religious practices	-	Harm, Benefit	Threat, Benefit	
			Living conditions	Threat	Threat, Harm	Demanding but beneficial	

Table 8.7. Challenging experiences, continued.

ID	Destination	Perceived gains	Effort stimuli	Stress Appraisal			Overall trip evaluation
				Before	During	After	
LEARNING ABOUT OTHERS							
6	Russia (2 nd trip)	Knowledge gain (insider factor); perspective change	Government regime	Challenge	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	'I wasn't challenged in the same way; still intrigued by the complexity of the country'
6	Myanmar	Knowledge gain (insider factor); feeling lucky	Living conditions; social structure; government regime	Threat, Challenge	Threat, Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	'It was the tour that made me think more critically about lots of things'
16	India	Knowledge gain (local insight); bonding with locals; excitement; spiritual enrichment; sense of accomplishment; re-evaluation of travel interests; perspective change	Language barrier	Challenge	Challenge	Benefit	'I just found it exciting. I loved it'; 'There is nothing overly challenging'; 'When I left India, I said, there is no way I'm going back'
			Living conditions; social structure	Threat	Threat, Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	
21	India	Stimulation; knowledge gain (general);	Living conditions	Threat	Threat	Threat	'Not as challenging as expected'
			Religious practices; social structure	-	Threat, Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	
			Sightseeing fatigue	-	Boredom	Boring but beneficial	
9	Iran	Knowledge gain; opportunity to tell stories; perspective change	Women's dress norms; government regime	Threat	Threat, Harm	Demanding but beneficial	'The challenge was the decision to go to Iran and abide by pointless rules'
13	Iran	Knowledge gain; sense of accomplishment	Physical demands	-	Harm, Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	'It was modestly hard work...but we got to see lots'; 'It was just so many dynasties. You had to sort of do a little bit of delving in the end'
			Sightseeing fatigue	-	Challenge	Demanding but beneficial	

In another interview, a follow up question had a detectable influence on the answer provided, triggering a positive reappraisal of the experience as beneficial, but one that was still congruent with the participant's motivation 'to see what life is like' in Iran (P9). When asked if being forced to wear 'a full black burqa' at the Holy Shrine of Imam Khomeini tarnished her impression of the country, P9 replied that it did not. She pointed out that it was 'good to experience to learn what the local women can feel like on a more regular basis', despite advising in the preceding comments how 'annoying' she found having to cover up daily and how 'cross' she felt about 'the clothing policeman' throwing the garment over her 'without any warning' on that particular visit.

Here, it is timely to explain why the 'after' stage in Table 8.7. does not include 'challenge' among the inferred evaluations but does include 'threat'. Both challenge and threat appraisals are known as 'anticipatory' evaluations of future events and their potential outcomes, that is harm or benefit (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985, p. 153). As a given life event or situation reaches completion or resolution, the ambiguity about the outcomes is replaced by greater clarity, expressed through outcome appraisals. Therefore, drawing on the transactional theory of stress in its current state (Jordan et al., 2015; Searle & Auton, 2014), the term 'challenge' does not seem to apply to the outcome stage. However, in this study, it was found that in many cases the participants continued to feel the same about the discussed cultural differences as they did during the trip. That is why the 'threat' evaluation was applied to the after-the-trip stage. As for 'challenge', given that the participants were not anticipating any struggle in the near future, it was determined to be less applicable. However, to still communicate that the participants continued to feel about the past events as 'demanding' but 'beneficial', a combination of these two evaluations was used instead.

The examples of challenge emerged as whole trips, taxed continuously by the same stimuli, but in two cases (P3, P14) also as instances of participation in isolated activities. Not all demanding situations, however, were appraised as beneficial, even when the whole trips were. The themes of sightseeing fatigue and government regime emerged as contexts for substantially effortful but personally rewarding experiences only from three interviews in total. Most challenging (demanding but enjoyable) experiences were discussed in the conversations about everyday activities, physical demands, casual interactions (language barrier), and spirituality in India. Although few of such examples were found, these findings support Stephenson's (2000, p. 78) observation that cultural adaptation is more likely to occur on the intermediate level of behaviours such as 'language use and preference, degree of interaction within ethnic and dominant societies', than on 'the significant level involves beliefs, values, and norms'.

In most instances of contact with Islamic norms and practices, reminders of the Iran-Iraq war, perceived violations of human rights, and government oppression, the participants spoke about demanding experiences but did not explicitly connect them with any benefits, even after the passage of a considerable amount of time. When asked if the trips delivered on what they expected of them, significant majority emphasised learning about ancient history, aesthetic pleasure, or visiting other sites of interest. P9 and P18 were found to be the exceptions in that P9 saw her experiences contribute to her knowledge of life in contemporary Iran, and P18 interpreted hers as beneficial to her general cultural awareness and travel skills. It must be noted, however, that their reactions to these contact situations were considerably negative, resembling threat appraisal, and were accompanied by notable physical discomfort, which was recorded in Table 8.7. as actual harm. The situations of contact with difficult living conditions and foreign social structures in India and Myanmar evoked a range of responses, from threat and harm to a mix of threat and challenge emotions, suggesting unresolved ambiguity of appraisal in several cases. Although in some cases they were described as demanding and beneficial in terms of personal development, general knowledge gain, and appreciation of own luck ('feeling lucky'), they had not been enjoyed in themselves.

In summary, the range of contexts appears to be quite eclectic, reflecting the diversity of the destinations (Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Myanmar, India, Russia) and local contexts. Furthermore, the differences in how the participants appraised the same external demands in the same countries or regions before, during, and after the trips illustrate the subjectivity of the experience of stress resulting from the person-environment relationship (Jordan & Vogt, 2017b). Nevertheless, several similarities can be pointed out.

All participants, except P13 and P14, had to overcome a pre-trip psychological barrier: intrapersonal, interpersonal, destination-related, or a combination of all three in order to fulfil their curiosity, and in some cases to obtain other desired outcomes. Half actively sought to challenge themselves (P3, P6 Russia, P7, P15, P18, P20). Two spoke about having to deal with anticipated but unwanted taxing situations (P4, P9), and P13 and P14 did not anticipate any demanding situations to arise but were able to recognise them as personally beneficial during the tours. In most cases, in addition to pre-travel concerns, the entire experiences were continuously taxed by a combination of stimuli (P3, P7, P6 Myanmar, P9 Iran, P15, P18, P20), except for P4 in India and P6 in Russia for whom overcoming pre-travel anxiety was the most difficult part.

Perceived control and certainty are key predictors of challenge appraisal (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2005; Lazarus, 2006), and anticipation of stress, in combination with the support

of the tour leaders, helped the participants cope with the lack of controllability over the environments they were in and uncertainty about how the trips would unfold. After all, visits to religious towns and sights - one of the most frequently mentioned contexts in regards to challenge - were organised. Some participants also had the advantage of having been in similar circumstances in other countries before, which gave them the confidence for independent exploration. Nevertheless, it should be reiterated that even when the participants were eager to get outside the comfort zone, not all aspects of their trips were enjoyable, or enjoyable all the time. Some participants, who either did not receive timely assistance from the guides or stepped out on their own too early, such as P20 in Delhi on the first day, felt reluctant to make similar attempts for the rest of their tours. Some extended contact situations evoked mixed responses, resulting in contradictory evaluations throughout the interviews, and acknowledgements of feeling 'scared but not scared' (P18) and 'excited' (P15), yet uncomfortable and emotionally drained and feeling like 'there is no way I'm going back' (P15) immediately after the trip. It is this awareness of acute psychological discomfort, either ongoing or situational, and limited control that differentiate these challenging experiences from effortless flow-type experiences where challenge (difficulty) and skill (or other relevant coping resource) are balanced, or where skill exceeds the challenge. Indeed, some participants recalled memories of experiences resembling the flow state, such as P6 finding her way on a walk around St Petersburg; P3 expanding on his knowledge of Turkey's history from listening to and interacting with on-site guides; P12 ordering a meal on her own; P21 using sign language to communicate with a local; or even P15 in the moment of 'bantering' with street vendors in India. However, they were still never in complete control over the environment, capable of letting go of their guard, although in those moments they were more in control than in others.

As far as perceived personal gains (positive outcomes) are concerned, they represent a combination of themes from the results on motivation, interests, and personal stakes. Each participant identified several ways in which they benefited from their trips. As some of the female participants were more explicit about the trips contributing to their personal growth, the themes of 'personal development' and 'self-actualization' were also included in the table. Overall, however, several male and female participants were found to appraise their experiences in their entirety or partly as beneficial to their personal development, self-actualization, or both, whether they referred to these themes directly or not. Since travelling for 'pleasure' applied to all and everyone enjoyed their trips for the most part, this specific personal gain was excluded from Table 8.7. of the personal gains were found to be assigned greater personal importance, clarifying the hierarchy of the travel motivations. Based on this finding, the participants in Table 8.7. were organised in three groups, informed by the types

of learning discussed by Falk et al. (2012) and Mezirow (1991): those who focused more on skill mastery, on learning about self, and on learning about others.

Of particular interest here is knowledge gain. Most participants in this group spoke about knowledge gain, that is gaining some type of insight into the local culture and in one instance into history of their respective destinations, fulfilling their general curiosity. The depth of some of those insights and their accuracy has been questioned earlier, but they were, nevertheless, seen by the participants as contributing to their knowledge capital and were, therefore, beneficial in psychological terms. This finding, however, is not unique to this group, as all participants in this study spoke about having enjoyed expanding their knowledge about their destinations to some extent. Furthermore, as discussed in the results on personal stakes, some participants were highly concerned with maintaining a desired self-image and concealing their psychological discomfort. Therefore, despite the general learning noted by P3, his appraisal of contact with Islamic practices and government regime in Turkey was analysed as 'threat', rather than 'challenge'. What is noteworthy here is that where the participants identified perspective change, most of those changes, as discussed in Section 8.2, were concerned with attitudes surrounding poverty. This finding further suggests that few tourists in the sample travelled with an explicit desire to put their views to the test or seek deeper understanding.

Among the remaining trips to Japan, Italy, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Cuba, Iran and Turkey, nine were evaluated as relatively easy and comfortable, and two as quite taxing, making their unique circumstances the exceptions in the sample. P11 reported that 'it was really a trip from hell in a way', sharing a wide range of reasons related to poor tour organisation and significant differences between herself and the majority of the group in terms of previous travel experience, wealth and expectations, who she also described as 'well-heeled travellers'. The other participant found it physically challenging due to serious food poisoning and flu suffered by the whole tour group. The trips of P2 and P4 to Sri Lanka were also not without some disappointments that may have minimised their opportunities for challenge. Both wanted to spend more time exploring local villages and markets, including on their own, and P2 wished they had spent more time learning about colonial heritage. She was also not able to complete the physical challenge she set for herself of climbing the Sigiriya rock to the very top.

Japan and Italy have largely been absent from the preceding discussions. As suggested by the participants, their level of socio-economic development and Japan's 'orderliness' (P1, P17) had a role to play in their relevance to the discussion of challenge. It is also important to point out that P8 had been to Italy before and travelled with friends, and P1 and P17

deliberately chose to go on tours to Japan for their ease and convenience. In particular, P1 noted that although when travelling to Europe he generally tried to 'have a phrasebook and learn a few words', he was not sure if he was 'too old to start learning languages that don't have our alphabet'. Furthermore, both P1 and P17 travelled for 'pleasure' (P1), 'more or less as a tourist' for 'the main attractions' (P17), rather than to engage in 'any great philosophical discussions ... nothing too deep' (P1).

Interviews about Sri Lanka represent another sub-group where all participants who travelled to the same destination were found to have benign-positive experiences. Sri Lanka is a tourism destination which is still recovering economically, politically and socially not only from a 30-year civil war but also a devastating tsunami of 2004 (Buultjens et al., 2016; Ratnayake & Hapugoda, 2017). Yet, the themes of poverty, socio-economic inequality, religious persecutions, refuges, military control, and government corruption, were given little attention overall, compared to similar problems reported in the interviews about India and Myanmar. The exceptions included P4's comment about finding it 'very affecting' to visit the tsunami-hit places and how her family 'donated to the causes' when it happened, and P16's professional interest of a news anchor in the treatment of the Tamil minority. Unlike P6 who advised that finding out about how 'ethnically diverse Myanmar is' was one of her greatest learnings, P5 and P16 drew a connection between Buddhism and 'gentleness' in Sri Lanka, despite to ongoing tension between the Sinhalese Buddhist majority and Hindu Tamils from the north of Sri Lanka. Poverty was also found to be of minor concern. Even P16 who spoke about 'the economic shock' from witnessing poverty, was sympathetic, but his comments were devoid of the sense of guilt displayed by the participants who were confronted by it in other countries.

Differences in local contexts are an important consideration. It is possible that by spending most of the time in the more developed south of Sri Lanka and in the centre exploring ancient ruins and national parks, the participants, most of whom travelled with the same company on the same itinerary, received less exposure to particularly poor areas, such as the slums of Mumbai in India. At the same time, even though they did not travel too far north, P5's comments suggest that they did see enough to realise 'what the war, or lack of money, or money going to the war had done to the rest of the country' (P5). In regards to the caste system, mentioned only by P2, the history of anti-caste Buddhist movements in Sri Lanka may explain why the caste divisions were less visible to the tourists (Silva, 2017). However, as Silva (2017, pp. 228-229) notes, 'Buddhist institutions and belief system in Sri Lanka operate on the basis of caste on a number of fronts', including legitimisation of gender

inequalities, and some traditional arts (Handapangoda, Madduma Bandara, & Kumara, 2019).

Therefore, it is necessary to understand the experiential context in combination with interpersonal differences and similarities. The prioritisation of ease and convenience in combination with the focus on sightseeing was found to characterise the motivation not only of the tourists to Japan and Italy but of the majority of the participants who appraised their experiences as comfortable. In the case of Sri Lanka, they travelled to 'ha[ve] a good time', without any 'earth-shattering' (P5) discoveries about themselves. Those who travelled to Mexico, Iran and Turkey when there first and foremost for the remnants of ancient civilisations.

In addition, many answers were characterised by a diminished responsiveness to difference. The differences in responses to poverty in Sri Lanka, and in India and Myanmar between the more and less experienced participants suggests that previous experience may not be a deciding factor. Rather, it is the personal stakes in the experience and the attitude, or the consciously made 'choice of responses' (Langer, 1983, as cited in Hottola, 2004, p. 458) that may play more significant roles, regardless of previous exposure. This observation is further illustrated by the earlier drawn comparisons of the impressions shared by the participants who travelled to Iran, Turkey and Egypt. The contradictions between episodic memories and declarations of not being affected revealed certain defensive detachment, contrasting with the extent of emotional involvement and personal investment by P9 (Iran) and P18 (Egypt) noted from the discussions of the sampled trips, as well as their statements about their pre-travel views. Furthermore, what unites all these accounts of mostly benign-positive experiences is that when moments of negative affect were recalled, there was little evidence to suggest that they were perceived as sources of struggle with significant positive implications for the participants' selves.

Finally, the socio-economic status of the local guides, as well as their views and actions, whether internally driven or potentially imposed on them by their employers and local governments (Dahles, 2002; Ong, Ryan, & McIntosh, 2014), also played an important role in managing the opportunities for their passengers to experience challenge. Since most of the trips in this group were run by generalist tour operators who worked only with local guides, it could be suggested that this finding is specific to this type of tour companies. However, learning from local guides emerged as influential from the conversations about both more and less challenging tour experiences with both generalist and specialist operators.

8.6. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to address the first objective of this thesis: to examine how challenge, as a complex psychological state characterised by perception of effort and motivational (goal) relevance and congruence can manifest itself in group tour experiences; and what meanings tourists can assign to the notion of challenge. Given the interest of this study in challenging (substantially difficult but beneficial) touristic experiences of other cultures, discussions of perceived cultural differences between Australia and the host destinations and how the participants coped with them were central to addressing this objective. Most participants found the analysed destinations significantly different to Australia. However, in contrast to the common understanding of cultural difference in the literature on intercultural contact as something requiring adaptational effort not only from long-term travellers (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2013) but also from tourists (Hottola, 2004; Rasmi et al., 2014), it was found that different cultural realities evoked different responses from the participants.

Many of the differences emerged from conversations about the participants' cultural interests. As far as the 'joy of difference' (Robinson, 2013, p. 32) is concerned, the most prominent themes that emerged from predominantly positive memories were food; local family and community ties; spirituality; intellectual and artistic works and practices; built heritage and other past artistic achievements; and such positive human qualities as friendliness, hospitality, positivity, and tolerance. In addition, a subset of participants who had travelled to Iran, Turkey and Japan talked about the level of technology, infrastructure and education. Besides expressions of admiration and enjoyment, several participants framed their answers in terms of what they found missing in the Australian society and what Australians could learn from others. Many of these themes are consistent with Salazar and Graburn's (2014, p. 11) observation that when cultural difference is significant, 'people emphasise overt features, such as...language, clothing, craft technologies...hospitality, ritual or...food and cuisine...'. However, some of them also included discussions of associated attitudes, beliefs and values as the less observable elements of culture.

What Chapter 8 focused on, however, is the differences of socio-cultural, economic and political nature that taxed the participants' coping limits of acceptance and understanding and elicited either mixed or negative responses. Whilst in many instances the participants differentiated cultural differences from environmental, economic and political conditions in the host destinations, analysis of specific contexts highlighted how intertwined these spheres of life can be. Walker and Moscardo (2016, p. 1256) frame such interests as 'taking a broader or global perspective on the issues related to the place'. Thus, rather than reporting

on exclusively cultural differences, all substantial external demands were taken into consideration and grouped under the following themes: religiosity and religious practices; relationship between religion and government; human rights; women's rights and gender relations; living conditions; social structures (inequalities between local people); everyday activities and casual interactions around using local transport, food experiences, and shopping; and interactions with local guides who led the tour groups.

The geographical distribution of these themes has highlighted a range of negative and positive stereotypes about the role of religion in Islamic destinations and its influence on the authoritarian governments of other countries; and poverty and spirituality in developing countries, particularly in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and India. The stress appraisal perspective on challenge, however, also called for a consideration of how such prominent values held by the participants as secularism, individualism, and materialism could be threatened by the reported differences, beyond the critique of common Orientalist and colonialist tourist imaginaries (Salazar, 2013).

Thus, contrary to the persistent scholarly critique of organised travel and cultural tourism more broadly as unlikely candidates for facilitating cultural contact that would cause 'dramatic disruptions' to tourists self-images and worldviews (Brown, 2005; Hottola, 2004; Watson et al., 2012, p. 5), this study has found that even group tourists become exposed to a number of differences they found quite significant. While several physical barriers to travel (accommodation, meals, transport) and even language differences were, indeed, minimised by the tour environment, the aforementioned differences in attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours were found capable of, if not transforming, then unsettling even the most widely-travelled and knowledgeable participants. In contrast to the ideas of group tours as highly controlled and choreographed herding of tourists (Urry & Larsen, 2011), most trip narratives of demanding events included a combination of organised activities, self-initiated explorations and uncomfortable serendipitous encounters with the surrounding environment over which the participants had little control, except for the choice of how to respond to them. Furthermore, despite their physical age, many actively sought to (temporarily) leave their 'environmental bubble' (Cohen, 1972, p. 166) and experience the enjoyment of negotiating those tangible and intangible differences on their own during free time. These findings demonstrate how group tourists simply cannot always be as shielded from the 'real world' and that much depends on how tourists choose to spend their free time and on how closely they follow pre-set itineraries.

Not all psychologically uncomfortable situations were evaluated as challenging (demanding but beneficial), but they left the impressions strong enough for the participants to talk about

them at length. Even among the third of the participants whose trips were found to be challenging in the contexts of contact with poverty, different systems of government, and differences in religiosity and religious beliefs and practices, not everyone travelled with an explicit desire to put their views to a test and seek deeper understanding. While some did travel with an awareness of preconceived ideas and had some of them overturned, those related to Islam's influence on gender relations, women's dress norms and celebration of martyrdom, as well as to the Hindu caste system remained unchanged. Furthermore, extensive previous travel experience, including with similar cultural contexts, was found to be of limited relevance to the coping responses in these contact situations. While the more experienced participants did not overtly oppose those differences, a degree of unease could still be inferred from their other comments, including on actions taken before and during travel. In contrast to men, women were directly affected by the Islamic dress norms, which may explain the prominence of the aforementioned themes in the interviews with female participants. However, the few men that participated in the study, also questioned those local ways. As for the relationship of challenge with competence and mastery (Ryan & Glendon, 1998), finding challenge through problem-solving during brief independent explorations of the 'everyday culture' was, indeed, a prominent theme. However, fulfilment of personal development goals did not always intersect with comments on improved cross-cultural understanding.

Consistent with the theories of stress, appraisal and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), cognitive-motivational-relational theory (Lazarus, 1990, 1993, 2006), and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), most of the challenging situations had been anticipated by the participants. It was found that when actively sought, challenge motivates to travel in the first place and to engage with local people; makes experiences more memorable; and contributes to emotional bonding between tourists and hosts. The findings also suggest that unplanned, potentially challenging and initially substantially difficult situations can be viewed as rewarding by tourists, providing one of the following conditions have been met.

Uncomfortable situations may be unexpected but are more likely to be interpreted as beneficial when challenging experiences are generally sought by tourists, even if they refer to them not as 'challenging' but as 'outside the comfort zone' or 'confronting'. The second condition is when a person has experienced challenge in the past but may not necessarily seek such experiences regularly. In this scenario, it is also important that the situation is interpreted as motivationally relevant and congruent and controllable by that person. Lastly, as suggested by the literature on transformative tourist experiences (Christie & Mason, 2003; Robledo & Batle, 2017), tourists may appraise their experiences as challenging when they are assisted by their tour guides in interpreting demanding situations as beneficial to

their learning and personal development and not as threatening. No such examples, however, were observed in the interviews here.

Chapter 2 posed a question about tourists' relationship with mental effort in the context of travel. Discussions of the meaning of the word 'challenge' helped gain insight not only into the participants' understanding of the term but also into their relationship with challenge. While physically demanding and risky activities formed the dominant understanding of the word 'challenge' in consistence with the literature, only two participants spoke about feeling challenged on that level on the discussed trips. One third were found to understand challenging experiences as those involving initial discomfort but promising a positive personally significant outcome. It is, however, important to note that mental challenge (emotional and intellectual) was the least discussed dimension across the sample.

The findings suggest that tourists are ready to apply necessary mental effort to reflect on, relate to and understand other ways of thinking and living until they encounter the differences that are particularly difficult to reconcile - around religion, gender relations, social structures, and politics. These differences form a group of cultural risks that are less controllable by the tour environment, are less likely to be actively sought and openly discussed during tours and are consequently less likely to be framed explicitly by the tourists as risks. While the participants in this study looked for the intellectual stimulation that comes from contact with significant cultural difference, few were found prepared to reflect on the reasons for their responses to those differences and learn about their importance to hosts, rather than search for reassuring similarities. These results, however, should be read in conjunction with a number of positive outcomes that were observed: increased awareness of the extent of adversity experienced in other countries, empathy, concern, and perceived similarity as manifestations of perspective change on local people. Drawing on the arguments put forward by Walker and Moscardo (2016), Kirillova et al. (2017), and Coghlan and Weiler (2018), these outcomes can be interpreted as examples of noteworthy transformations around how tourists can relate to hosts, and form a foundation of the 'sense of care of place' (Walker & Moscardo, 2016).

In summary, although in many cases the tours analysed in this study fell under Mortlock's category of low-risk 'play' (Varley, 2006), challenge and associated positive outcomes do appear to have a place in small group tours, even if it is not deliberately incorporated into the itinerary. However, the interviews have also highlighted two barriers to challenge: some aspects of care-taking, interpreting and cultural mediation performed by local guides, and tourists' diminished responsiveness to difference. Further commentary on these two barriers and their implications are offered in the concluding chapter.

Chapter 9 Post-Travel Culture Involvement

9.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, it presents and discusses the findings on post-travel culture involvement, and second it answers the main research question by bringing together the involvement and challenge findings. Given the gap in the literature, Section 9.2. discusses a wide spectrum of tourists' post-travel behaviours interpreted as instances of involvement with the host cultures of their destinations. The key considerations in the analysis were intentionality of involvement; subjective meaningfulness; and depth of cultural insights. Thus, the responses were analysed through the lens of the ontological and epistemological considerations informing this study: that data should be read both literally and interpretively, and that the "real world" does exist independently' (Mason, 2002, p. 179) of the individual and should be accounted for. Close attention was also paid to the breadth of involvement (domains, activities, objects) and the following behavioural indicators commonly used in the literature on cultural participation (Alazaizeh et al., 2016; McKercher et al., 2002): length, frequency ('how often'), and amount ('how many/much') of involvement.

By addressing the sources of that involvement (*why* the participants chose to engage in particular ways) in Section 9.3., the chapter aims to explore the role that challenging tour experiences, among other factors, may have played in stimulating it. Considering that personal meaning lies at the core of involvement and is embedded in specific person-environment relationships (Hou et al., 2005; Prayag & Ryan, 2012), some parts of Sections 9.2. and 9.3. overlap. The chapter concludes with some final observations about the role that perceived challenge may play in how tourists travelling on group tours engage with previously visited cultures once they return home.

9.2. Domains of Involvement

9.2.1. Knowledge

As can be seen in Table 9.1., most involvement examples found in this study were concerned with seeking destination-related knowledge, predominantly through engagement with text and video resources - in one instance as part of creating a photo book –through following the news. The rest include singular examples of attendance of public events (art and history lectures, and courses at a local temple); and learning from others (staying informed about current affairs by maintaining contact with the local guide and learning through social networks).

Table 9.1. Domains and activities of post-travel culture involvement.

Involvement domains and activities	P3	P12	P14	P9	P10	P13	P19	P4	P15	P20	P21	P6		P7	P8	P1	P5	P11
	M	F	F	F	F	M	F	F	M	M	F	F		F	F	M	F	F
	TK			IR				IN				RU	MY		IT	JP	SL	CU
KNOWLEDGE																		
Reading history books	✓			✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓					
Reading fiction set in the destination								✓	✓			✓	✓					
Reading biographies and memoirs							✓					✓	✓					
Consulting history resources online					✓	✓												
Watching history lectures	✓				✓													
Creating photo books					✓													
Staying informed about current affairs by following the news	✓		✓			✓						✓	✓	✓			✓	
Staying actively informed about current affairs by maintaining contact with the local guide														✓				
Culture learning through social networks								✓							✓			
Attending art and history lectures															✓			
Attending courses at a local temple								✓										
FOOD																		
Eating out at ethnic restaurants		✓						✓			✓					✓		
Consuming ethnic food and drink at home								✓		✓		✓					✓	
Shopping at an ethnic grocer										✓								
ARTS																		
Collecting works of art and craft	✓	✓						✓				✓						
Decorating home interior	✓	✓						✓				✓	✓					✓
Wearing hand-crafted clothes		✓																
Knitting		✓																
Carpet making		✓																
Listening to recorded music												✓						✓

Table 9.2. Involvement in reading, consulting online resources and watching history lectures.

Participant	Genre	Resource	Time period	Location/Setting	Key events
P3	History	A book about Byzantium	4 th – 15 th c.	Western and Eastern Mediterranean (Greece, Italy, Sicily, Turkey, North Africa)	Byzantium renamed into Constantinople, new capital of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire (330-1453), following the collapse of the Western Empire; Constantinople conquered by the Ottoman Turks and renamed into Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire (1453)
		Lectures about late antiquity	2 nd – 7 th c		
P9	Art history	A book about the influence of Iranian architecture and art around the world, and India in particular	Ancient and modern	Iran, India and other	-
P10	Political history	A book on the Iranian revolution	1978-1979	Iran	Iranian revolution (1978-1979)
	History	Books and Wikipedia	c. 60BC – 7 th c.	Iran	Roman-Persian and Greco-Persian wars
P13	History	Internet	Ancient (333BC) to medieval (13 th c.)	Iran	The Achaemenian Empire conquered by Alexander the Great; Roman-Persian wars; the Mongol Invasion; the Arab invasion
P19	Biography	A book on Omar Khayyam	1048-1131	Iran	Persian poet, astronomer, mathematician
	Reference	A book on Iran in general	-	Iran	-

Table 9.2. Involvement in reading, consulting online resources and watching history lectures.

Participant	Genre	Resource	Time period	Location/Setting	Key events
P4	History	'India Discovered: The Recovery of a Lost Civilization' (Keay, 1988)	Ancient to modern	India	Discovery and conservation of India's cultural heritage by British archaeologists in the 18 th – 19 th c; the Mauryan Empire (321 – 185BC)
	Fiction	'The White Tiger' (Adiga, 2008)	Contemporary	India	-
	Historical fiction	'A God in Every Stone' (Shamsie, 2014)	c. 500BC – 20 th c.	India	British colonial rule (1858-1947)
	Reference	A book on Iran in general	-	Iran	-
P20	History	'The Silk Roads: A New History of the World' (Frankopan, 2015)	Ancient to contemporary	Europe, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Middle East, Far East, South Asia	The history of the Silk Roads region (Russia, Iran, Central Asia, India, Pakistan, China) as the centre of human civilisation
P15	Fiction/ Autobiography	'The Mountain Shadow' (Roberts, 2015)	1980s – early 2000s	India	-
	Fiction	'Siddhartha' (Hesse, 1954)	c. 600 – 400BC	India	Life of the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama)
P6 (Russia)	History	'The Romanovs: 1613-1918' (Sebag Montefiore, 2016)	1613-1918	Russia	History of the Romanov dynasty (1613-1918)
	History	'Catherine the Great and Potemkin: The imperial love affair' (Sebag Montefiore, 2000)	1774-1791	Russia	Relationship between Catherine II, empress of Russia and army officer

Table 9.2. Involvement in reading, consulting online resources and watching history lectures.

Participant	Genre	Resource	Time period	Location/Setting	Key events
P6 (Russia)	History	Biography of Nicholas II	1868-1918	Russia	The rule of Nicholas II, Russia's last emperor; Russian Revolution (1917)
	History	Biography of Lenin	1870-1924	Russia	Vladimir Lenin, founder the Russian Social Democratic Workers' (Bolsheviks) Party (1903), leader of the Russian Revolution (1917) and assassination of the Romanovs family (1918)
	History	'Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy' (Smith, 2012a)	1900s – 1930s	Russia	
	History	A book about Shostakovich's 'Leningrad' symphony in terms of the siege	1940s	Russia	WWII
	History/ memoire	'The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin' (Gessen, 2012)	1952-2010	Russia	The rise to the position of Russia's President by Vladimir Putin
P6 (Myanmar)	Fiction	'Burmese Days' (Orwell, 1989)	1920s	Myanmar (Burma)	WWI; the British colonial rule (1885 – 1948)
	Fiction	'The Glass Palace' (Ghosh, 2006)	1880s – 1990s	Myanmar (Burma), India, Malaysia	the British colonial rule
	Autobiography	'From the Land of Green Ghosts: A Burmese Odyssey' (Khoo Twe, 2002)	1960s – 2000s	Myanmar (Burma), the UK	Establishment of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (1962); formation of a military regime (1988)

The most popular activity across the sample, post-travel involvement in reading was mentioned by seven participants most of whom, except P15 and P20, travelled with specialist tour operators. The resources, predominantly books, with which the participants engaged after their trips are listed in Table 9.2. and are organised by genre or subject field (for online resources); title and author, where available; time period; and location (setting).

Most of the participants concentrated their reading efforts on the more distant past, and only two interviewees mentioned books featuring the events of the last decade (P4, P6). At the same time, while many involvement examples were focused on ancient history, only two participants consulted resources exclusively about that time period (P3, P13). Even they used that knowledge to draw connections between the past and the present, as further discussion will show. The majority read more widely, learning about historical events from different time periods up to 2014. Regarding online resources, the use of Wikipedia was mentioned by P10 in relation to clarifying historical facts about the places and objects she had photographed on the Iran trip in order to create a 100-page photo book documenting what she saw, and P13 spoke about looking up similar information on the Internet without naming specific resources.

Regarding the amount, frequency, and the length of involvement in the activities directed at the acquisition of destination-related knowledge, while examples of reading lent themselves to some quantification, other activities did not, and care was taken not to reduce the conversations to the recall of numbers. Most participants who engaged in reading, were able to recall the exact number of books they had read and videos watched, ranging between one and three over the space of 3 to 12 months (Table 9.3.). At the time of interviewing, four participants (P3, P4, P6, P9) were still reading; four had already finished (P10, P19, P20, P15), and P6 named three additional books she had bought or borrowed from a library that she intended to read next. As far as the window of opportunity for involvement is concerned, no distinguishable pattern was observed between the length of time since the end of the last trip and the extent of involvement. The participants who had twice less time than others were found to have read just as much or even more than those who had 8 to 12 months, but further research with a larger sample is required to understand the influence of the length of post-travel involvement time on involvement outcomes.

In regards to the specific knowledge sought, Table 9.4. summarises the broad themes raised by the participants when recalling the content of those books and resources, and what they learnt from them. The order in which the themes are organised emerged from the analysis of the resources by time period (Table 9.5.), and in the light of the findings about the dominance of distant past in the participants' interests. The data-driven order reveals the

boundaries between three thematic sets addressing different time periods: ancient to medieval, ancient to contemporary, and contemporary history.

Table 9.3. Length of time between end of trip and interview.

Participant	Length of time between end of trip and interview	Destination	Total number of visits
P4	12 months	India	4
P13	11 months	Iran	1
P9	10 months	Iran	1
P10	10 months	Iran	1
P8	10 months	Italy	>3
P14	8 months	Turkey	1
P15	8 months	India	1
P5	7 months	Sri Lanka	1
P1	5 months	Japan	1
P6	5 months	Russia	2
		Myanmar	1
P7	5 months	Myanmar	1
P12	5 months	Turkey	5
P20	5 months	India	1
P21	5 Months	India	1
P3	4 months	Turkey	1
P19	3 months	Iran	1

Table 9.4. Knowledge acquisition themes.

Theme	Ancient to medieval history (600BC – 1600)	Modern history (1600 – 1900)	Contemporary history (1900 – 2014)
Interconnectedness	P3, P9, P20		
Significance of cultural heritage	P4, P9, P10, P19, P20		
Complex history	P3, P10, P13		
Historical continuity	P3, P13, P20	P4, P6 (R), P20	P4, P6 (R, M), P10, P20
Formation and disintegration of colonies, states, empires and civilisations	P3, P4, P10 P13, P20	P4, P6 (R, M), P20	P4, P6 (R, M), P20
International and domestic military and political conflicts	P3, P10, P13, P20	P4, P6 (M), P20	P4, P4, P6 (R, M), P10, P20
Religion	P13, P15, P20	P6 (R)	P6 (R), P10, P15
Government regime			P6 (R, M), P10
Socio-economic adversity and prosperity			P4, P6 (R, M), P15

Table 9.5. Periodisation of readings.

Historic period	Turkey	Iran	India	Russia	Myanmar
Ancient to Medieval (600BC – 1600)	Constantinople, new capital of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire (330-1453), following the collapse of the Western Empire; Constantinople conquered by the Ottoman Turks and renamed into Istanbul	The Achaemenian Empire conquered by Alexander the Great in 333BC; Roman-Persian and Greco-Persian wars; the Mongol Invasion; the Arab invasion	Life of the Buddha c. 600 – 400BC; the Mauryan Empire (321 – 185BC)		
Modern (1600 – 1900)			Discovery and conservation of India's cultural heritage by British archaeologists in the 18 th – 19 th c;	History of the Romanov Dynasty (1613-1918); Relationship between Catherine II, empress of Russia and Potemkin, statesman and army officer (1774-1791); Russo-Turkish wars	
Modern to Contemporary			British colonial rule (1858-1947)	The Russian Social Democratic Workers' (Bolsheviks) Party by Lenin (1903); Nicholas II, Russian Revolution (1917); assassination of the Romanovs family (1918); formation of the Soviet Union (1922)	
Contemporary (1900 – 2010)		Iranian revolution (1978-1979)		WWII; the rise to the position of Russia's President by Vladimir Putin	WWI; the British colonial rule (1885 – 1948); the Burma Socialist Programme Party (1962); military regime (1988)
Ancient to Contemporary	The history of the Silk Roads region (Russia, Iran, Central Asia, India, Pakistan, China) as the centre of human civilisation				

The theme of 'historical continuity' spanning all three periods demarcates the boundary between the discussions of ancient to medieval, and modern to contemporary history, while 'religion' draws the line between contemporary and the other two periods. An interest in the linkages between the past and the present was expressed by several participants as one of the four dominant themes in the discussions of involvement in further learning. For example, P3 referred to continuity on several occasions when explaining his specific interests in the history of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire up to 1453 when its capital Constantinople, a former Greek colony of Byzantium, was conquered by the Turks (Ottomans), and its 'intersection with the early Middle Age':

That's the reason I go to these places, the connection with past history...One of my great interests in history is continuity in terms of lived experience and in terms of ongoing attitudes, beliefs. I think that the pervasiveness of things through history is very interesting. (P3, Turkey)

In other interviews this theme emerged from the context of what the participants said about what they had learnt from their readings; the gaps in their knowledge they admitted earlier in the conversations; the questions they had following their trips; and the historical scope of the materials with which they engaged. They spoke about understanding the origins of 'all the problems that we've got in the Middle East now' (P20); the reasons for 'Islam to take hold' in Iran (P13); the curiosity about the 'new cult of the Russian imperial family' (P6) and their canonization in Russia in 2015 despite their assassination during the October Revolution of 1917; the unpreparedness for the expressions of 'the culture of martyrdom' (Gruber, 2012) in Iran through 'billboards showing those who had been killed' in the Iran-Iraq war (P10); formation of a military regime in Myanmar (Burma), and the history of the British colonial rule in India and Myanmar (P4, P6).

As these examples show, the theme of 'historical continuity' was interlinked with references to the formation and disintegration of colonies, states, empires and civilizations; international and domestic military and political conflicts, some of which played a part in the former events; and religion. Similar to the findings on demanding situations, these four themes were central to the conversations about post-travel culture involvement, running through most readings about most destinations and historic periods. The majority of these resources belong to the history genre (mostly historical books), including political history. Although knowledge of a country's history is an important aspect of culture involvement from the acculturation perspective (Stephenson, 2000), few participants shared any learnings about the thoughts and feelings of ordinary people affected by those events, and their cultural and religious practices, social norms, values and beliefs.

Creative writing, including creative non-fiction (biographies and autobiographies), a domain of cultural participation (Australia Council, 2017; Kelly et al., 2018), was read only by three participants. Among the seven texts of those creative genres, five were written by local (Indian, Burmese and Russian) authors, sharing insider perspectives. As P6 described her pre-travel involvement in reading Russian classic playwright Chekov, 'it was intriguing because the little glimpses you got were so different from our own experience'. In contrast, the historical monographs were written by Western authors, such as Sebag Montefiore's (2016) history of the Romanovs, the last Russian dynasty whose first monarch (tsar) was appointed by the church, or Frankopan's (2015) history of the Silk Roads. Although Western authors, particularly historians, may aim for comprehensiveness and balanced views, they remain outsiders looking in. This argument does not apply to all Western authors and texts. Each should be examined individually, but the few comparative examples found in this study demonstrate the importance of this consideration for the choice of pre- and post-travel readings recommended by tour operators to their passengers.

The comparison of fiction texts read by P4 and P15 helps illustrate this point on the example of the themes of spirituality and poverty, both of which were central to their challenging experiences of India. Since returning to Australia, P15 read *The Mountain Shadow*, the sequel to *Shantaram* by Roberts, a novel picturing the life in the slums of Mumbai and the Western protagonist's spiritual transformation (Magner, 2014). He also read what he described as 'highly spiritual' *Siddhartha* by Hesse (1954), telling a story of a man's spiritual journey, inspired by the tale of the Buddha's enlightenment. Magner's (2014, p. 215) review of *Shantaram* as 'a continuation of the tradition of Westerners visiting Asia to discover enlightenment' highlights the contrast between P15's choice of readings and the interest behind it and what P4 gained from reading Adiga's (2008) *The White Tiger*. As someone who, similar to P15, felt inspired by the positivity and religiosity of the people she met in India amidst serious deprivation, she noted that the book offered a 'counterbalance to any romantic notions you've got about India being the perfect society', portraying 'the other side of what it was like to grow up in an Indian city'. Another participant who sought a deeper understanding through reading, in this case, of ethnic diversity and religious conflicts in Myanmar, was P6 who read Khoo Twe's (2002) autobiography, telling his story as 'a young Burmese man from one of the hill tribes' she mentioned in the interview (P6).

Colonial history is another theme that connects the participants' recollections of their tour experiences with their post-travel creative readings. Both *A God in Every Stone* (Shamsie, 2014) read by P4 and *The Glass Palace* by Ghosh (2006) read by P6 examine what Kaur (2014, p. 1) describes in the review of Shamsie's (2014) book as 'the underside of empire'.

As reviewed by Surti (2013, p. 101), Ghosh narrates it through the history of devastating dislocation of 'a family uprooted due to the complex sociological, political and historical factors'. The need to be 'critical of the colonial experience' (P4) echoes the participants' memories of feeling confronted by poverty and the sense of guilt for sharp inequality between them and hosts. Although the interest in the negative impacts of Britain's rule on its colonies was prominent only in two interviews with P4 and P6, it forms an on-going subject of scholarly critique of tourism from the postcolonial and now neocolonial West (Bloch, 2017; Seaton, 2009). Furthermore, the ideology of Eurocentrism that was 'propelled' by colonialism (Wijesinghe et al., 2019, p. 1264) was found to be questioned by the readings undertaken by other participants interested in history.

As observed by Wijesinghe et al. (2019, p. 1264), colonialism 'supported the assumption that innovation, may it be knowledge or research, comes from the Euro-Western centres of knowledge'. Learning during the trip about the layers of history and religious influences at Indian forts which 'had been Christian and then Muslim, and then went back to Christian', 'instigated' P20 to read *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (Frankopan, 2015). The book brought to P20's attention that 'we often see civilisation as more European, but the Silk Road looks at the trade roots and more of the Middle East and India, the places that had been central to civilisation for hundreds of years'. The realisation of connection between nations and cultures was also shared by P9 who read a book about the influence of Iranian architecture and art around the world and particularly on India where she had been earlier. Thus, counteracting Eurocentric thinking, the theme of 'historical continuity' was found to run parallel to the conclusions about 'interconnectedness' (P3) as historical and cultural links not only between the West and the East but also between the countries within them. As P3 observed about Turkey, Europe and Northern Africa, in books 'things are often dealt with as discrete kind of things, and the reality is much more continuous and interconnected'. These comments were also marked by appreciation of the significance of cultural heritage of the visited destinations and the desire to 'make sense' of their complex histories and 'put everything in context' (P13).

These findings on post-travel learning about ancient and medieval history reveal a hopeful tone and, once again, a search for connection. However, this positivity was accompanied by expressions of presently felt disconnection that permeated the engagement with modern and contemporary histories. The choice of readings about more recent historical events was influenced by the participants' concern over illiberal, autocratic government regimes; the interference of religion in government; and socio-economic disparity.

Regarding engagement with news sources, for the significant majority of participants in this study it was about gaining access to knowledge through mainstream channels rather than watching or reading the news produced by and for the members of ethnic communities (Stephenson, 2000). Furthermore, in contrast to reading, which involves exercising choice and finding time to read, the intentionality of engagement with news varied more substantially. In total, just over half of all participants spoke about an increased interest in the current affairs as 'the modern story' (P14) of the destinations, as the news about them started to 'figure in a different way' (P10), more real and personal. Six participants mentioned actively 'following the news' (Table 9.1); the others – a general interest in the future of the countries and receiving the news about them among many others, rather than intentionally seeking out the information specifically on them:

Oh, yeah, now I will always see it [Sri Lanka]. Before it might have been a word, but that word now has a bit more meaning when you see it, so I will always hear it. I am a news anchor, I will always hear it So I see the words 'Sri Lanka', right, and I listen, or I read because I can relate to it. (P16, Sri Lanka)

From the findings it may be posited that following the news was approached as engagement with contemporary culture. Driven by the interest in international and domestic military and political conflicts, and government regimes, it further skewed the post-travel culture involvement findings towards these themes, already discussed in Chapter 8. Religion, again, emerged as the only tangible link between the interest in political issues and 'social emotional and value-related' domains of culture (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004, p. 26):

I certainly haven't been reading a lot on *contemporary* Turkey, although I obviously follow the news and the elections, and what's happening with the Turks and the Kurds, and with the Turkish government I always follow international things, and I've always found the Kurds particularly interesting, and professionally I have been aware of the success of Turkish governments towards Islamist things. (P3, Turkey)

I think the Prime Minister, he is very much pro-religion So yes, I am interested in following what's happening. I'm probably more interested now, in the *modern* story of Turkey. (P14, Turkey)

Oh, yes, yes, and particularly because at the time when we were there, we did see election rallies Basically, three families had run Sri Lanka since god knows when, and somebody who wasn't one of those three families won the election. I think they've had hassle since, and I've sort of kept up with that. (P5, Sri Lanka)

An interest in the process and the outcome of an election campaign witnessed during the trip was also what prompted P7 to email her tour guide in Myanmar 'to talk to see what her experiences are like this time'. This was the only example found in this study of post-travel communication between a tourist and a tour leader. Several participants who travelled to Japan (P1), Italy (P8) and India (P15, P20) simply did not bring up the topic of watching the news. As for P4, although she enjoyed reading Indian newspapers when in India, she advised that in Australia 'you don't get that much actually when you get right down to it', and that she was 'flat out feeling distressed about our own pretty ridiculous situation'.

Aside from reading and following the news, listening to lectures was mentioned by two participants who travelled with the same special interest company (C3) that includes expert lectures in its tour programs. P3 watched his lectures privately in preparation for his next trip, while for P8 attending lectures on art and history formed an integral part of her life, not only as someone who was greatly interested in different art forms 'of any country', but who at the time of the interview was also a presiding officer of an arts society delivering lectures to its members as its primary activity. The interview with P8 also highlighted the important role that one's social networks at home can continuously play in learning about other cultures. As she explained, involvement with the culture of Italy had been part of her upbringing. She spoke about studying Italian when she was younger and having a close Italian friend in Italy with whom she had studied at school and who she continued to visit in Italy, including for cultural tourism. This normalised multi-faceted nature of involvement with the Italian culture prior to the interview may explain why when asked about involvement in other activities, she advised that she was finding it difficult to be specific and emphasised the circumstances of her childhood and adult life.

The forms of involvement reported by P8 intersect with the equally rare choices made by P7 and P4. In the first instance, the decision made by P7 to contact the guide to seek answers to her questions further highlights the social aspect of learning, underrepresented in the findings. In the second instance, P4 provided another example of culture involvement at public spaces: attendance of courses at a local Buddhist temple. The surrounding interview context suggests, however, that the visits were more motivated by personal reasons, that is 'gaining a more relaxed', 'a more Buddhist view of life' and improving personal wellbeing through the application of Buddhist wisdom, rather than by studying Buddhism in more depth as a world religion. Although it would be hard to dispute that the two processes are undoubtedly intertwined, this example further demonstrates the limited extent to which the participants in this study were interested in learning about the discussed religions as systems of beliefs and practices and not as subjects of ethnic conflicts or politics.

9.2.2. Food

Food is a common pull factor for many tourists and intersects with many other cultural experiences, including visits to cultural heritage sites (Kim & Iwashita, 2016), food festivals (Savinovic et al., 2012), and creative activities (Tan et al., 2013). Together with the arts, it is also a field of cultural participation (Bonner, 2015) and one of the private domains of culture (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004). While engagement with it presupposes acquisition of cultural knowledge, to a large degree it also about hedonic and aesthetic experiences. In regards to referring to restaurants, food and grocers as 'ethnic', although the word choice may raise concerns about enforcement of cultural divisions, stereotypes and commodification, it is also a common way of indicating their distinctive cultural roots (Collins, 2015; Noble & Ang, 2018).

Post-travel involvement with food as a cultural domain was mentioned by less than half of the participants in the involvement group, and only some answers were suggestive of engagement with food as a way to maintain the bond with the destination. The only participants who spoke about regular involvement through different activities were P4 and P20. Describing a long-standing relationship with Indian food, strengthened by repeat travel and having Indian in-law relatives, P4 spoke in third person about having 'a few Indian restaurants that we go to' and doing 'a bit of very Europeanised Indian cooking ourselves'. In the case of P20, it was a combination of self-identification as 'foodie-winy sort of people' who 'have had an Indian meal nearly every day' since coming back, and newly gained appreciation for buying authentic Indian produce at Indian supermarkets as a result of an unplanned visit to a spice shop in India:

We haven't been to Indian restaurants, anything like that, because we get all the Indian produce where we live. You can actually get the exact branded spices and whatever you are after in the Indian supermarkets that you can in India. So it's actually no different. So the supermarket, if you go to Woolies or something like that, you get a very sanitised version and a very limited range, but you go to an Indian supermarket, and you can get basically everything you get in the shops we saw over there. (P20, India)

Cooking ethnic food at home was also mentioned but very briefly by P5 who 'found a few [Sri Lankan] things' and said 'they've been nice and I've made them'. Two others spoke about eating out at Turkish (P12), Japanese (P1) and Indian (P21) restaurants only on a couple of occasions. Interestingly, P6 appeared to attach more value to drinking a popular Russian beverage, as she stressed that 'one has to have come Russian black tea with mint'. The

significance of developing a taste for local food and drink and the associated cultural practices was further highlighted by the participants who pointed out that they did not develop such tastes.

Following his earlier comment about finding interesting ‘the significance they attach to the way you drink the coffee and the importance of the cups’, P3 noted that him and his wife ‘haven’t started drinking Turkish coffee at home’. Another participant, who was highly impressed with the local ‘appreciation of beauty’, including during a restaurant visit in Tokyo, also clarified that the fact that him and his wife had eaten in a number of Japanese restaurants after the trip had nothing to do with increased interest in Japan. Collins (2015, p. 153) also argues that ‘what constitutes an ‘authentic’ ethnic or cultural eating or tourist experience could vary according to the different standpoints of those who participate in [it]...’. Furthermore, enjoying ethnic cuisine in multicultural Australia can be quite an ordinary experience (Bonner, 2015) and could, therefore, be considered as very limited involvement in cultural terms and a banal observation in tourism research terms. However, without undervaluing the confidence with which he made this statement, it is important to note that this spike in interest in eating at Japanese restaurants, even if short-lived, could be attributed to an increased sensitivity to all things Japanese. After all, he did repeatedly express his admiration for the Japanese ‘appreciation for the aesthetic of things’. In addition, the restaurant environment could still imprint on the patrons without them being aware of its influence. For these reasons, this instance was counted as an example of post-travel culture involvement, further speaking to an earlier observation about the pitfalls of undervaluing seemingly ordinary encounters (Bonner, 2015). Overall, however, the low post-travel engagement with the food domain, in terms of both the number of participants and the limited range of activities, is consistent with the findings on it being of secondary interest during travel.

9.2.3. Arts

As summarised in Table 9.1., arts engagement by the participants in this study is represented by a mix of activities belonging to the sub-domains of visual arts (painting), crafts and music. The literature on cultural participation distinguishes between two main modes of engagement with the arts: attendance and creative participation (Australia Council, 2017; Bennett & Gayo, 2016). The only explicit reference to post-travel attendance of any cultural events was made by P8 who found it difficult to separate her involvement with the Italian culture, including through regular attendance of art and history lectures, from everyday life. As for the results on creative participation, how well this second mode is represented depends on what is understood by it.

Examples of creative cultural participation as gaining and developing skills in traditional arts (Richards & Wilson, 2006; Tan et al., 2013) were reported only by one participant who spoke about knitting using locally bought Turkish yarn and carpet weaving. Interestingly, in addition to handicrafts, Tan et al. (2013) also include interior decoration, a theme that emerged from conversations with several participants under different circumstances and is examined in the literature on the place of souvenirs in homes (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011; Haldrup, 2017; Peters, 2011). The interview with P2 was the first time any participant was asked about what they brought back from their trip. In this particular case, after she reported no involvement, the question was introduced in an attempt to explore another way of accessing relevant insights, knowing that discussions of souvenirs and other trip mementoes can be effective memory triggers. In two subsequent interviews, the participants brought up this subject themselves in response to the question about post-travel culture involvement. Drawing on its emergent relevance, this question was asked in all other interviews, unless the participants addressed it themselves first.

Ownership of souvenirs, the collective term used to refer to 'objects kept to recall occasions, places or people' (Hitchcock, 2013, p. 201), can still evoke criticism of the disregard for cultural diversity and complexity in favour of essentialising images of whole destinations, captured in those tourism artefacts (Salazar & Graburn, 2014). Examples of such essentialising were found in the nostalgia for 'idyllic landscapes' (Hitchcock, 2013, p. 205) and rural life, as the participants spoke about 'naive painting of the village themes' (P4) in India; 'a painting of a felucca', reminding P18 of her cruise along the Egyptian Nile; and a painting of 'the rooster in the breads' brought back from Cuba by P11 who said 'that's what I will always remember about Cuba is the rooster crying'.

Other issues include erosion of cultural traditions as a result of their commercialisation for tourism purposes (Change et al., 2008) and a shift towards production of 'tourist art, based largely on tourists' expectations of what souvenirs should be' (Swanson & Timothy, 2012, p. 495). Indeed, two participants bought items illustrating Hitchcock's (2013, p. 205) point about 'standardised styles and genres', such as 'the tree of life motif' on the 'elaborate ceramic plate' bought in Turkey by P3, and on a 'hand-painted fabric wall-hanging' purchased by P4 in India. An example illustrating the extremes of tourist art is found in the interview with P6 who brought back a souvenir that was produced entirely for Western tourists and carried no cultural symbolism for the hosts but attracted her by the story behind its production:

It was just after Christmas, and in the market, they were selling these little carved figures. I was really, really intrigued by them because there seemed to be a man and a woman, and a baby, and some animals, and I said to the guide, what is this? He said,

oh, it's the Christmas family. The Christmas family? He said, yes, yes, yes, it's the Christmas family, for tourists. And I realised that it was the nativity scene. And I said, 'but you are Buddhists?' And he said, oh, they are only making them for the tourists. When four years ago the tourists first started to come, the villagers in this particular area got together and talked about what they could make that tourists would buy because they were desperately poor. And he said the first group of tourists that came were from Germany, and it was just after Christmas. And these German tourists told the locals about the Christmas family, as they call them, and so the locals went 'ah, this is what we'll make!', which I thought was very enterprising. (P6 Myanmar)

Engagement with 'the material culture of tourism (e.g. handicrafts and souvenirs)' (Timothy & Boyd, 2006, p. 8) can be interpreted as passive appreciation at best, or simply passive ownership at worst. However, when viewed through the lense of embodiment, ownership of touristic artefacts as tangible 'embodiments' of culture (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 86) can acquire the meaning of active multi-sensory involvement (Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Watson et al., 2012). Furthermore, the act of ownership has been used as an indicator of the intensity of visual arts participation and book reading in the research informed by Bourdieu's (1984) theory of cultural capital (Bennett & Gayo, 2016; Kelly et al., 2018).

Not all souvenirs are simple reminders of extraordinary places and experiences. Some can be placed in 'glass cabinet[s] where no one is ever going to see it' (P3), maintaining their status as signifiers of difference, or bought as gifts for friends and family. Jewelry, notebooks and clothing from a mix of destinations were popular items purchased by female participants, mostly as gifts. Others can be treated as integral to the fabric of what one considers home (Peters, 2011) and 'expressions of taste and identity' (Hitchcock, 2013, p. 201). Not all of them are also products of exclusively 'tourist arts' (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Many of the purchases made by the participants could be categorised as different from 'ordinary souvenirs' in their intention (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011, p. 21) and utility value (Chang et al., 2008; Sthapit & Björk, 2019; Swanson & Timothy, 2012): rugs, carpets, throws, tablecloths, teaware, and music CDs. Among them, several emerged as everyday touchpoints of connection and affirmation of affinity with the places where they had been bought and the people encountered. What could be interpreted as passive consumption, emerged as active behavioural involvement in the early stages of finding those objects the right place in the home interior, followed by their regular use, appreciation or both, as integral elements of the participants' homes:

We bought three paintings while we were over there this time and they are huge, and they are going to cost a fortune to get them framed, but they are the sort of naive art...And textiles. I've got piles of weaving and rugs. In fact, I'm looking at a gorgeous tree of life hand-painted wall-hanging that I bought on this last trip and I've run out of wall space, but it's just so beautiful and you see it being done by hand. And the place is full Indian tablecloths and rugs. (P4, India)

I brought the inevitable Turkish rug. 'Never, I'm not buying another rug, no way, never!', and of course, I bought one. In fact, this time I bought, I'm looking at it now, I bought kilim, so rather than the tile rug and bought kilim. I love it! Every day I have a shower, I can see it. It's great! I've got five rugs from Turkey. I certainly love my carpets [...] I have a glass table, because I can see the carpet through the table, so I look at it thinking 'oh, the woman making...'. (P12, Turkey)

Thus, depending on the souvenir, the 'otherness' through which tourists tend to view their hosts (Salazar, 2013) can give way to a sense of attachment and even identification. In addition to personal significance and prominence in the home, for ownership of souvenirs to be viewed as culture involvement, it is important to consider cultural significance of those objects to their producers and the host societies more broadly, and their educational significance for the tourists. Few participants shared what they learnt about cultural, historical and social meanings of the purchased objects. In addition to P12 who bought a carpet following a 'cultural experience' (P12) of visiting a women's finishing school in Turkey, 'giving them a skill that gave them some standing in their community', P3 bought his carpets after hearing about the origins of their designs. He also read up more on the differences between them after the trip. Informed purchases were also reported by P6 who, fascinated by the Russians' revived interest in 'the last Tsar and his family', bought a small icon with 'the Russian imperial family' that she witnessed locals praying to, and porcelain from 'the imperial porcelain factory'. From Myanmar, she returned with silk scarves and lacquerware, emphasizing 'this real sense of pride' with which the artisans were 'showing you how they worked and what they made, and demonstrate the level of craft' (P6).

Several other participants bought hand-made and hand-painted items, an important indicator of authenticity for tourists (Swanson & Timothy, 2012), but they never met the artists and artisans personally and only knew that they had been produced locally. As illustrated by the aforementioned example of the replica icon, objective authenticity of tourism memorabilia is not a requirement for attachment (Peters, 2011; Swanson & Timothy, 2012) and witnessing the production process does not guarantee meaningful cultural links between the producers and the products. Nevertheless, as far as culture involvement is concerned, these are

important considerations, and only those instances of ownership that fulfilled most of the criteria discussed in this section were interpreted as post-travel culture involvement with the arts through 'decorating home interior' and 'collecting works of art and craft'. It is acknowledged, however, that more of relevant examples were potentially overlooked as a limitation of data collection.

Souvenirs and collecting go hand-in-hand as tourists accumulate, i.e. 'collect' different objects from different trips, or objects of the same types from each destination, thus forming whole collections (Peters, 2011). Noting similarities between museum collections and collections of souvenirs, Hitchcock (2013, p. 201) draws attention to the importance of this touristic activity, particularly when 'some become specialist collectors and experts'. Here, a small group of participants were, indeed, found to engage in creating collections of items, further highlighting their resemblance with serious cultural tourists and their hobbies examined in serious leisure literature (Stebbins, 1996, 2015).

To illustrate this point, Table 9.6. lists the diverse items mentioned by the participants, including those the origins of which were not ascertained. It shows whether items of a particular type had been purchased regularly or for the first-time, and, where known, how many had been bought on the latest visits. Some were single repeat purchases; some bought in sets for the first time or repeatedly; and others were first-time single purchases but all adding to collections consisting of items purchased locally and in Australia. The last point refers to the items of décor bought by P3 before the trip, displaying the same 'very traditional, blue and orange tulip pattern' that he saw 'everywhere in Turkey', and to the authentic Russia silverware purchased by P6 from an Australian antiques dealer prior to the tour. A discussion of the cultural meanings associated with these objects is beyond the scope of this study, but both examples do, indeed, address culturally significant themes for Turkey (Gumuser, 2012; Sajdi, 2007; Scarce, 1980) and Russia (Yoder, 2009). In addition to the evidence of the development of aesthetic tastes for local motifs, materials and product types, two other observations can be drawn from these findings. First, repeat purchase during travel emerges as a form of culture involvement. Second, contrary to the findings reported by Collins-Kleiner and Zins (2011), interviews with repeat tourists revealed no decrease in the quantity of products bought, including of the same type, and no reduction in their significance for the tourists.

Table 9.6. Collecting works of art and craft.

Item	P3 (Turkey)	P12 (Turkey)	P4 (India)	P6 (Russia)
Paintings	-	-	Repeat (3)	First-time (2)
Icons	-	-	-	First-time (1)
Rugs and carpets	First-time (2)	Repeat (1)	Repeat	-
Throws	First-time (1)	-	-	-
Tablecloths	-	-	Repeat	-
Wall-hangings	-	-	Repeat (1)	-
Yarn (thread)	-	Repeat	-	-
Teaware	-	-	-	First-time (1)
Ceramics	First-time (1)	-	-	-
Porcelain	-	-	-	First-time (2)
Silverware	-	-	-	Repeat
Clothing	-	Repeat	-	-
Jewellery	-	-	-	First-time (1)

The cultural field of music completes the post-travel culture involvement profile of the participants in this study with two examples of listening to the music recorded on the CDs bought locally: recordings of Cuban dance beats by the local street artists and Russian church choir recordings. Both examples represent interest in central elements of Cuban (Simoni, 2012) and Russian (Pechurina, 2011) cultures and highlight the increasing difficulty of developing liking for value-laden and symbolically rich, historically-embedded, and taste-dependent domains of culture, from literature to food, and visual arts and crafts.

9.3. Sources of Involvement

9.3.1. Pre-Tour

A formal discussion of involvement sources was not part of the interview schedule, but relevant insights were obtained from both asking the participants directly about the sources of their interests in specific activities, as well as from unprompted comments offered throughout the interviews. All participants had some prior knowledge of the destination, and all examples of post-travel culture involvement were preceded by pre-travel involvement, aligned with the participants professional and personal interests, and their lifestyle. In addition, post-travel involvement habits emerged as another prominent driver. The first two sources were discussed in Chapter 3 among other key facets of leisure involvement (Kyle et al., 2007; Shen et al., 2012), while the third one has not been discussed in prior research.

Centrality of involvement to lifestyle has been conceptualised as consisting of two dimensions: meaningful impact of involvement on everyday life, and its connection to social ties (Gross & Brown, 2008; Kyle et al., 2007). As the analysis revealed, when the concept of centrality is applied to post-travel culture involvement, it becomes important to differentiate between the centrality of the involvement domain and the centrality of a particular destination

to the involvement with that domain or specific activity within it. Furthermore, as suggested by the comparison of engagement in following the news and in reading as two most frequently mentioned involvement examples, activities belonging to the same domain can also differ in centrality to lifestyle.

As illustrated by the interview with P3, centrality of activity to lifestyle does not warrant centrality of destination to that activity. Although he reported having an enduring interest in reading about late antiquity and the Middle Ages, the literature he read after the trip featured Turkey as one of many geographical locations, making it of secondary interest and the subject of situational (short-term) involvement. In contrast, staying informed about the current affairs involving Turkey was a prominent professional interest, as he advised having worked for many years in 'foreign affairs'. As far as centrality of both domain and destination are concerned, for five participants (P3, P4, P6, P8, P12) post-travel culture involvement emerged as enduring leisure pursuits, enriching their lives intellectually and in two instances also socially. Regarding social ties, their influence was found to play a significant role in the involvement of P4 and P8, as it formed an integral part of their daily interactions with family and friends. Four of them were repeat travellers, and all of them have been identified previously as serious cultural tourists. One more participant who spoke about ongoing but occasional rather than regular involvement in learning about Iran was P10 who, as most in this sub-group (except P12), travelled with a specialist tour operator.

In regards to determining centrality, all participants described the prominence of the identified post-travel culture involvement examples in their 'overall life' (Kyle & Chick, 2004, p. 245) by referring to the enduring nature of their interests, diversity of involvement domains, as well as by mentioning the length, frequency and amount of involvement, and by recalling similar involvement with other destinations (post-travel involvement habits). As for the implications of the discussed post-travel involvement examples for the effectiveness of the participants' communication with the wider multicultural community of Australia, this question was outside the scope of the interviews. Overall, few participants talked about it as an outcome of their trip. In those instances where the effects of the tours on effective intercultural communication were discussed, the participants advised that they were already working successfully in multicultural environments, or that the areas where they lived did not offer sufficient opportunity to meet people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Further commentary on this subject is offered in the discussion of barriers to involvement in Chapter 10.

Collectively, the findings demonstrate the importance of viewing involvement with different domains and even activities in isolation. While it is difficult to denote distinctive patterns,

engagement with the news and food domains was found to be mostly situational, compared to only some examples of situational involvement with the arts and the acquisition of knowledge. This finding could be explained by another driver of post-travel culture involvement - the sign value (importance to self-identity and projected self-image), assigned by just under half of all participants to their involvement activities in terms of what they said to themselves and to others about who they were and who they identified with.

These findings are consistent with the function of engagement with the arts and reading as markers of cultural capital and social status (Bennett & Gayo, 2016; Kelly et al., 2018). The importance of appearing 'knowing' (Priour & Savage, 2015, p. 308) and identifying with social groups sharing the same characteristics has already been discussed in the results on travel motivation and personal stakes. Indeed, six participants (P3, P4, P6, P8, P10, P19) travelled with specialist tour operators and drew attention not only to the depth of knowledge they gained but also to travelling in a group of 'well-travelled (P10), 'professional, quite well educated people who are interested in history and the arts' (P6). These and two more participants (P15, P20) also identified themselves as 'avid readers' (P15), further highlighting their belonging to the 'reading class' (Kelly et al., 2018) in both self-image and actual behaviour. In contrast, P18 who acknowledged that she 'didn't have a lot of books in the house' when growing up, brought back several 'picture books...just as a reminder' of where she had been. As far as involvement with the arts is concerned, although in this study the participants displayed interest predominantly in handicrafts and not in the 'high arts' that have been linked to class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984), P3 and P6 were found to be particularly proud of knowing which motifs, materials and objects could be described as typically Turkish or Russian.

For P4 and P12, engagement with handicrafts appealed to their creative side, rather than desired social status, as they enjoyed doing different crafts at home themselves, although P4 did not specify which ones. In addition, for some of them, newly developed (P15) or strengthened through repeat travel (P4, P6, P12) place identity, signified by the desire to maintain the sense of affinity with the destination and aspects of its culture, emerged as another source post-travel involvement. Further comments on this point are provided in the discussion of on-tour experiences that may have stimulated these involvement efforts.

Several participants spoke about habitually engaging in the same cultural activities after most overseas trips, revealing that it is not only preferences for travel destinations and experiences that can persist over time (Crouch et al., 2016) but also preferences for post-travel culture involvement. Among them were examples of reading up after trip to better absorb the historical facts learned during the tours (P10, P13, P20), and buying the works of

local artists and artisans (P6, P4, P12), and single instances of bringing local food and wine and trying local recipes at home (P20), creating photo books (P10), and buying music CDs (P6). In addition to highlighting the possible extent of serious cultural interests among a small segment of cultural tourists, this finding further highlights the importance of differentiating between centrality of domain and centrality of destination. Given the participants' frequent travel, post-travel culture involvement emerged as an integral part of their life in-between travels, but with most destinations occupying their attention only until the next trip.

9.3.2. On-Tour

This section draws on Chapters 7 and 8, as it focuses on two themes linking the discussed tours and post-travel culture involvement results: moments of human connection and unresolved questions. Both were identified by noting changes in involvement behaviours and analysing the narrated tour events and involvement examples for a shared core: contextual links, represented by common events, people, places, and themes. To contextualise these links here would require revisiting many of the previously discussed results on motivation, challenge, and post-travel culture involvement. To minimise repetition, a comparative table summarising the key findings on pre-travel involvement, on-tour experiences, and post-travel involvement was included in Appendix D.

The phrase 'moments of human connection' was borrowed from Robinson's (2013, p. 30) reference to the importance of 'a moment of human connection' in tourism to group together the types of contexts in which the participants experienced moments of being able to 'just relate to people... see each other as people' (P7). Thus, this theme closely intersects with the literature that examines social bonding (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012), formation of friendships (Pettigrew et al., 2011), personal heritage (Poria et al., 2006), and emotional solidarity (Ribeiro et al., 2018). Whilst many of the situation types grouped under this theme involve moments of direct interaction between the participants and hosts, this phrase allows to temporarily step away from social interaction as a key dimension of cultural tourist experience (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016) and consider the value of psychologically active immersion (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

Up to this point, the theme of connection has been touched on in the findings on motivation for 'meeting the locals'; discussed more closely in the results on personal stakes and the participants' realisations of 'something missing' from their life; and raised again in the findings on post-travel involvement in learning about the 'interconnectedness' of countries and cultures. In addition, the demanding situations analysed in Chapter 7 form a group of

moments of disruption to the participants' usual rhythm of life and worldviews, which resulted in exposure of their insecurities, fears, biases, and self-interests. It is such moments of tourists realising their 'vulnerability and dependence' (Robinson, 2013, p. 31) that have been noted to have potential for personal transformations and host-guest bonding (Watson et al., 2012).

In this study, moments of connection and moments of disruption were, indeed, found to intersect in the accounts of two thirds of the participants. Whether they acknowledged it or not, the trips challenged what they already knew; how they wanted to live and travel; how they saw themselves; and what they valued and believed in. However, not all participants who experienced moments of disruption – 'anxiety, nervousness, uneasiness and apprehension' (Robinson, 2012, p. 40), disorientation (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Reisinger, 2013a), cognitive dissonance (Christie & Mason, 2003), and covert and overt disagreement (Hottola, 2004) - were found to deal with their thoughts and feelings through seeking further knowledge during and after the trips. On the contrary, majority were found to be resolved during the trips through avoidance, distancing, rejection, looking for similarities, and seeking confirmation of their pre-travel views from local people and guides. The findings on the last two coping strategies highlight the observations stressed by Pettigrew et al. (2011) and Raymond and Hall (2008) that mutual liking can still be based on incorrect assumptions.

Nevertheless, the examples of the most proactive involvement in acquisition of additional knowledge, beyond what is shown in the news, were found to share themes with the situations that seven participants (P4, P6, P7, P10, P13, P15, P20) described as challenging, confronting, intriguing and intellectually demanding, but also as rewarding. The experiences of most of those participants, except P10, were interpreted as challenging (demanding and beneficial). Except P13 and P20, the same themes were also central to their memories of direct and indirect contact with the local people, i.e. 'moments of human connection' discussed further. It must be noted, however, that only P4 (India), P6 (Russia and Myanmar), P10 (Iran) and P15 (India) discussed the involvement examples that intersected with the most prominent demanding situations they were exposed to during their trips: Hindu spirituality; poverty and inequality between tourists and local people in India and Myanmar; religious, social and economic inequality among hosts in Myanmar; the relationship between Russia's non-democratic government and religion; and the culture of martyrdom expressed in visual reminders of the Iran-Iraq war in Iran. In contrast, P20, who also reported feeling confronted by the cremation ceremonies and disagreeing with the social structure in India, spoke about enjoying gaining a greater understanding after the trip of the historical facts he had struggled to engage with during the tour. In a similar way, P13,

who had found it difficult to keep up with the pace of the tour physically and mentally, spent some time reading up on Iran's ancient history after the trip.

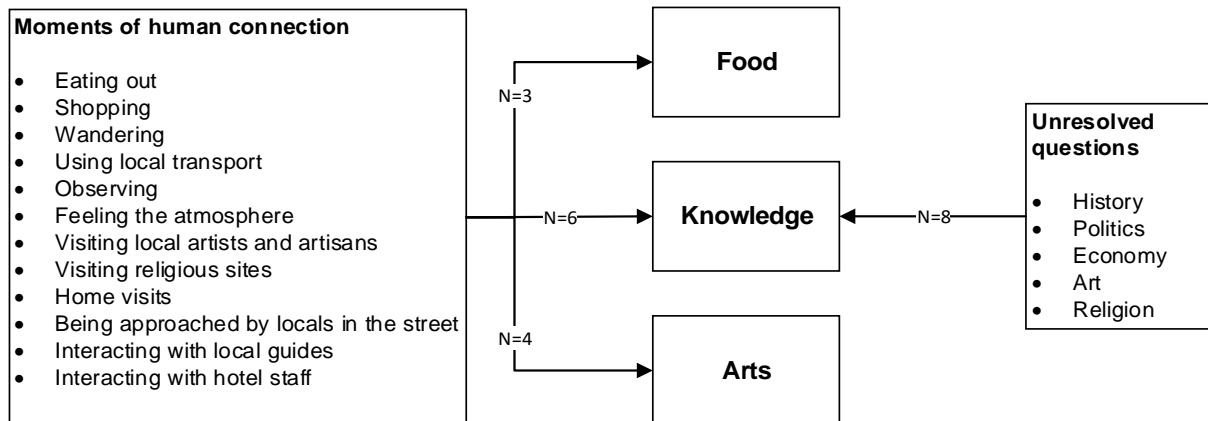


Figure 9.1. On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement.

As reflected in Figure 9.1., emotional connections that played a likely part in stimulating post-travel culture involvement were formed under a range of circumstances, discussed throughout the results chapters. Some were organised and sometimes, therefore, more extended, such as visiting local artisans or religious sites, or meeting local families in their homes during short home visits or overnight stays at guesthouses. Others were unplanned but also of variable length, from being approached by the locals for a photo or an opportunity to practice English, to the exchanges with hotel staff, shopkeepers and street vendors, and more extended conversations with local guides. It is through direct interaction with the hosts that the participants learnt not only how friendly they were but, in some cases, also what they thought of their culture, country, and government.

Most of the narrated encounters left deeply positive impressions on the participants and contributed to the development of mutual liking, emotional solidarity (Woosnam, 2011), and, in some cases, affective attachment (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012). Both 'attachment' and 'emotional solidarity' can imply a strong emotional bond and 'a sense of identification ... with someone else' (Woosnam, 2011, p. 617) or something else. A comparison of these concepts and the relationship between them is outside the scope of this discussion. Given the relative newness of Durkheim's theory of emotional solidarity to tourist studies (Woosnam, 2011), the recent paper by Ribeiro et al. (2018) can serve as a starting point in future research. Aside from the shared meaning of 'connection', however, 'solidarity' with hosts was found to be a more accurate description of the combination of 'sympathy with local dilemmas' (Hough, 2011, p. 91), agreement with the hosts and heightened concern that several participants reported.

Indeed, whilst only P4 mentioned this explicitly, the surrounding context suggests that the purchases discussed in this chapter were made not only out of aesthetic appreciation and shared interest, but also as a token of support: 'So much talent, so much skill, so underappreciated, I suspect' (P4). This comment echoes the motivation for 'solidarity souvenirs' discussed by Hitchcock (2013, p. 204): purchases made not so much for their quality, as for 'the message that counts' more. In the case of the objects reported in the arts involvement findings, in most cases the participants were able to meet the artists and artisans and witness the creative process of them being made by hand – they key indicators of authenticity applied by tourists (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Such direct contact was influential for the learning about the social and cultural significance of local handicrafts, as well as for their post-travel appreciation.

The theme of solidarity is also recognisable in some of the responses about involvement in knowledge acquisition. As discussed earlier, in several cases, the participants spoke about their concern for the well-being of their hosts and for the present and future of their countries. Pearce (2012) found it to be a common tourists' response to poverty, but here it also emerged from interviews about economically more developed countries such as Russia, Iran, and Turkey. Drawing on earlier analysis and the links summarised in Appendix D, it is argued that by either strengthening or creating new host-guest bonds, positive host-guest interactions played a part in the interest of six participants to follow the news; read about colonial histories of India and Myanmar and the political and military conflicts in which they, as well as Russia and Iran, were involved, and, in one instance, to stay informed about the current affairs by maintaining contact with the local guide. These findings illustrate the process discussed in the literature on heritage tourism whereby an interest in specific social groups can increase personal relevance of their heritage (Poria et al., 2006; Timothy, 1998).

Among them was P10 who had read a book about the Iran-Iraq war, recommended to her by one of the group members. When asked about opportunities to meet local people, she immediately recalled three instances: a brief exchange in English with 'a little girl, Rafsani' who came up to her during the tour group's picnic by the Caspian Sea and later brought to the tour bus 'a bag of ANZAC biscuits' baked by her mother who accompanied her; receiving 'a fridge magnet that had two little girls in a hijab' from a mother and a daughter at a café; and meeting a group of schoolgirls who were keen to take photos of the tour group and to be taken photos of. As P10 summarised her responses, those were the 'outstanding' opportunities. Whilst the gift-giving component is somewhat suggestive of these contact situations having been possibly staged by the tour operator, the memorability of such brief 'cultural moments' should not be undervalued (Watson et al., 2012).

In regards to attachment, it has also been noted that the concept of attachment is more commonly approached in tourism research as 'people's emotional ties to a spatial setting', rather than to other people (Lee, Kyle, et al., 2012; Tsai, 2012, p. 754). In this study, the participants' positive memories of the friendliness and helpfulness of the local people; of the strong liking and respect many developed for their local guides; and the similarities they found between them and hosts demonstrate 'the friendship potential' of group tours – one of the essential pre-conditions of successful intercultural contact (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, p. 329). However, similar to Raymond and Hall (2008, p. 537), most interactions emerged 'as providing memories, rather than lasting friendships'. Besides P10 who reported feeling more 'attached' to Iran, of all the types of hosts met by the participants, the kind of enduring attachment discussed by Cheng et al. (2016) was noted only in three more interviews about the relationships between the participants and their national or local guides. Besides P7 who contacted her local guide after the trip for her opinion on the elections in Myanmar, the second prominent example was P12's offer to her local Turkish guide to visit her in Australia.

What is afforded considerably less attention in the literature on cultural immersion and involvement is seemingly passive observation, the value of which as active embodied psychological immersion and engaged gazing has been discussed in the literature informed by the experiential (Oh et al., 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1998), phenomenological, and performance perspectives (Edensor, 1998; Rakić & Chambers, 2012; Watson et al., 2012). This literature demonstrates how some touristic pursuits may involve no or minimal 'doing', but can still be very active cognitively, emotionally, and sensorially. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 7 and summarised by P15, for many participants 'for almost a month, it was observe, observe, observe' while wandering around without the group or on guided tours, or enjoying meal breaks outside.

A prominent group of examples involves the moments of watching artists and artisans at work, including P1's 'full-on experience' of seeing how 'the chef cooks in front of you, if not explained verbally, it is visually', and getting 'to taste things' in a 'very decorous' setting. Another group highlighting the bonding power of observing involves the participants' experiences of religious sites in India and Russia that can be traced to subsequent readings, touching on the themes of religion and spirituality. Among them are the vivid memories of simultaneously confronting and uplifting embodied experiences of Varanasi and P4's comments on subsequent involvement in reading widely about India and going to a local Buddhist temple at her place of residence. Although she acknowledged that 'Buddhism is not much in evidence [in India] these days', she also reported that 'the observation of the way India is trying to overcome its difficulties' contributed to her interest in a 'more relaxed',

'Buddhist view of life' (P4) that she also observed about her extended Sri Lankan-Tamil family and their Hindu practices. Two other prominent examples of active sensorial and intellectual involvement during the trip come from the interview with P6. Not only did she seek to learn more about the history and the role of religion in Russia, but she also bought a miniature icon, and a CD with canonical music. The CD she bought on an independent visit to a local church where she enjoyed listening to the church choir, and her curiosity about the worshiping of the last Tsar and his family was awakened by the observation of local people lighting candles before their icons at different churches and cathedrals.

The significance of these findings as illustrations of moments of connection should not be overestimated, given the unique circumstances of how the relationship of these participants with India and Russia developed, and how many other participants who bonded with their hosts, including through observations and active participation, did not seek further learning. Furthermore, the somewhat essentialising tone of these and other memories analysed earlier cannot be ignored. Appreciation and liking, although are positive outcomes, do not equate to understanding, just as observing does not equate to knowing (Pettigrew et al., 2011; Raymond & Hall, 2008). What the participants paid attention to, that is the direction of their gaze (Urry & Larsen, 2011), was likely influenced by their pre-travel images of the destinations, either drawn from the general knowledge, or, as in the case of P6, from prior readings, but in both scenarios informed by 'historically inherited stereotypes' (Salazar & Graburn, 2014, p. 7). Furthermore, the sign value and consequently memorability of P6's discovery was likely amplified by being able to share it with her expert tour leader who was equally 'surprised', despite having been to Russia 12 months earlier. In his critique of specialised tours, Salazar (2013) demonstrates how similar pursuits of amateur anthropology in ethnic tourism, headed by academics as expert tour guides, can still reduce diversity to type.

At the same time, it is important to stress the existential authenticity of subjective experiences (Mkono, 2013; Kirillova et al., 2017) and that what can be interpreted as an instance of stereotyping can also be a matter of perspective. Drawing on the earlier examples, it would be incorrect to assume that all Russians are deeply religious or even 'spiritual' (P6) people, and that they all strongly identify with Russia's imperial past. Nevertheless, learning about the importance of faith and spirituality in Russia as established markers of 'Russianness' (P6) is a valuable positive outcome (Sandler, 2004). The same can be noted about the participants' observations of positivity in India despite adversity. Whilst tour operators should be prepared to correct the common assumption that 'local people accept their poverty' (Raymond & Hall, 2008, p. 538), Csikszentmihalyi (2014, p. 141) turns

to the Hindu scriptures, 'the Bhagavad Gita, that beautiful hymn to a life of detachment from material rewards', to argue for the importance of questioning material wealth as a source of happiness.

In summary, these findings on the role of brief moments of human connection in tourist experiences help illustrate how in the 'moments of being a cultural tourist', that is of feeling, thinking and relating, tourists 'may discover new feelings about themselves and the individuals, groups or nations that surround them' (Watson et al., 2012, p. 5) and seek further involvement. In isolation, some of the participants' observations can be interpreted as examples of banal tourist gazing. However, what this analysis hopes to demonstrate is that when considered in relation to specific embodied responses and learning outcomes, these moments emerge as building blocks of memorable tourist experiences and such enduring travel outcomes as post-travel interest.

9.4. Conclusion

Acculturation psychology approaches involvement on a spectrum from more and less significant behaviours and attitudes, depending on adaptational difficulty and significance of change. It examines domains of culture involvement that incorporate sources of information about people such as news and literature, as well as their religious and family values and preferred ways of living guided by those values, and taste preferences, including for food and music. Chapter 5 concluded that the acculturation approach to culture involvement appears more inclusive than the perspective on culture immersion in tourism literature as culture adoption. In this chapter, whilst the analysis also adopted a flexible approach, it still attempted to differentiate between more and less significant (deep) involvement by considering intentionality of involvement; subjective meaningfulness to the participants self-image projected to others, self-identity (sign value), and lifestyle; and depth of cultural insights, that is the meaning to the local people and what those insights tell tourists about them. Thus, while seventeen participants reported some form of post-travel culture involvement, a group of five were found to be much less involved than others, both in terms of behaviours and the meanings assigned to them. In addition, variation in the depth and breadth of involvement was noted between the discussed domains (knowledge, food, arts) and between domain-specific activities across the sample and for each participant individually. Regarding the sources of involvement, the chapter has examined thematic links to challenging experiences and other aspects of the tours, as well as alignment with personal and professional interests and lifestyle as drivers of pre-travel involvement.

Most of the involvement findings from twelve interviews were concerned with acquisition of knowledge about the destinations' history and cultural heritage, mainly through reading books. Between 3 to 12 months after their trips, the participants read up to 3 books, and the length of time was not found to have any effect on the volume of reading. Several participants also spoke about proactively following the news to stay informed about the current socio-economic and political situation in their respective destinations. Recurrent references to such learning outcomes as realisations of 'historical continuity' and 'interconnectedness' through shared history and cultural links further highlight how important it was for many participants to establish connection with the hosts.

The importance of learning about the history of host destinations has been pointed out by Jansson (2007) as an expression of a culturally immersive attitude by tourists and their desire to relate to others. Culture as 'historically derived' has also been defined by Kluckhohn (1951, p. 86), and the importance of reading as a domain of arts participation has been more recently emphasised by the Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council, 2017). However, while a strengthened or newly discovered sense of connection with other nations and cultures through history is a highly valuable positive outcome, few participants noted the implications of their learnings for understanding the significant differences they had observed between them and the hosts in attitudes to religion, in religious practices and gender relations, and in attitudes to religious and socio-economic inequality. Despite perceived similarities, core differences, in many cases, did not become subjects of further learning.

Without downplaying the significance of the knowledge acquired by the participants through their readings, including about the negative effects of colonisation, it is important to point out that the subjects of interest typically reflected the dominant politicised, romanticised and Eurocentric imaginaries reproduced by Western tourists. The recollections of contact with cultural differences and post-travel involvement findings are united by the discourse of the relationship between the secular, democratic, developed, Christian West and the totalitarian, theocratic, or developing East. In the case of theocratic Iran and the increasingly conservative Turkey, and the more secular but still perceived as non-democratic states of Russia and Myanmar, learning more about them was driven by seeking explanations for disconnection between them and the West, or searching for points of connection, underpinned by admiration for cultural achievements and empathy for the oppressed. Of all the religions discussed in the interviews, understanding the foundations of Islam as a system of beliefs was found to be of the least interest. When the participants drew comparisons with the East around the level of economic development, their readings appeared to be motivated

by empathy for the disadvantaged former British colonies of India and Myanmar, and a sense of guilt for the resulting disparity between them and the hosts. In addition, fuelled by personal existential crises, simultaneous questioning of and fascination with India's fabled wisdom and confronting but intriguing spirituality was discussed in two out of four interviews about it.

Involvement with food and the arts was significantly less popular, the latter being the least mentioned domain. In addition to intellectual involvement, several female participants were found to engage in the activities more commonly known in tourism literature as cultural consumption rather than cultural participation: decorating home interior and collecting works of art and craft. Although scholarly interest in the ownership of souvenirs has been recently revived in regards to trip memorability (Sthapit & Björk, 2019) and the 'intersection between tourism and everyday life' (Haldrup, 2017, p. 53), it was not considered during the literature review and initial data collection. It emerged as one, however, from the participants' narrations of their embodied involvement with a range of objects, central to their lifestyle and self-identity; the evidence of their identification with the host destinations; and an analysis of the souvenirs' origins and cultural meanings.

These findings and the results on reading demonstrate the limitation of the participation approach to defining culture involvement and the arbitrary nature of such quantitative measures as frequency and amount (quantity). The limited evidence of creative engagement with the arts through skill development and attendance of culture-themed events, and low social and cultural importance assigned by the participants to the consumption of ethnic food and drink, suggest that most participants in this study sought predominantly solitary and intellectual forms of involvement. These results are consistent with the following characteristics that applied in combination or in isolation to the majority of the most involved participants: enduring interest in the arts, history, or both; love of reading; travelling on the tours led by specialist tour operators; and repeat travel. However, they do not explain why some of the other participants with considerable interest in history, including with a history degree, did not engage in any further learning about Japan, Mexico, and Sri Lanka.

While the underrepresentation of the food and arts domains across the sample may be specific to the discussed destinations, the results on post-travel involvement habits and the minimal attention the participants gave to the recollections of arts participation and food consumption during the trips suggest that these domains were of secondary interest overall. Furthermore, these findings reflect the lower levels of creative participation in the arts, particularly around contemporary culture, among senior Australians (Australia Council, 2017), and may indicate a different relationship with consuming the ethnicity of fellow-

residents at home (Collins, 2015). Differences by gender also support prior research (Australia Council, 2017; Bennett et al., 1999; Crouch et al., 2016). Men were interested in acquisition of factual information and in food, while creative readings and the visual arts and crafts domain were mentioned by women, with two exceptions.

Most participants reported some prior interest in the destinations, including recurrent examples of prior situational (short-term) involvement in reading and watching documentaries and following the news. Three repeat tourists also spoke about enduring pre-travel involvement in a range of activities. As far as changes in interest are concerned, few participants reported any substantial shifts. Several had already been notably involved prior to travel, but some did mention seeking further knowledge through reading; making meaningful first-time and repeat purchases of locally made souvenirs; and engaging in new activities they had not pursued before in relation to the discussed destinations. Many participants also spoke about being impressed with how friendly local people were and experiencing an increased interest in the political future of their countries. Adoption of new behaviours and worldviews into everyday life was excluded from the definition of post-travel culture involvement in the conceptual framework as an unlikely outcome in tourism context. Although, it was, indeed, reported by very few participants, these findings demonstrate the importance of including significant shifts in cultural orientations into possible tourism outcomes.

To summarise the spectrum of involvement domains and activities and the extent of change, the results revealed a gradual decrease in interested participants, consistent with Stephenson's (2000, p. 78) categorisation of acculturation from the superficial level of 'learning and forgetting of historical facts and traditions' to the significant level of involvement with host culture 'beliefs, values and norms'. However, the results on changes in diet as superficial (Stephenson, 2000) were inconclusive. While some participants assigned low importance to their self-identity and low cultural significance to ethnic food consumption, others noted such changes to be significant, in relation to their own involvement and in general.

Regarding on-tour sources of involvement, the chapter has discussed the findings on the influence of both moments of connection, such as organised and unplanned contact with hosts, and moments of disruption, that is situations that taxed the limits of the participants' tolerance and understanding. A third of participants who had travelled with three out of four tour operators to India, Myanmar, Iran and Russia were found to build on their pre-travel knowledge of the destinations by seeking answers to the questions that had arisen from moments of intellectual and emotional challenge during the tours.

Chapter 10 Conclusions

10.1. Contributions and Directions for Future Research

10.1.1. Challenge as a Pathway to Personal Relevance

'The point is that an empathetic and compassionate understanding of the worlds beyond our own places may be best grounded in a love of a particular place to which I myself belong. In this way, we may recognize that what we need in our everyday world is parallels in the worlds of others' (Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 50).

'When we apply the premise of mutual respect, separateness is actually a precondition of dialogue' (Visvanathan, 2017, p. 277).

Finding personal relevance lies at the core of tourists' bonding with places, people and cultures (McIntosh et al., 2002; Timothy, 1998). An initial exploration of the factors contributing to bonding, particularly in relation to tourists' renegotiation of their cultural identities towards 'embracement of multiple cultural norms' (Cohen, 2010b, p. 292), led to the literature discussing the transformative potential of difficult touristic experiences and their implications for improved cross-cultural understanding (Christie & Mason, 2003; Kirillova et al., 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Further reading on intercultural contact and associated difficulties experienced by tourists and other short-term travellers pointed to acculturation literature and the theories informing it. This knowledge helped refine the focus of this study and bring together broad-ranging insights from tourism research on transformative and lifestyle travel; adventure, backpacking and voluntourism; cultural tourism; dark tourism; culture shock; memorable tourist experiences, and from other disciplines.

As much as the study of tourism is about host-guest contact and its impacts on both, the effects of international travel on how tourists engage with other cultures when they return home have been largely overlooked. Drawing on the interdisciplinary literature that argues for more research on the benefits of disorienting experiences and manageable stress for human connection, learning and cultural adaptation, this study has developed a novel conceptual framework to address this gap by empirically exploring a previously unexamined relationship between post-travel culture involvement and perceived challenge (Tikhonova et al., 2016, 2018). In addition to empirical insights, it also contributes a comparative analysis of the research on challenge, involvement and related concepts from leisure and tourism studies; anthropology; positive, cognitive appraisal, social and acculturation psychology; and education. With a focus on small group cultural travel as an underappreciated travel mode

with potential for supporting the proposed relationship, the study offers several methodological, conceptual and theoretical contributions and practical implications.

In tourism research, the theories of acculturation and stress, appraisal and coping are still in an emergent phase (Jordan & Vogt, 2017b; Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013; Rasmi et al., 2014; Schuster et al., 2006; Zheng, Ritchie, Benckendorff, & Bao, 2019), and Chapters 3, 4 and 5 offer several conceptual and theoretical contributions on their integration with extant tourism literature. The main one is a comparison of existing operationalisations of challenge in psychology literature and the uses of this term in empirical tourism research. Chapter 5 concluded that the stress appraisal perspective on challenge as a positive cognitive evaluation of an experience as substantially effortful and promising opportunities for personal gain was the most comprehensive. It was also found relevant to the study of difficult situations of intercultural contact and their outcomes. Indeed, the combination of secondary appraisal of substantial perceived effort and primary appraisals of high personal significance (motivation relevance, congruence and ego-involvement) was found to differentiate challenge as stress appraisal and associated psychological state from perceived difficulty and external stressors, as well as from the flow state and its perceived effortlessness.

Regarding personal relevance, the study contributes to a more holistic understanding of how international tourists can be expected to relate to 'the worlds of others' (Seamon & Sowers, 2008, p. 50). As illustrated in Figure 10.1., it brings together two emergent pathways, 'what we admire in others that we find missing from own lives', and 'what we struggle to cope with', and those widely discussed in the literature, 'what we have in common' (heritage, history, values, lifestyles, interests, social ties, shared experiences) and 'what we empathise with'. The idea that both moments of connection and moments of disruption play important roles in touristic experiences has been shared before (Christie & Mason, 2003; Robinson, 2013; Waterton et al., 2012). This study helps advance these arguments with rich empirical evidence of contextual links between challenge and post-travel involvement, highlighted by intersecting opportunities for connection through perceived similarities, empathy and learning lessons, and psychological discomfort, manifested in unease, questioning and disagreement. Thus, rather than prioritising sameness over difference and 'togetherness' over 'otherness' (Cloquet & Diekmann, 2015), it calls for creating spaces for tourists to experience and reflect on both. It also challenges the hegemony of positive emotions in tourism (Nawijn & Biran, 2018), by discussing the benefits of not only feeling confronted by significant social, cultural, economic and political differences, but also of reflecting on the problems of one's home society and home culture. Indeed, as found in this study, such

intentional dwelling on ‘something missing’ (Robledo & Batle, 2017, p. 1737) from one’s life and worldviews may conflict with touristic pursuits of pleasure and other self-interests. However, when framed as opportunities to learn from hosts as positive examples, it can help trigger transformation of tourists’ relationship not only with their selves but also with other individuals, groups, and cultures.

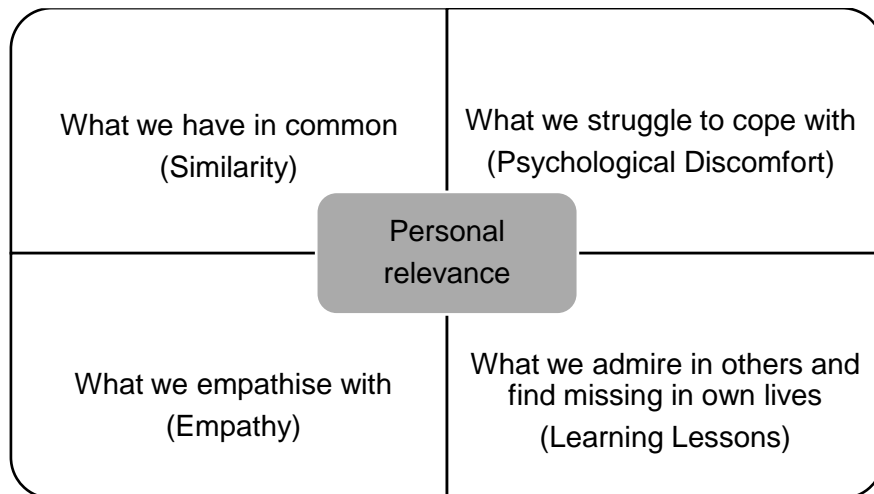


Figure 10.1. Pathways to personal relevance.

To briefly summarise the conclusions drawn from this study specifically about the place of challenge in the experiences of group tourists and its relationship with post-travel culture involvement, mental challenge (emotional, intellectual, and intercultural) was found to be a prominent factor contributing to involvement in further knowledge acquisition. Post-travel culture involvement can follow where its pursuit results in some form of benefit. In this study, the most frequently mentioned benefits were hedonic pleasure from consuming ethnic food and drink; aesthetic pleasure from collecting and decorating home with locally purchased art and crafts; and intellectual satisfaction from acquiring further knowledge, mainly through reading. Rarer examples included the benefit of social interaction from culture learning through social networks; and spiritual fulfilment from attending courses at a local temple, as well as from reading.

To offer alternative explanations, rather than focusing solely on challenge, the study has considered a range of possible sources of post-travel culture involvement, also contributing to perception of associated benefits. Consistent with involvement literature, it has established that one important group of antecedents is alignment with personal tastes, interests, and lifestyle. In addition, the study has identified a factor that has not been discussed in current literature: post-travel involvement habits as habitual short-term involvement in-between trips. A key driver that emerged from the interviews is the presence

of unresolved questions about oneself and others that can arise before or during the trip and be answered through further culture involvement in the home country. Such questions were observed in the interviews with those participants who sought intellectual satisfaction and, in few instances, spiritual fulfilment, motivated by a combination motives: personal development, self-actualization, and motives related to learning about the destination, its history, culture, and people.

The findings suggest that when tourists' views on others and themselves are tested by external realities, they are more likely to evaluate their experiences as challenging (effortful and beneficial) and seek further involvement, *if* they see them as part of their learning journey. Whether or not they were seen as such was found to be influenced by tourists' relationship with notion and the state of challenge in general and in that particular moment in time, depending on their personal stakes in the experience: their motivation to travel (including to experience challenge and the type(s) of learning sought); personal life circumstances; self-interests; and desired self-image. In particular, it was found that when tourists seek to challenge only their abilities to travel solo (without family and friends), navigate unfamiliar environments, converse with strangers, and overcome language barriers – in other words, seek challenge as the more widely researched mastery of new environments and travel-related skills and abilities – they are less likely to engage in post-travel culture involvement than those who seek or respond to unexpected situations that challenge their intellectual abilities, worldviews, or self-image. As for the development of creative skills, although it is a prominent theme in the literature on challenge (Richards & Wilson, 2006; Tan et al., 2013), the participants in this study did not discuss any examples of challenge on this level.

Despite the eclectic nature of the analysed travel circumstances and responses to them, the study has revealed that when it comes to the effort required to understand significantly different worldviews, perception of benefits can be delayed, if they are to be perceived at all, beyond acknowledgements of general awareness of what is possible in other cultures. The role of religion in private and public life emerged as the source of most prominent discomfort, stress, and disagreement. The life domains discussed by the participants included religious practices (frequency of praying and death-related rituals), dress norms, gender relations, social inequalities, and suffering (martyrdom), as well as the use of public resources for religious heritage conservation and government actions. In contrast, everyday activities such as using local transport, shopping and ordering meals; casual interactions; and physically demanding activities were found more likely to be appraised as simultaneously somewhat effortful and enjoyable.

Several noteworthy implications can be drawn from these findings. Differences in attitudes to religion emerged as a dominant theme and a key individual characteristic of tourists, requiring closer attention from tourism scholars and practitioners interested not only specifically in religious tourism but any travel to destinations where religion forms very visible fabric of life. As demonstrated by this study, even widely travelled and educated professionals with prior experience of travel to similar cultural contexts can find it difficult to let go of entrenched biases and stereotypes. One example is the difference in the lenses of religiosity and spirituality applied by Australian tourists in this study to Islam in Turkey, Iran, and Egypt, and other religions, here Hinduism and Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and India; Orthodox Christianity in Egypt and Russia, and syncretism in Mexico and Cuba. Pre-conceived ideas, however, is not the only reason why it is important to understand tourists' attitudes to religion. The other one is the combination of their interest in the subject of religion; the importance of religion to many societies and minority ethnic groups; and the presence of objective differences that can be difficult not only to reconcile, but to even openly discuss.

The findings on group tourists' experiences of different religions contribute empirical insights on the other side of intimate intercultural contact and the character and place of truly disorienting dilemmas in international tourism and tourists' approaches to resolving them (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018). They also shed light on tourists' perspectives on cultural difference, challenge and tolerance, and the prominence of such protective and sometimes defensive coping strategies as acceptance, avoidance, distancing, looking for similarities and emphasising other positives to reduce stress or minimise mild psychological discomfort at the expense of deeper and further involvement. Challenge is an appraisal of personal significance, but this study demonstrates how such approaches to coping can carry the opposite effect on the personal relevance of intercultural encounters.

In addition to the earlier mentioned perspective on difference as a source of learning lessons, the responses were found to fall into three more categories: reporting of personal reactions to significant differences; emphasising similarities; and declarations of being undisturbed by difference. Two thirds of the sample spoke of feeling challenged by new environments as something that no longer applied to them and that was perceived as a sign of weakness, inexperience, and lack of education. In other words, many interpreted 'challenge' as an undesirable feeling or a source of excessive difficulty and discomfort. These findings illustrate how tourists' sociocultural competencies and self-image can, indeed, be tested by cultural journeys (Hirschorn & Hefferon, 2013; Weber, 2001). Many participants were more concerned with protecting their desired self-image as experienced

travellers and the right to travel in comfort to developing countries than with acknowledging feeling surprised or discomforted by the observed differences, including, in fewer cases, by poor living conditions. Experiencing surprise, however, is a pre-cursor of disorientation and is essential to learning (Furnham, 2010).

The study offers some answers to the question raised in Chapter 2 about the relationship between tourist motivation for learning about other cultures and the mental effort they are prepared to invest, and expands the understanding of tourist learning in different contexts (Falk et al., 2012; Packer & Ballantyne, 2004; Van Winkle & Lagay, 2012). The findings suggest that due to significant identity implications, challenge is much less likely to be experienced around gaining greater intercultural understanding and is more aligned with the development of abilities and skills other than seeing the world through a different set of lenses. They also support Rasmi et al.'s (2014) findings about the problematic tendency among tourists to pursue the marginalisation acculturation strategy. Whilst participants in this study sought cultural immersion through direct social contact, they simultaneously sought to marginalise. By temporarily accepting that it was not going to be like home, they let go of their home culture but also chose to separate from the host culture by detaching themselves psychologically from being affected by the experienced differences.

In addition, the importance of tolerance communicated by the participants directly and the concern about appearing tolerant, inferred from their responses, validate the observation shared by a transformative travel company in Soulard et al. (2019, p. 100) that from their experience, 'a lot of people think that culture shock means that they're not good at traveling or there's some sort of stigma about it'. While tolerance is a highly desirable tourist characteristic (Raymond & Hall, 2008; Tomljenovic, 2010) facilitating successful intercultural contact, the reported challenge and post-travel culture involvement findings suggest that tourists' heightened concern with being tolerant can also act as a barrier to both. An exploration of tourist perspectives on difference, tolerance, acceptance, embracement, respect, and multiculturalism may help advance the understanding of the moral dilemmas faced by postmodern tourists and their influence on the patterns of culture consumption in tourism. It may also help counterbalance the deterministic perspective on the dominance of personality traits, including the desire for challenge (Weissinger & Bandalos, 1995), the need for cognition (Packer & Ballantyne, 2002), and flexibility and open-mindedness (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2013).

An analysis of the secularisation and individualisation trends in Western societies (Pew Research Centre, 2018; Stone, 2009a), including Australia (Bouma, 2018; Mccrindle Research, 2017), and the evidence of simultaneous perception of spiritual void, moral

confusion, and cultural identity crisis from this study and prior research, has highlighted the complex relationship of Western tourists with religion and spirituality. Yet, tentative empirical observations on tours to Iran, Egypt and Turkey and the perspectives of local guides, and tour leaders and tourists from Western secular liberal democracies, placing high value on autonomy, individual freedoms and materialism, suggest that this is still a challenging aspect of not only touristic experiences but also group tour operations (Tikhonova et al., 2019)⁷.

Despite the criticism of the shielded nature of group tours, the social support they are able to provide has also been acknowledged as an important moderator of cultural adaptation (Cohen, 1985; Ong & Ward, 2005; Soulard et al., 2019; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). The study has reaffirmed prior research findings that tour guides can significantly enhance touristic experiences by offering insider perspectives, arranging special cultural experiences, and helping the tourists adjust to unfamiliar ways of living. It has also found, however, that local guides' views and behaviours can complicate their role as cultural translators, making them the sources of the very contentions the guides are there to help tourists resolve in particularly demanding contexts. In this study, professional local guides who led the tours either on their own or together with Australian tour leaders emerged from the participants' recollections of their trips not as neutral 'purveyors of information' (Quinn & Ryan, 2016, p. 323) and apolitical cultural mediators but as cultural brokers, having the power to influence tourists' attitudes to host destinations in one direction or another.

Examples of cultural brokerage included sharing political and religious views on Iran and Turkey with which participants could identify more easily, but at the expense of more difficult to understand perspectives; justifying problematic social structures in India; and, overall, controlling the depth and breadth of shared insights in a mix of destinations. The latter point also applies to the information overload experienced by the participants. As much as tour operators and even local guides themselves may prefer to avoid or minimise discussions of sensitive, controversial and, in some contexts, dangerous topics (Ong et al., 2014; Quinn & Ryan, 2016; Walker & Moscardo, 2016), this is not always possible. The interviews highlighted how guides' insider perspectives can be influenced by their own socio-economic status, religious and political views that they may not want to withhold or of which they may not always be conscious. These findings reveal the complexity of group tour dynamics in regards to tourists-guides interactions. On one hand, the involvement of local guides in leading small group tours almost guarantees multiple opportunities for host-guest

⁷ I conducted and analysed the interviews and wrote the first draft that required some conceptual and editing input from both co-authors. My contribution to this publication was 70%.

interactions where local guides act as hosts. On the other hand, tourists travelling in small organised groups can never fully escape the group environment and its influence on them.

The political aspect of tour guiding; the expectation that professional guides in general should be sensitive to a range of perspectives; and the strains associated with fulfilling their multiple roles have been discussed in prior research (Cohen, 1985; Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013; Ong et al., 2014; Quinn & Ryan, 2016). The literature has also examined the influence of the socio-economic background of local guides, although mostly in relation to the inequality between them and tourists (Salazar, 2005, 2013) and not between local guides and other local people (Diekmann & Chowdhary, 2015), including on-site local guides, as observed in the present study. What sets this study apart is the type of guides in question, that is local guides who stay with small tour groups for extended periods of time of two weeks or more. The implications of the length and dimensions of contact between such guides and their passengers for performing the role of 'transformative tourism practitioners' (Souldard et al., 2019) is one direction for future research.

As noted earlier, the research on transformative travel continues to grow. The recent study by Souldard et al. (2019) is a significant step forward in acknowledging the more learning-oriented types of group travel and understanding their dynamics from the perspectives of not only tourists but also the stakeholders responsible for development of itineraries. Further research, however, is still required to include the perspectives of local guides who, in the network of power relations formed by tourists, and inbound and outbound tour operators remain in a disadvantaged position (Cetin & Yarkan, 2017). Another point to consider when discussing transformative tour guiding and the role of local guides in challenging touristic experiences is the expectation of impartiality through adoption of a cosmopolitan identity (Salazar & Graburn, 2014) in the pursuit of what Ong et al. (2014, p. 227) describe as 'the homo turismo', or an idealised guide. Future research could investigate how local tour leaders on extended small group tours negotiate their personal views and tour guiding responsibilities around cultural mediation, as well as their training needs, and how from both empirical and theoretical standpoints, transformative guiding and the theory of transformative learning fit with this and other related roles (Black, Weiler, & Chen, 2019). In the absence of evidence of significant transformations experienced by tourists (Coghlan & Weiler, 2018; Walker & Moscardo, 2016), these lines of inquiry could be particularly beneficial to clarifying the meaning of and potential for transformation in tourism. Pursuing these research directions in a variety of cultural contexts may also help gain a more holistic understanding of the ethical challenges faced by tour operators and their employees in offering cultural advice on sensitive matters.

By integrating insights from a wide body of interdisciplinary literature into a conceptual framework informed by the stress perspectives on culture involvement and challenge, the thesis helps advance Iwasaki and Schneider's (2003, p. 107) argument that 'stress and coping have the potential to be a common language for many researchers with diverse interests, and it thus leads to opportunities for enhanced communication and understanding, as well as for possible collaborations'. As this study illustrates, the metatheory of stress, appraisal and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and its vocabulary enable a holistic examination of cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses to the external environment, their moderators, and outcomes, and offer a novel, comprehensive and systematic approach to the study of touristic experiences.

This study is also the first one in tourism to have applied the stress, appraisal and coping framework to qualitative research design. Qualitative design allowed to 'go beyond the superficial measurement of coping' and analyse the 'personal significance' or the 'relational meanings' of the situations that largely determine the stress and coping response (Lazarus, 2006, p. 125). Quantitative retrospective measures of stress are questionable, given that participant answers appear to strongly depend on how they feel at the time; how they interpret the purpose of the question; and the impression they may want to create (social desirability). Future research may benefit from asking open-ended questions about amount of stress and effort to encourage participants to think in those terms and clarify what they understand by those terms but should be mindful of such questions disrupting interview flow.

The examination of anticipatory stress appraisals of threat and challenge and outcome appraisals of harm/loss and benefit is particularly helpful for understanding mixed emotions. Nawijn and Biran (2018) highlight the limitations of the binary positive-negative approach to categorising affective responses, arguing that mixed emotions are a significantly overlooked research area. Indeed, the post-trip memories analysed in this study have shown how tourists can continue to feel a similar mix of emotions about specific stressors and situations even after those events have passed. These findings also suggest that when applied to tourism contexts, the understanding of challenge as appraisal of anticipatory stress may need to be revised and expanded to the outcome stage when the outcomes are ambiguous, and a combination of threat and benefit emotions apply.

Future research could contribute to the wider application of the meta-theory by suggesting how the analysis methods and tools used in this thesis can be further improved to increase feasibility of qualitative analysis of stress appraisals by making it more effective and efficient. Many of the analytical strategies used here were borrowed from Miles et al. (2014) who developed their tool kit of qualitative data analysis methods on the basis of their education

research. A tool kit developed for studies concerned with complex extended person-environment interactions could help address not only the multiple subareas of the stress, appraisal and coping framework but also its three main assumptions of 'transaction, process, and context' (Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002, p. 3).

To conclude, while it is common to approach qualitative research as a steppingstone to testing locally observed causality on larger samples, it would be more beneficial to replicate the present study on single destinations or whole regions and samples of different ages and cultural backgrounds. This approach would help further illuminate the complexity of individual subjective experiences, and interpersonal and intrapersonal differences, while advancing the knowledge of 'general mechanisms that transcend context' (Lazarus, 2006, p. 9).

10.1.2. Re(defining) Culture Involvement: The Problem of Ideal Scenarios

What is understood by culture in a given study determines what is reported in its results, including what is understood as culture involvement. Chapter 2 reviewed several approaches to defining culture and cultural tourism, observing that participation in culturally-marked activities is not the same as culturally-motivated participation. Therefore, during analysis of post-travel involvement results, the following question arose: Should post-travel culture involvement only be acknowledged when an individual engages in an activity because of its connection to the culture they previously experienced during travel; what that engagement tells them about it; and how it helps them maintain the bond they developed, or if mundane or social reasons such as cooking a meal at home or eating out without perceiving those activities as culture involvement can also be counted, providing there is some cultural context involved? While this thesis has examined examples of the latter, given the exploratory nature of the study, it has also applied criteria for differentiating between more and less significant (deep) involvement.

Chapter 2 revealed that to date, when discussing the depth of experience, learning and understanding, cultural tourism literature has only engaged with the following indicators: strength of motivation and intentionality; subjective assessment of activities as more and less learning-oriented, depending on their formal/informal and active/passive nature; length and frequency of host-guest contact, and an ambiguous notion of intimacy (McKercher et al., 2002; Pizam et al., 2000; Vong, 2016). Thus, besides intentionality of involvement, this study contributes to cultural tourism literature by proposing the following criteria for assessing the depth of involvement: subjective meaningfulness to the participants self-image and everyday life, and depth of cultural insights. The latter is understood as the meaning of

cultural insights to hosts and what those insights tell tourists about them. Therefore, tourist destinations and attractions that wish to understand the depth of tourist engagement with them or identify the proportion of culturally-motivated tourists should consider incorporating questions about key learning outcomes and personal meaningfulness of acquired knowledge to tourists. However, while the qualitative analysis has demonstrated the importance of addressing the aforementioned parameters, it has also highlighted the difficulty of this task in terms of applying specialist knowledge of relevant historical and cultural contexts, and the time-intensive nature of such work. Therefore, future research can help the industry by examining how these criteria can be effectively operationalised for survey research and adopted to specific cultural contexts with some modifications.

The study findings on involvement and its on-tour sources also hold implications for pursuing through research and practice ideal forms of cultural participation and ideal (quality) contact circumstances, as assessed using the aforementioned indicators, as well as the conditions of successful intercultural contact from social psychology (Pettigrew et al., 2011) and transformative learning literature (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). Chapter 2 discussed the decreasing popularity of the 'high arts' (Smith & Richards, 2013a), perceived by mainstream society as the pursuit of the educated and well-off elite with which many of the participants in the present study were found to identify. Although anecdotal, some of the comments shared by the tourists in this study suggest that an almost opposite situation can apply to the activities that are perceived as more mundane and normalised and, consequently, as less significant in culture involvement terms. From this study, food emerged as one such domain. A similar finding has been reported by the Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council, 2017) in regards to reading and listening to music at home as the most accessible and popular activities that were found to be significantly under-appreciated as forms of arts participation. Yet, as demonstrated in this thesis, both can have positive implications for emotional bonding, finding sameness and reaching greater understanding of other cultures and their local socio-economic and political contexts. By viewing souvenir ownership, also an underappreciated activity, through the lens of culture involvement, the thesis also draws attention to the undervalued 'importance of objects in modern tourism (Collins-Kleiner & Zins, 2011, p. 26) and further highlights the need for more research on the 'blurring of boundaries between tourists, residents and day visitors' (Xie, 2018, p. 51).

Besides the more obvious barriers to post-travel culture involvement such as misalignment with personal interests, novelty-seeking, repeat travel, and falling back into the routine, future studies may, therefore, consider perceived availability of opportunities for cultural participation, which has direct implications for domestic tourism in multicultural societies. The

findings of this study suggest that in addition to the differences in perceived opportunities between tourists from regional areas and capital cities, there is a need for further research into how domestic tourists negotiate the meanings of everyday spaces such as cafes and restaurants; dedicated tourism spaces; and such hybrid sites as locally organised ethnic markets, fairs and celebrations as places of intercultural contact and tourism consumption. While some spaces may be associated with their cultural heritage only in spirit, others are actively used by local ethnic groups to safely practice their home culture (Collins, 2015). The growing research on the 'interrelationship between tourism, migration, ethnic diversity and place' (Hall & Rath, 2007, p. 6) has focused on the intrusive nature of ethnic tourism, including in multicultural urban centres, and the perspectives of local ethnic communities (Collins, 2015; Reisinger & Mouffakir, 2015). It has also examined how tourists and locals negotiate the authenticity of ethnic precincts, demonstrating how resulting expectations of both sides may function as barriers to visitation. The knowledge of positive tourism impacts can be enriched by exploring the perspectives of domestic visitors as outsiders on cultural appropriation, hybridisation, walking the fine line 'between voyeurism, interest and education' (Diekmann & Smith, 2015, p. 15), and the barriers to meaningful and respectful cultural participation.

Regarding the conditions for effective intercultural contact, many of them were fulfilled during the analysed tours, enabled by their small group size, the involvement of local guides, and the balance of group and free time. These conditions encompass tourists' positive attitudes towards hosts, including intercultural tolerance as a key personal stake; positive attitudes of residents towards tourists; opportunities for intimate interactions during organised activities, independent explorations, and interactions with local guides; and establishment of not only common interests and other similarities, such as the value of friendliness, hospitality, and education, but also learning lessons concerning spirituality, family and community ties, positivity, respect for older people, and other characteristics of the hosts identified by the tourists as missing from their life in Australia. Yet, only a small group of highly learning-motivated participants were found to be interested in what their hosts may think, beyond what the tourists observed and had been told by the guides.

There is little doubt that tourism operators should aim to facilitate intercultural contact founded on mutual respect and kindness, and opportunities for cooperation and exchange of knowledge through extended contact that helps build trust and connection and break down psychological barriers. As found in this study, establishing this trust was critical for self-disclosure on both sides, which is 'an important mediator of intergroup contact's positive effects' (Pettigrew et al., 2011, p. 276). Ensuring equality, however, in the context of tourism

is particularly important (Kende et al., 2017) but difficult to achieve, given that the hosts, even in economically highly developed countries, are dependent on the tourists' spending and feedback (Cetin & Yarcan, 2017; Ong et al., 2014).

This study supports the literature that highlights the importance of motivation for seeking contact rather than the travel form (Tomljenovic, 2010; Woosnam, 2011). Although the analysed itineraries were quite structured and required the participants to act as a group, the tourists in this study sought autonomy whenever needed. Similar to the distinction between culturally-themed activities and culturally-motivated travel, this thesis has highlighted that tourists travelling in groups can be quite independently-minded while still being classified as 'group tourists' by the travel mode. Preoccupation with ideal travel modes and contact situations can deprive both tourists and hosts of opportunities to connect altogether. What were perceived by some participants as superficial exchanges with the local members of the tourism industry, for others were moments, pivotal to the development of emotional solidarity, attachment, and post-travel involvement. In regards to the organised contact opportunities, while it is possible that some of the home visits were staged, others were not. Thus, future tourism research on intercultural exchange should pay close attention to both extended contact situations and brief moments of connection between tourists and hosts and focus on the ways to maximise their potential to yield positive outcomes. As Woosnam (2011, p. 617) argues, 'one way of transcending the view of residents and tourists reduced to polar opposites with divergent socioeconomic statuses, possessing little in common, whose relationship is predicated on power inequalities and gazing at the Other, is to embrace the potential for emotional solidarity to exist between each'.

Drawing on the literature on domestic tourism and cultural participation research outside tourism studies, Chapter 1 suggested that post-travel culture involvement may contribute to improved social cohesion. A close examination of such benefits was discovered to be beyond the scope of the interviews, and the few comments shared by some participants were insufficient to draw informed conclusions. Therefore, future research may inquire specifically into how different post-travel involvement activities may additionally contribute to improved intercultural communication and cooperation. Moreover, a post-travel survey on involvement behaviours of international tourists from a range of multicultural societies and with varied leisure interests in daily life, professional and educational background, and of different age could help understand preferred patterns of engagement with different cultures after travel. These findings may also help tour operators provide more targeted advice on post-travel culture involvement opportunities.

10.2. Limitations

The limitations of this study have been made transparent throughout the thesis. Chapter 6 discussed the advantages and disadvantages of purposive tour sampling; the accuracy of recall and reappraisal of past events in retrospective collection of self-reported data; the difference between experiencing and being aware of the experience; the number of abstract theoretical concepts examined; and using qualitative methodology for researching local causality. The methodological and theoretical questions surrounding qualitative analysis of experience narratives for emotional, cognitive and coping responses to stress were examined in Chapters 6 and 7. The purpose of this section is to reflect on the study holistically and discuss the limitations that emerged from data collection and analysis: diversity of contexts, concepts and themes; socio-demographic homogeneity of the sample; and the extent of engagement with the critical debates around the notions of difference and 'otherness'; analysis of tour itineraries; and participant profile.

The study was developed with the understanding that the notion of difference lies at the core of tourist motivation to travel; that the interest in it can bring tourists and hosts together, but can also keep them apart; and that there is a need for further research in addressing the latter issue. It also aimed to address the gap in the knowledge about postmodern group travel by stepping away from the perpetual criticism of this mode of travel as shallow mass tourism and instead by focusing on the positive changes in the industry.

The study was subsequently designed to research the relationship between the two key concepts, challenge and post-travel culture involvement, with cultural difference and small-group cultural tours as research context. To narrow the geographical and cultural focus for a more nuanced and in-depth discussion, Russia and Australia were initially chosen as the destination and the country of origin. The choice was based on the perception of Russia by English-speaking tourists as significantly different (McNair, 2000; Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008) and on the personal experience and knowledge of the differences between both countries by the author as a first-generation Russian migrant who, by then, had lived in Australia for eight years. Critical debates surrounding touristic pursuits of difference were viewed as outside the scope of the study for two reasons. First, the study intended to offer a fresh and pragmatic perspective on group travel, with all its limitations. Second, it is a personal conviction of the author, supported by extensive research on intercultural contact (Bell et al., 2016; Hottola, 2004; Ward et al., 2001), that differences between individuals and groups are a fact of life, and that misunderstandings can become opportunities for mutual enrichment, given the right intention (Visvanathan, 2017).

When in 2015 pre-selected Australian operators of the tours to Russia advised that the downing of a civilian airplane over the Ukraine and the ban on gay parades in Russia resulted in them losing half of their bookings and that they would not be able to recruit enough participants, a decision was made to broaden the spectrum of possible destinations to move the project forward. Pre-selection of tours and, as a result, destinations, was still necessary to reduce the burden of recruitment on tour operators and plan for sub-groups of responses by destination. In addition, the screening question about perceived significance of cultural difference was introduced to ensure that those Australian tourists who self-selected themselves for the study, indeed, had travelled to places that they found significantly different to Australia 'based on the objective and subjective elements of the culture that they consider salient to their evaluation' (Rasmi et al., 2014, p. 313). The initial interest in the value of experiencing difference as a pathway to finding sameness carried through the project, but as data collection progressed, it became increasingly obvious that the analysis would call for a more critical approach than first intended.

Asking the participants to reflect on the significance of cultural difference potentially encouraged them to think in terms of stereotypes, and future tourism research drawing on acculturation literature should be mindful of this implication. In turn, the moderately critical approach to the analysis of statements suggesting the participants' lack of awareness, knowledge and sensitivity could be condemned for attempting to justify the tourist gaze. However, these 'otherness'-focused conversations helped open up discussions about the participants' diverse perspectives on difference and examples of specific differences unresolved by previous travel and requiring radical shifts in worldviews. As Berry (2006a, p. 296) observes, 'researchers often presume to know what acculturating individuals want'. The approach adopted in this study helped illuminate subjective person-environment relationships, rather than apply a-priori labelling of different contexts as more and less challenging. Reasonable effort was also made to acknowledge any evidence of ignorance, inaccuracy, resentment, stereotyping, and antagonistic viewpoints. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the full extent of the participants' views on the issues they raised and their personal investment in them could not be adequately addressed within the interview time to which they committed themselves. How much of what they said was influenced by deeply held values and beliefs; by a confluence of situational factors in a particular moment in time; and by dominant tourism imaginaries could not be fully ascertained. Clarifications were sought where possible, and several participants were willing to converse for much longer and even participated in second interviews, but some made it clear that even one hour was already a significant investment of their time. Therefore, a

more critical approach could not be justified. Instead, preference was given to considering a spectrum of possible interpretations of the views expressed by the participants.

Regarding the number of destinations, the study has observed important regional commonalities in tourists' perceptions of groups of destinations sharing some cultural similarities. In addition, inclusion of wide-ranging contexts helped identify recurrent themes, such as attitudes to religion, that 'cut across' that diversity, thus highlighting their importance (Ritchie et al., 2014 p. 114). However, the variety of socio-economic, political and cultural contexts also meant that the full extent of their complexities could not be addressed in significant depth. While the study was designed with the goal to recruit enough participants in order to form sufficiently large sub-groups of 5-10 participants by destination, the largest sub-groups in the actual sample consisted of four participants who had visited Sri Lanka and Italy, and five destinations (Cuba, Mexico, Russia, Italy, Egypt) were represented only by one interview each. Moreover, the interviewer's inexperience with many of the examined destinations also may have affected the accuracy of interpretation. At the same time, it is hoped that this limitation created room for greater impartiality. It also helped collect rich data, as the participants assumed the role of experts not only in their experiences but also in the destinations discussed.

The time invested into familiarisation with relevant psychology theories may have also affected the depth of cultural analysis, as it was particularly challenging to balance the analysis for the underlying psychological processes with the discussion of emerging complex social issues and the significance of tourists' learnings for cross-cultural understanding. In particular, the analysis of the multiple components of the stress, appraisal and coping framework (motivations, personal stakes, appraisals, emotions, coping strategies, perceived gains) produced several sub-themes for each component. Schwarzer and Taubert (2002, p. 3) note:

Because of its complexity and transactional character leading to interdependencies between the variables involved, the meta-theoretical system approach cannot be investigated and empirically tested as a whole model. Rather, it represents a heuristic framework that may serve to formulate and test hypotheses in selected subareas of the theoretical system only.

This study, however, attempted to capture as many elements as possible, and to communicate some of those interdependencies that required detailed reporting of contextual links between concepts and themes. This put limitation on how much attention was afforded to sub-themes.

How effectively the analysis was able to note and communicate the connections between touristic experiences of different tour activities, as conceptualised in Chapter 5, is a potential limitation also. While the study employed the methods of writing short synopses and participant profiles of each interview to capture some of those contextual links surrounding host-guest interactions and demanding situations, the study was not able to offer a comprehensive empirical examination of this part of the framework. The literature review observed a noticeable gap in research on the construction of tour itineraries (Wong & McKercher, 2012), and future research can make considerable contributions to theory and practice by analysing contemporary models of tour itineraries and the interrelatedness of itinerary components for most appropriate timing of various potentially challenging and transformative activities. Epistemologically, the study also did not address the likely influence of the language of tour itineraries and other pre-departure information provided to the participants by the tour operators on their responses. This presents an important methodological consideration for future examinations of group tourism experiences. Last but not least, the influence of group members on individual decision-making during the trip (Torres, 2015) is another important avenue for future research that could not be fully explored in this thesis.

Finally, it is important to consider the demographic profile and the size of the sample in this study for the generalisability of the findings: first, because it was skewed towards tertiary educated, financially comfortable, senior female tourists from Australia who identified themselves as Western tourists, and second, because the findings from this study contribute to the debate about the questionable importance of age and gender for tourist segmentation. Based on cultural tourism and group tourism literature and the secondary analysis of operators of small-group tours, it was anticipated the participants would be aged 40 and above. However, while country of origin and nationality were deliberately limited to Australia from the outset, it was never the intention of the study to focus either on women or on tourists of any gender aged predominantly over 60. In addition, the study recruited less than half the size of the intended sample size of 50.

In line with prior knowledge, majority of the tourists in this study were found to be high novelty-seekers, mainly motivated by host-site involvement than personal development, and cautious of health and other risks to their physical wellbeing. The findings on the attitude of acceptance and longing for the sense of community reported by some participants; overall, stronger interest in intellectual rather than social involvement; and on the greater representation of visual arts and craft participation and reading creative fiction by women are also consistent with the literature discussing differences by age and gender. Further on

gender, those female tourists who were motivated by personal development were found more open to acknowledging the need for personal growth than men; and women were more directly affected physically and psychologically by travel to Islamic destinations.

However, the study has also revealed some diversity in previous travel experience and motivation for personal development, highlighting the differences in life stages even among the tourists of the same age, and more substantial differences within the sample in motivation for interacting with hosts and in the perspectives on opportunities for interaction. Furthermore, contrary to some of the other common notions of senior travel, the participants were found to represent a homogeneous segment of mentally and physically active and considerably independent travellers, preferring adventurous holidays to challenging destinations, avoided by many Australians, including millennials, according to a recent survey (Core Data, 2016).

To conclude, despite the participants' chronological age, the findings did not warrant framing this study as research on senior tourists. On the contrary, it was seen as particularly important to avoid this label in the title of the study in order to bring forward the alternative perspective advocated by the research on cognitive or subjective age (Gonzalez et al., 2009; Le Serre et al., 2017) and other literature demonstrating the limitations of chronological age as a segmentation variable and the heterogeneity of the seniors travel market (Alén et al., 2017; Hung & Ju, 2016). As Hung and Ju (2016, p. 134) note, 'elderly people are seeking active, fulfilling, and adventurous travel experiences'. These may well be softer adventures in the physical sense, but they are, nevertheless, still adventurers, implying an element of uncertainty. Thus, recommendations to 'reduce the travel uncertainties as much as possible' for senior tourists (Kazeminia et al., 2014, p. 91) should be carefully weighed.

As for gender, whilst it is important to note that its gender imbalance contrasts with some of the cultural tourism literature, further research is required to draw more informed conclusions about its relevance to perception of challenge, cultural differences, and culture involvement. Ethnicity is another important characteristic deserving close attention. Although Australians of Anglo-Celtic descent form the majority (ABS, 2016a), theirs is only one perspective in multicultural Australia. Furthermore, the literature discusses how perspectives on immigration and multiculturalism vary in Australia, the US, Canada, and Europe (Phalet & Kobic, 2006), highlighting the importance of differentiating between 'Western' tourists. The study findings highlight that sample homogeneity can be uneven and that research with small samples can still have wider implications. In this study, consideration was given to individual backgrounds, perspectives and unique travel circumstances, as well as to

similarities, including in beliefs and attitudes shared within the sample and with the wider population.

10.3. Practical Implications

The study holds several implications for tour itinerary design, marketing and sales, and selection of guides. Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2014, p. 349) ask ‘how can the tourism industry improve the quality of the contact between guests and hosts, given the tendency of (especially) organized tours to become a “tourist environmental bubble”?’ The findings of the present study suggest that they can start by helping their clients recognise the value of the most seemingly superficial and fleeting contact situations as, first and foremost, opportunities for connection. They may also revisit how they select local business partners in favour of those who see themselves as advocates of the local arts, and who are willing to educate the tourists about the different types of value of the exhibited and sold works and their importance to the local communities, and encourage them to support those creative trades in tourists’ home countries.

Furthermore, the idea of interconnectedness can be further shared by capitalising on tourists’ interest in both the past and the present of the visited destinations and helping them recognise how the knowledge of history can help them understand the present. The study found, however, that both specialist and generalist tour operators had stronger focus on ancient and medieval history. Despite the benefits of single destination focus, small groups and expert guides, the learning outcomes can be further enhanced by including fewer stops and sites, more extended stops (minimum two nights) and more free time for relaxation and reflection. These changes to itineraries may help reduce information overload and improve tourist engagement not only with hosts but also with each other. Furthermore, they may have a positive spillover effect on the situation with very low interest of Australians in migrant heritage (Australia Council, 2017) and problems with social cohesion (Markus, 2017).

Regarding tour promotion, while it may be best to avoid referring to ‘challenge’ and its derivatives in written communication with potential tourists due to prominent negative associations with the word, conversations about ‘challenge’ and ‘comfort zone’ can be used to more accurately assess the level of tourists’ readiness to encounter significant differences and how they may respond. While many were found to link these words to bad experiences, some were found to have a mixed perspective on challenge, similar to the one adopted in this study. Furthermore, such conversations are likely to result in the sharing of preferred coping strategies, including denial of vulnerability. In addition, references to ‘surprise’, ‘relief’ and evaluations of situations and events as ‘interesting’ could also help travel advisors and

tour leaders recognise a level of unease around certain subjects. Sensitive and highly personal information such as attitudes to religion and perspectives on difference are unlikely candidates for surveys. However, such information can be shared during in-store and over-the-phone consultations with sales staff offering travel advice. Tour operators may consider customising their reservation systems to allow for recording such information under client profiles.

The study also offers insights on the possible reasons not only for tourists' negative associations with the words 'challenge', 'culture shock' and even with a more general idea of feeling outside the comfort zone, but also for hesitating to acknowledge experiencing psychological discomfort in the first place. In addition to the concerns of more experienced tourists about coming across as ill-equipped and intolerant, it could be suggested that the importance of intellectual abilities and psychological resilience may increase for older tourists in the face of declining physical fitness. This, in turn, may stifle group discussions, as some tourists may not want to reveal their biases and lack of knowledge. Thus, tour companies could benefit from a comparison of different age groups. Irrespective of possible age-related differences, however, to remove the aforementioned stigma the companies may consider engaging positive role models from among more experienced travellers, including guides, who can share their stories of facing and resolving their own biases and pre-conceived ideas. In addition, tour operators could benefit from shifting the conversation around cultural differences from offending to seeking greater understanding and to being prepared to respect irreconcilable differences.

While perception of similarities is a valuable learning outcome that helps establish common ground (Cohen, 1972; Robinson, 2012; Soulard et al., 2019), inbound and outbound tour operators may need to consider the negative consequences of attempting to cosmetically 'flatten' (Salazar, 2005, p. 679) those cultural differences that, in actuality, can be hard to reconcile or even understand. Furthermore, the study has also highlighted positive practical implications of employing guides who do not necessarily fully share tourists' current worldviews. Engaging such guides presents its challenges, as tourists can be confronted by the behaviours and convictions of the very people they rely on the most during tours for advice and other forms of support. At the same time, the interaction between them and the tourists can enhance mutual understanding, as being from the place, local guides occupy an advantageous position of expert insiders. It is important, however, that they are willing to discuss with tourists the differences between their worldviews, as well as comment on religious and cultural diversity within their home countries.

The management of disorienting situations and facilitation of critical discussions around them are not risk-free. Returning to the earlier point about the length and dimensions of contact, unlike on-site guides who deliver interpretation at specific sites or groups of sites and then leave, tour leaders may be even more concerned with participant satisfaction. Indeed, experiencing disagreements may lead to additional consequences for the duration of the tour, or perhaps their own job securities. The interviews with Australian tour leaders, conducted for the present study but not included in it for reasons of scope, offer examples of how conversations about Islam were minimised by some national and local guides (Tikhonova et al., 2019). What makes local guides more vulnerable is their higher dependence on positive feedback, as observed by Cetin and Yarcin (2017), and the socio-economic inequality between them and the tourists, noted by some participants in the present study. Having teams of national and local guides can be particularly helpful, as national tour leaders from the same countries as tourists can perform the role of cultural mediators between the latter and local guides. Now is not the time to avoid difficult conversations during travel. It is critical to embrace them with the same passion for life-long learning and appreciation of cultural diversity that drives cultural tourism. If not during group travel facilitated by multicultural teams of guides for culture learning, then when?

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Appendices

Appendix A – Data Collection

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (PART A)

Questions on Travel Motivation and Individual Characteristics

Q1. Below is a list of possible reasons why you decided to travel on a cultural tour in the past 6 to 12 months. Please type 'X' next to each reason that, from your memory, represented your motivation to travel on that tour. If any reasons that apply to you are not included in this list, please describe them in your own words under 'Other'.

Reason	(X)
1. Having fun	
2. Being away from daily routine	
3. Working on my personal/spiritual values	
4. Resting and relaxing	
5. Having unpredictable experiences	
6. Getting away from everyday physical stress/pressure	
7. Developing my knowledge of the area	
8. Experiencing adventure	
9. Meeting the locals	
10. Observing other people in the area	
11. Feeling the special atmosphere of the vacation destination	
12. Developing my skills and abilities	
13. Experiencing different cultures	
14. Getting away from everyday psychological stress/pressure	
15. Doing things with my companion(s)	
16. Experiencing something different	
17. Doing something with my family/friend(s)	
18. Visiting places related to my personal interests	
19. Develop my personal interests	
20. Gaining a new perspective on life	
21. Using my skills and talents	
22. Feeling inner harmony/peace	
23. Being with others who enjoy the same things as I do	
24. Following cultural events	
25. Feeling excitement	
26. Giving my mind a rest	
27. Learning new things	
28. Having daring experience	
29. Being creative	
30. Not worrying about time	
31. Gaining a sense of self-confidence	
32. Gaining a sense of accomplishment	
33. Knowing what I am capable of	
34. Understanding more about myself	
35. Getting away from the usual demands of life	
36. Meeting new and varied people	

Q2. Prior to going on a cultural group tour with (Name of Company) in the past 6-12 months, how many countries had you travelled to for tourism (holiday) as main purpose? _____ (number)

Q3. In the table provided below, please you list those countries (up to 10 maximum) and provide the following information from memory:

- Number of trips per country
- Average trip length
- How different the cultures of those countries were to the Australian culture as your home culture (culture of origin) when you first visited them by typing 'X' next to applicable options

Name of Country	Number of Trips	How different to home culture on first visit			
		Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very

Q5. In what year were your born? ____ (year)

Q6. What is your highest level of education attained? Please type 'X' next to the answer that applies to you:

- Primary School
- High School
- Diploma
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Other

Please specify: _____

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO TOURISTS (PART B)

The meaning of challenge (experience and understanding)

When you decided to participate in the interview, you indicated that you experienced a significant difference between the Australian culture as your home culture (culture of origin) and the culture of the country you visited.

Why did answer 'yes'? What was particularly different about that culture? Under which circumstances did you experience this difference? Which activities were you involved in?

How did it make you feel? How did you cope with these differences? Would you say it was a challenging trip for you? Could you tell me more about those moments when you felt that way?

When you say it was (wasn't) challenging, what exactly do you mean? How do you understand the difference between a challenging experience and not at all challenging? What is challenge for you?

Travel motivation

- a. If tourists answered a closed multiple choice question on travel motivation prior to the interview:

What motivated you to take that tour? You selected a few options from this list. Could you expand on the options you chose a little bit, particularly those that you included under 'Other'?

How relevant was your tour experience to your motivation to travel? Was it able to meet your goals?

What did you gain from your experience?

- b. If the travel motivation question is asked for the first time during the interview (25 min):

Here is a list of possible reasons why you may have decided to travel on a cultural tour offered by (Name of Company) in the past 6 to 12 months. Could you please read through it and put a tick next to each reason that, from your memory, represented your motivation to travel on that tour. If any reasons that apply to you are not included in this list, please describe them in your own words.

You selected a few options from this list. Could you expand on the options you chose a little bit, particularly those that you included under 'Other'?

How relevant was your tour experience to your motivation to travel? Was it able to meet these goals?

What did you gain from your experience?

Pre- and post-travel involvement

Have you engaged (sought contact) with (...) culture in any way since returning home? What have you tried doing? (E.g. cooking, watching films, etc.) How often?

Did you do any of this before your trip? How knowledgeable were you about the culture, traditions and history of (name of country) prior to taking that tour?

Email to Tourists (Customers) by Tour Operators

Dear Customer (or other generic form of address used by your company)

We are contacting you because you travelled on one of our cultural tours in the past 6 to 12 months.

(Name of Company) are assisting Flinders University with a PhD student research project into what role having a challenging cultural tour experience plays in how group tourists engage with a previously visited culture once they return home.

The study is particularly interested in what constitutes a challenging cultural tour experience for different stakeholder groups. Your contribution will provide a more holistic picture of the meaning of challenge in cultural tourism context and the long-term outcomes of challenging experiences, and ultimately inform development of more effective tour programs.

If you can answer 'yes' to the question below, the primary researcher, Ms Daria Tikhonova, is inviting you to participate in her study:

From your memory of going on a cultural tour with (name of company) in the past 6 to 12 months, did you feel like there was a significant difference between the Australian culture as your home culture (culture of origin) and the culture of the destination you visited?

You can find more information about being involved in this project in the attached Letter of Introduction and Information Sheet. The purpose of these documents is to provide you with detailed information about this study to assist you with deciding whether or not you are interested in participating, and with giving informed consent.

If you have any questions or comments about the study and/or would like to express your interest in participating, please contact Daria directly via her email (daria.tikhonova@flinders.edu.au) or phone (08) 820115674.

The participation in this study is entirely voluntary and choosing not to participate will have no effect on the services provided to you by (name of company).

Kind regards,

(company's signature)

Email to Tour Operators

Dear (Name of Manager)

I am a PhD student in the Department of Tourism, School of Humanities and Creative Arts at Flinders University, and I would like to invite (Name of Company) to participate in my research.

Briefly, the research aim is to explore what role having a challenging cultural tour experience plays in how group tourists engage with a previously visited culture once they return home. The ultimate goal is to inform development of more fulfilling cultural tour programs which generate continuous interest in visited cultures and contribute to their strengthened appreciation and improved understanding.

If you are interested, you will be asked to assist with recruitment of tourists (your customers), and your product development staff and tour leaders. In-depth interviews with your customers and employees will be used to explore and link tour context with participants' interpretations of challenge in relation to cultural group tours; and tourists' personal accounts of past tour experiences and comments on their current cultural involvement activity.

You can find more information about being involved in this project, its objectives, benefits and risks in the attached Information Sheet.

I look forward hearing your thoughts and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Kind regards,

Daria

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION - CUSTOMERS

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter is to introduce Ms Daria Tikhonova who is a PhD student in the Department of Tourism, School of Humanities and Creative Arts at Flinders University.

She is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis and publication of academic articles on the subject of "The role of perceived challenge in cultural group tourists' involvement with the host culture after travel", that is what role having a challenging cultural tour experience plays in how group tourists engage with a previously visited culture once they return home.

She would like to invite you to assist with this project by agreeing to participate in an interview which covers certain aspects of this topic. No more than 90 minutes (1.5 hours) on one occasion would be required.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

The interview will be conducted either face-to-face or via internet-mediated communication software such as Skype. Once you have familiarised yourself with this Letter of Introduction and the attached Information Sheet, you are invited to contact Daria via email to express your interest in participating; confirm informed consent based on the information provided in these documents; arrange a mutually convenient time and place for an interview; and choose your preferred interview mode (face-to-face or online).

Since she intends to make a digital voice-only recording of the interview, she will seek your consent in writing (via email) to record the interview, to use the recording or a transcription in preparing the thesis, report and other publications, on condition that your name or identity is not revealed, and to make the recording available to me and her second supervisor Dr Gareth Butler on the same conditions.

Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on 8201 3039, by fax on 8201 3635 or by email (sean.kim@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely



Dr SangKyun (Sean) Kim
Director of Studies
Senior Lecturer in Tourism
Department of Tourism

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 6856). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.

INFORMATION SHEET FOR CUSTOMERS

Project Title: “The role of perceived challenge in cultural group tourists’ involvement with the host culture after travel”

Primary Researcher:

Ms Daria Tikhonova
Department of Tourism
Flinders University
Email: daria.tikhonova@flinders.edu.au

Project Supervisors:

Dr SangKyun (Sean) Kim
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Dr Gareth Butler
Department of Tourism
Flinders University
Ph: 8201 7950
Email: gareth.butler@flinders.edu.au

Description of the study:

People’s interest in cultural travel is driven by their motivation to learn about other cultures and themselves. Still, when cultural differences are significant and contact is brief, it can be difficult to develop continuous interest in the host culture. This project will address this problem answering the following main question: What role does having a challenging cultural tour experience play in how group tourists engage with a previously visited culture once they return home? In-depth interviews with tourists, and product development staff and tour leaders working for Australian outbound tour operators will be used to explore and link tour context with participants’ interpretations of challenge in

relation to cultural group tours; and tourists' personal accounts of past tour experiences and comments on their current cultural involvement activity.

Objectives of the study:

In order to answer the main question, the project has the following key objectives:

- To explore what constitutes a challenging cultural tour experience for different stakeholders: group tourists, product development staff and tour leaders
- To identify which factors (e.g. specific tour activities) contribute the most to whether or not group tourists perceive their cultural tour experience as challenging
- To identify if perception of challenge among group tourists varies depending on their individual characteristics such as socio-demographics, travel motivation and previous international travel experience
- To explore how group tourists are involved with a recently experienced culture after travel: which activities they undertake and how often
- To identify if there is any difference between group tourists' host culture involvement before and after travel
- To provide recommendations on how the differences in the interpretations of the challenge construct given by different tourism stakeholders can be reconciled to develop more effective cultural tours

Why have I been selected?

You have been selected because you meet the following criteria:

- You are of Australian nationality as indicated at the time of purchasing a tour with (Name of Company)
- Australia was your country of departure and return
- You travelled on a single-destination cultural group tour 6 -12 months prior to receiving the invitation from (Name of Company) to participate in this study
- You are 18 years and older

What will I be asked to do?

You are invited to participate in a one-on-one interview with a research student/primary researcher who will ask you a few questions about your past cultural tour experience with (Name of Company), as well as your present and pre-trip involvement with the culture of the country you visited on that tour. As part of the interview, you will also be asked some socio-demographic questions, as well questions about what motivated you to take that trip and previous international travel experience at the time.

The interview will take from 60 min to no more than 1.5 hours on one occasion, and will be conducted either face-to-face at a mutually agreed and adequately private location or via internet-mediated communication software such as Skype. The interview will be recorded either using a digital voice recorder (if face-to-face) or using a program such as Skype (if online) to help with looking at the results.

To reduce the length of the interview, you will be offered to answer closed multiple choice questions about your age, education, travel motivation and previous international travel experience at your own convenience by completing an electronic (MS Word) form and returning it back to the primary researcher via email before the actual interview.

Participation in the study is voluntary and refusal to participate will have no effect on the services provided to you by (Name of Company). You can withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?

By answering questions about their pre- and post-travel culture involvement and reflecting on your past tour experience, you may find involvement in the study a learning experience. As a result of an interview, you may learn about yourself something you did not know before. Any contribution of your time will be highly respected as you will gain no other personal benefits through participation in this study.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study? How will my anonymity and confidentiality be assured?

The primary researcher will make every effort to keep your participation strictly confidential and maintain anonymity of your interview responses:

- Interview transcripts will not be shared with anyone within or outside participating tour operators, including (Name of Company)
- Any information that may identify you directly and indirectly, i.e. connect you to your comments will be anonymised/de-identified by using pseudonyms, numbers and generalised descriptions
- You will be offered an opportunity to review your transcripts for adequate de-identification of your comments
- You will be offered an opportunity to ask for any part of the interview to be omitted from the study.
- Once you contact the researcher directly to express your interest in participating, confirm informed consent and arrange time and place for an interview, your email address will not be used for any purpose other than making interview arrangements
- If you choose to be interviewed online via internet-mediated communication software such as Skype, your contact details will be deleted from the researcher's software account once the interview is finished
- Once recorded, the interview will be transcribed (typed-up) and stored as a computer file and then destroyed once the results have been finalised.

Are there any risks and discomforts if I am involved?

The study gives full consideration to the significance of time commitment required from you and the inconvenience this may cause you. The anticipated risks, however, are low.

Although very unlikely, you may still experience some emotional discomfort associated with recalling unpleasant tour experiences, if any, or remembering possible mild awkwardness resulting from contact with a foreign culture. To prevent this from happening, you can decline to answer particular questions and can discontinue the interview at any stage.

Online interviews will only be used as a method if you find it a convenient and comfortable option. You may feel uneasy communicating online with synchronous video streaming, and can opt-out of using video during online interviewing at any time.

As with all qualitative research, there is a small risk that your comments will be inadvertently misinterpreted or misrepresented in published material in a way that reflects poorly on (Name of Company) as your service provider or on yourself. To address this potential risk, you will be offered an opportunity to review your transcript for accuracy.

Are there any ethical obligations that you will be asked to honour?

You will be asked to keep the fact of your participation confidential and not disclose it to anyone.

How will the research results be disseminated and in what form?

The research is intended for publication in the form of a thesis, and academic journal articles and book chapters, as well as conference papers. It will also be disseminated through conference presentations.

How do I agree to participate?

Once you have familiarised yourself with this Information Sheet and the attached Letter of Introduction, you are invited to contact the primary researcher via email to express your interest in participating; confirm informed consent based on the information provided in these documents; arrange a mutually convenient time and place for an interview; and choose your preferred interview mode (face-to-face or online).

How will I receive feedback?

Outcomes from the project will be summarised and provided to you by the primary researcher if you would like to see them. To request this report, please contact the primary researcher on the email provided above.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 6856). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TOUR OPERATORS

Project Title: “The role of perceived challenge in cultural group tourists’ involvement with the host culture after travel”

Primary Researcher:

Ms Daria Tikhonova
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Project Supervisors:

Dr SangKyun (Sean) Kim
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Dr Gareth Butler
Department of Tourism
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Description of the study:

The core of purposeful cultural tourism is exposure to foreign cultures driven by tourists’ motivation to learn about those cultures and themselves. Still, when cultural differences are significant and contact is brief, it can be difficult to generate continuous interest in the host culture. This project will address this problem by answering the following main question: What role does having a challenging cultural tour experience play in how group tourists engage with a previously visited culture once they return home? In-depth interviews with tourists, and product development staff and tour leaders working for Australian outbound tour operators will be used to explore and link tour context with participants’ interpretations of challenge in relation to cultural group tours. In particular, the study will examine tourists’ personal accounts of past tour experiences and comments on their current cultural involvement activity.

Objectives of the study:

In order to answer the main question, the project has the following key objectives:

- To explore what constitutes a challenging cultural tour experience for different stakeholders: group tourists, product development staff and tour leaders
- To identify which factors (e.g. specific tour activities) contribute the most to whether or not group tourists perceive their cultural tour experience as challenging
- To identify if perception of challenge among group tourists varies depending on their individual characteristics such as socio-demographics, travel motivation and previous international travel experience
- To explore how group tourists are involved with a recently experienced culture after travel: which activities they undertake and how often
- To identify if there is any difference between group tourists' host culture involvement before and after travel
- To provide recommendations on how the differences in the interpretations of the challenge construct given by different tourism stakeholders can be reconciled to develop more effective cultural tours

Selection Criteria for Tour Operators

The study aims to sample a diverse group of 5 to 10 tour operators to reflect their difference in business size, customer age groups and degree of specialisation within the cultural tourism market. The businesses must also meet the following selection criteria:

- Be an Australian outbound tour operator
- Develop and lead/conduct own tours
- Offer small group cultural tours as non-work leisure activity where host-culture involvement, i.e. engaging with and learning about other people and their culture, past and present, is central to the tour experience, and pursuits of other activity are of equal or lesser importance.

Details of Involvement - What will your company be asked to do?

Your company will be asked to assist with recruitment of tourists (your customers), and your product development staff and tour leaders.

Recruitment of customers (tourists)

The number of customers (tourists) you will be asked to contact will depend on how many tour operators have agreed to participate. It is predicted that the total of 250 tourists will need to be contacted to recruit the final sample size of 50 interview participants. If you accept this invitation to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- Consider whether you have any customers who may be interested in participating and who match the following selection criteria:
 - Travelled on any of your fully escorted, single-destination, small group cultural tours pre-selected by the primary researcher from your online brochures and website
 - Travelled 6 -12 months prior to receiving the invitation to participate.
 - Australian nationality as indicated at the time of purchasing a cultural tour
 - Australia as country of departure and return
 - 18 years and older
- Using the email provided to you by the primary researcher, email an invitation to participate in the study to a diverse range of customers (men and women, and of

different ages) who meet these criteria, and include two attachments: Letter of Introduction and Information Sheet.

Once relevant customers receive the participant documentation, it will be up to them to contact the principal researcher via email to express their interest in participating; confirm their informed consent; arrange time and place for interview; and choose their preferred interview mode (face-to-face or online).

Recruitment of product development staff and tour leaders

Recruitment of these participants will start once the interviews with your customers (tourists) have been completed and it is known how many tourist participants travelled to which destinations. It is anticipated that a minimum of one staff member per participating company will be interviewed but no more than 20 product development staff members. The study also aims to include interviews with 10 to 15 tour leaders in total.

You will be asked to:

- Provide two de-identified lists of your employees (one for product development staff and one for tour leaders). These lists from all participating tour operators will be combined to establish how many relevant employees there are in total and with which destinations they work.
- Using the email text provided to you by the primary researcher, email participant information to relevant employees once your company has been informed how many interview participants from each group it needs to approach.

It will then be up to the participants to contact the primary researcher via email to express their interest in participating; confirm informed consent; arrange a time and place for interview; and choose their preferred interview mode (face-to-face or online).

Indirect approach via email is the preferred method of recruitment in this study. If your company decides to approach your employees directly (face-to-face or over telephone), you will be asked to use the verbal script provided by the primary researcher to briefly inform your staff about the proposed research study, and email them the Letter of Introduction and Information Sheet for detailed participant information.

Benefits from Participation

Your company will receive a report with a summary of research findings and applicable recommendations. This report can be used by your product development staff and tour leaders to:

- Improve customisation of cultural tours in terms of perceived challenge across different groups of customers, and
- Develop and deliver more fulfilling and potentially more commercially successful experiences which generate continuous interest in visited cultures and contribute to their strengthened appreciation and improved understanding.

In particular, providing the study identifies a positive relationship between experiencing challenge and post-travel culture involvement, this second point can be used in future marketing campaigns to emphasise the potential long-term benefits of your cultural tours.

As for your interviewed customers, by answering questions about their pre- and post-travel culture involvement and reflecting on their past tour experience, they may find involvement in the study a learning experience. As a result of interviews, your customers may learn about themselves something they did not know before.

Confidentiality and Anonymity Assurances

Due to the relatively small sample sizes of participating tour operators and interviewees, and the qualitative nature of the study, there is a small risk that your company and employees will be inadvertently identified from the published output of the study either by other participating tour companies and participants or by external parties.

However, the primary researcher will make every effort to keep the participation of your company and all participants strictly confidential and maintain anonymity of all interview responses. We understand the potentially commercially sensitive nature of the data collected during interviews, and will provide the following assurances:

- Any information that may identify study participants, participating organisations and related third parties directly and indirectly, i.e. connect them to their comments will be anonymised/de-identified by using pseudonyms, numbers and generalised descriptions
- Interviewees will be offered an opportunity to review their transcripts for adequate de-identification of their comments and appropriate sharing of any commercially sensitive information
- Interviewees will be offered an opportunity to ask for any part of their interview to be omitted from the study.
- Once participants contact the researcher directly, their email addresses will not be used for any purpose other than making interview arrangements
- If participants choose to be interviewed online via internet-mediated communication software such as Skype, their contact details will be deleted from the researcher's software account once the interview is finished

Risks and Discomforts from Participation

The study gives full consideration to the burden of time commitment for all participants and, in particular, to the contribution of human resources by your company to assist with participant recruitment. The anticipated risks, however, are low.

Although very unlikely, your interviewed customers may still experience some emotional discomfort associated with recalling unpleasant tour experiences, if any, or remembering possible mild awkwardness resulting from contact with a foreign culture. To minimise this discomfort, participants will be reminded that they can decline to answer particular questions and can discontinue the interview at any stage. Online interviews will only be used as a method if participants find it a convenient and comfortable option.

In addition to the small chance of your company and employees being identified (See Confidentiality and Anonymity Assurances), participants may be concerned with their comments being inadvertently misinterpreted or misrepresented in published material in a way that may reflect poorly on your company as their service provider, as their employer

and themselves. To address this small potential risk, all interviewees will be offered an opportunity to review their transcripts for accuracy.

Are there any ethical obligations that your company will be asked to honour?

This project is conducted under a number of ethical obligations. Therefore, your company will be asked to do the following:

- Use the email or verbal scripts provided by the principal researcher to ensure informed and free consent when recruiting participants
- Provide a written confirmation via email that your company will not apply any pressure on any participants to take part in the study and/or to share their confidential interview answers.
- If any reservation staff or other company employees have to be involved in the recruitment process, your company will be asked to email them this Information Sheet and brief them verbally about the purposes of this project, what is required of them and their obligation to maintain confidentiality of your company's participation in this study.

How will the research results be disseminated and in what form?

The research is intended for publication in the form of a thesis, and academic journal articles and book chapters, as well as conference papers. It will also be disseminated through conference presentations.

How will your company receive feedback?

Upon completion of the study, your company will be emailed a report with a summary of research findings and any applicable recommendations.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept our invitation to be involved.

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 6856). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Appendix B - Sampling

Guidelines for recruiting (Name of Company) passengers

SAMPLING MATRIX

Number of invitations to send out per country	Trip name	Departure months in 2015
Total		

- Multiple trips per destination are listed to reach the specified quota per country. Trips for any given country are listed in the order of priority. Passengers travelling on the trip listed as first should be selected first. If in that trip and month there are not enough passengers who meet the selection criteria and the quota, then selection should move to the next trip, until the quota is reached.
- Each selected passenger needs to receive an email invitation with two attachments: Information Sheet and Letter of Introduction

SELECTION CRITERIA

The passengers in each quota must meet the following selection criteria:

- Travelled in an open-to-all group (not private)
- Australian nationality as indicated at the time of purchasing the tour
- Australia as country of departure and return
- 18 years and older
- Represent a balance of men and women and a mix of ages where possible

Tour matrix design for 45 destinations

Country	Company 1		Company 2		Company 3		Company 4		Total per country		Estimated number of tourists	Region
	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept	N/tours	N/dept		
1. Bhutan	1	6	-	-	1	1	1	1	3	8	128	Asia
2. Burma	2	31	1	4	1	1	1	2	5	38	608	Asia
3. Cambodia	2	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	15	240	Asia
4. China	4	16	1	7	1	1	6	7	12	31	496	Asia
5. Croatia	1	10	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	11	176	Europe
6. Cuba	1	44	1	8	1	1	-	-	3	53	848	Latin Am
7. Ecuador	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	112	Latin Am
8. Egypt	2	17	3	46	-	-	1	2	6	65	1040	ME/Africa
9. England	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	3	3	48	Europe
10. Ethiopia	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	48	Africa
11. France	3	12	-	-	1	1	5	5	9	18	288	Europe
12. Germany	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	16	Europe
13. Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Europe
14. Greece	1	3	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	5	80	Europe
15. Iceland	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Europe
16. India	5	113	6	28	1	1	-	-	12	142	2272	Asia
17. Indonesia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Asia
18. Iran	1	17	-	-	2	2	1	1	4	20	320	ME
19. Ireland	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Europe
20. Israel	1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	160	ME
21. Italy	5	26	-	-	8	10	2	2	15	38	608	Europe
22. Japan	1	12	1	9	-	-	2	2	4	23	368	Asia

Tour matrix design for 45 destinations, continued.

Country	Company 1		Company 2		Company 3		Company 4		Total per country		Estimated number of tourists	Region
23.Jordan	1	10	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	11	176	ME
24.Mexico	1	15	1	8	1	1	-	-	3	24	384	Asia
25.Mongolia	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	5	80	Asia
26.Morocco	4	55	-	-	-	-	1	1	5	56	896	Africa
27.Nepal	1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	160	Asia
28.New Caledonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Oceania
29.Oman	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	48	ME
30.Peru	6	43	-	-	-	-	1	1	7	44	704	Latin Am
31.Portugal	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	48	Europe
32.Russia	1	4	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	5	80	Europe
33.Scotland	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	4	3	5	80	Europe
34.South Korea	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	1	5	80	Asia
35.Spain	3	19	-	-	2	3	-	-	5	22	352	Europe
36.Sri Lanka	1	16	1	23	1	1	1	1	4	41	656	Asia
37.Taiwan	1	3	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	5	80	Asia
38.Thailand	1	10	1	11	-	-	-	-	2	21	336	Asia
39.The Netherlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	16	Europe
40.Tunisia	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	48	Africa
41.Turkey	6	99	1	10	1	2	1	1	9	112	1792	ME/EU
42.Turkmenistan	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	32	Asia
43.USA	-	-	-	-	6	6	2	2	8	8	128	North Am
44.Uzbekistan	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	80	Asia
45.Vietnam	5	26	1	41	-	-	-	-	6	67	1072	Asia
Total	69	672	19	200	33	37	40	45	161	954	15264	

Appendix C – Data Analysis Methods

Non-cross-sectional analysis matrix: Within-case analysis example on P15

Line	Time	Activity	Pre-travel evaluation	Personal stakes	Eagerness	Effortfulness	Emotional response	Perceived gains
2	1:32.6 - 2:20	Overall impression	I put off going (I'm 65), I put off going to India for decades. Though my kids were there and they said 'you should go, it's good' but you know, I was afraid that all the deformities and the poverty, and the begging would (I'm a sensitive soul [laughing]), I thought it would be disturbing [...]			[...] I found a lot of that confronting but [...]	[...] I also found that incredibly enjoyable [...]	[...] There was some sadness but the people themselves, regardless of being poor, were quite happy [with surprise].
26	12:57.2 - 13:35	N/A		[...] Yeah...I like to be culturally inclusive. I can't just sit back and just totally observe. I need to deal with the people. How can you form an opinion about the people if you've never actually spoken to them? You can't use the guide as a guide, so to say.				
28	13:48.0 - 15:40.	Free time, walking around	Ahm...Well the fact that I had survived China [smiling]. Because, you know, they are pretty comparable, 1.2 - 1.3 billion people, pretty comparable in size and the [cultivating?], if you like , of deformed people for begging purposes [...]	[...] get out of your comfort zone and go and have a look at India [...]		[...] We'd go to a town and I often just sort of go out free ranging by myself [...] I wouldn't class myself as an extrovert. If the need arises, I can in short bursts be forthcoming [...]		[...] and managed to survive [...] but there is something being in the Indian culture and their receptiveness (notwithstanding all the rapes and the horrible things they get up to)...They have 1.3 billion. They will always have some unsavoury types but as a sweeping generalisation, they are very pleasant people; very embracing, very interested in us, very interested to practice their English, so it's a two-way street.
4	2:27.1 - 3:2	Overall impression			I had the luxury of sitting and observing, and it was incredible. I was there for almost a month, and it was observe, observe, observe. Just incredible	[...] Just the density of people [...] It was more the colours, the noise [emphasis], noise pollution, my God! Just the sheer numbers of people and how they make the traffic work [...]		[...] I was there for almost a month, and it was observe, observe, observe. Just incredible.
6	3:33.0 - 4:37	Enroute stop, interaction with street hawkers			[...] he taught me a few Indian words, and I interacted with (we were on a bus but would obviously get off and you'd be challenged by hawkers and street vendors and whatever)...I like to interact with them. Other people on the tour were just instantly awkward and afraid to interact but I interacted with them, and some of them taught me words I didn't know which I could use with our guide [...]		I loved it! I loved it. There was nothing confronting [...] (we were on a bus but would obviously get off and you'd be challenged by hawkers and street vendors and whatever)...I like to interact with them [...] I enjoyed it [...]	[...] He gave us a lot of background on the culture and he taught me a few Indian words, and I interacted with (we were on a bus but would obviously get off and you'd be challenged by hawkers and street vendors and whatever)...I like to interact with them. Other people on the tour were just instantly awkward and afraid to interact but I interacted with them, and some of them taught me words I didn't know which I could use with our guide and he was impressed with the knowledge I picked up. I enjoyed it [...]

Cross-case analysis matrix example

ID	Destination	Pre-travel evaluation	Personal stakes	External demands (effortfulness)	Perceived gains	Situational factors	Key activities	Meaning of challenge	Overall trip evaluation
P2	Sri Lanka	Physical challenge	Physical challenge; Learning about the history and the society of the destination; Autonomy; Tolerance	Heritage interpretation; Climbing Sigirita; Venturing out alone	Knowledge gain (general); Enjoyable animal experience (surprise)	Not very attentive and overly protective tour guide; Little interaction (few opportunities, busy tour); Little free time; Friendly locals; Safety of organised tour	Sightseeing (heritage interpretation); Climbing Sigiriya; Wandering during free time	Physical, mixed valence	Comfortable
P6	Russia	Challenge	Better understanding of local people; Learning about the history and society of the destination; Desired self-image (Insider factor); Spirituality; Secularism; Individual freedoms; Materialism	Influence of religion on politics; Controlling government	Knowledge gain (insider factor); Perspective change	Knowledgeable guide; Familiar environment	Visiting religious sites (a church and cathedral); Wandering during free time; Shopping, eating out and interacting with locals; Interacting with local guide	Mental, positive valence	Somewhat challenging
P15	India	Challenge, threat	Understanding local people through direct contact; Getting out of the comfort zone; Fairness; Spirituality; Tradition; Sense of cultural pride	Poverty; Inequality; Population density Street hawkers and vendors	Knowledge gain (local insight); Bonding with locals; Excitement; Spiritual enrichment; Sense of accomplishment; Re-evaluation of travel interests; Respective change	Friendly locals; Safety of organised tours; Supportive tour guide	Wandering during free time; Enroute stops and interaction with street hawkers and vendors; New Delhi crowds; Mumbai contrasts; Village home visit; Visiting religious sites (Varanasi ceremonies); Using local transport (interaction with street vendors when on an auto-rickshaw ride)	Mental and physical; mixed valence (more negative)	Substantially challenging

Appendix D – Results

Summative Bios

Participant	Travel companion during trip	Socio-demographic characteristics	Previous travel experience and currently preferred travel mode	Personal circumstances	Key travel motives	Other key personal stakes
P1	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); male; 65; Bachelor's degree	10 countries in 3 regions (Asia, Latin America, Middle East) Trekking in Nepal Travels mainly independently (alone or with partner); Moved towards more relaxing but still physically active holidays	Married; interested in walking, nature, and golf	Novelty; host-site involvement	Tolerance; tradition; lifestyle; peace of mind
P2	Sister	Lives in a capital city (Adelaide); female; 69; Master's degree	23 countries in 5 regions (Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America) Travels both independently (alone, with sister or friends) and on tours	Widowed; interested in walking, history, food	Novelty; nature; stimulation; host-site involvement; relationship	Autonomy; tolerance; peace of mind
P3	Wife	Lives in a capital city (Canberra); male; 69; Bachelor's degree	15 countries in 4 regions (Asia, Europe, Middle East, Oceania) Travels with wife, mainly on tours with independent stays before tours	Married; formerly employed in foreign affairs (overseas postings, including Indonesia; interviewing asylum seekers); recently retired; interested in history, foreign relations, and politics; reads regularly	Host-site involvement; stimulation; personal development	Desired self-image (knowledgeable, experienced, tolerant); autonomy; secularism
P4	Husband and friends (Sri Lanka); husband (India)	Lives in a regional coastal city (Wollongong); female; 68; Doctoral degree in public health	Over 15 countries in 6 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Oceania) Travels with husband and/or friends both independently and on tours	Married; recently retired senior academic in an executive role; parents recently passed away; Sri-Lankan in-law relatives and grandchildren; interested in Buddhism and Hinduism, arts, crafts, and colonial history; reads widely; not religious; reported mobility impairment	Novelty; host-site involvement; relationship (Sri Lanka); Escape; stimulation; host-site involvement; self-actualization (India)	Spirituality; tradition; simplicity; happiness; acceptance; peace of mind; lifestyle

Participant	Travel companion during trip	Socio-demographic characteristics	Previous travel experience and currently preferred travel mode	Personal circumstances	Key travel motives	Other key personal stakes
P5	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Adelaide); female, 74; Honours degree in history	Minimum 14 countries in 6 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Oceania) Prefers tours, travels solo	Widowed; worked in a corporate job; now doing animal volunteering; interested in history, art, music, food, shopping, and animals; reported getting older (declining level of physical fitness)	Novelty; escape; nature; host-site involvement	Tolerance; peace of mind
P6	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; Master's degree	15 countries in 5 regions (Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Travels mainly independently (first tour)	Retired theatre professional; wrote an Honours thesis on Chekhov; interested in arts, classical and canonical music, ballet, theatre, history, literature, and Russian culture; reads widely	Host-site involvement; self-actualization	Spirituality; secularism; autonomy; equality; individual freedoms; low power distance; materialism; desired self-image (knowledgeable; experienced; tolerant; compassionate)
P7	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Adelaide); female; 62; Graduate Diploma in social work	40 countries in 4 regions (Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania) Travels mainly independently with partner and/or friends (first tour)	Very recently retired social worker; first trip alone (without partner or friends); introvert with a 'hippy side', 'Asianified' house, and interest in Asian cultures	Novelty; autonomy; stimulation; host-site involvement; personal development; self-actualization	Autonomy; equality; tolerance; lifestyle
P8	Friends	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; 74; Diploma	37 countries in 6 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America) Travels both independently (solo or friends) and on tours	Presiding officer of an arts society; lived in Italy, speaks Italian and was friends with the tour guide from Italy; interested in different arts, gardening and reading; atheist	Relationship; host-site involvement	Desired self-image (knowledgeable, experienced, tolerant); tolerance
P9	Husband (Mexico), solo (Iran)	Lives in a capital city (Melbourne); female; 71; Master's degree	97-100 countries in minimum 3 regions (Africa, Europe, Latin America, Middle East)	Married; former academic; interested in art history; not religious	Novelty; host-site involvement	Desired image (experienced); secularism; individual freedoms; low power distance

Participant	Travel companion during trip	Socio-demographic characteristics	Previous travel experience and currently preferred travel mode	Personal circumstances	Key travel motives	Other key personal stakes
P10	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; Master's degree in education (geography)	Minimum 17 countries in 6 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America) Travelled on multiple tours	Teacher of geography at secondary school; former tutor in population geography at university; interested in ancient history, particularly of the Middle East, and reading; creates photo books after some trips	Recognition; host-site involvement	Secularism; equality; individual freedoms; low power distance
P11	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Adelaide); female; 65; Diploma	6 countries in 3 regions (Asia, North America, Oceania) Volunteered in India recently Travels both independently (solo) and on tours	Widowed; employed in office administration in a multicultural environment; previously lived on a farm, then moved into apartment after becoming a widow; brother recently passed away; religious	Novelty; relationship; host-site involvement	Religiosity; family and community ties; simplicity; happiness
P12	Solo	Lives in a regional coastal city (the Gold Coast); female; 57; Doctoral degree in accounting	20 countries in 5 regions (Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Worked in Kuwait Travels both independently (solo, with husband or friends) and on tours	Married; recently retired academic; German-Australian; enjoys exploring places on her own; interested in crafts; had a Turkish friend; supports several charities helping refugees and women; not religious; reported mobility impairment	Novelty; autonomy; host-site involvement	Autonomy; equality; tolerance; lifestyle
P13	Wife	Lives in a capital city (Melbourne); male; 77; Bachelor's degree	36 countries in 6 regions (Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Prefers tours, travels with wife	Married; places strong emphasis on his and his children's education; watches many documentaries; keeps travel journals; interested in culture and nature; reported getting older (declining level of physical fitness)	Novelty; host-site involvement; self-actualization	Secularism; equality

Participant	Travel companion during trip	Socio-demographic characteristics	Previous travel experience and currently preferred travel mode	Personal circumstances	Key travel motives	Other key personal stakes
P14	Husband and friend	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; 69; Bachelor's degree	22 countries in 3 regions (Asia, Europe, North America) Travels mainly independently, with partner and/or friends (second tour)	Married; worked for a state government minister in the past; had a Turkish friend; interested in battlefield sites and history, and politics; reads regularly	Novelty; host-site involvement	Secularism; autonomy
P15	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); male; 66; Diploma	8 countries in 3 regions (Asia, Europe, Africa) Travels mainly independently, solo (second tour)	Divorced; recently retired IT professional who worked with many Indian colleagues; formerly very religious, now spiritual; introvert; 'avid reader' and enjoys documentaries	Novelty; stimulation; host-site involvement; personal development	Spirituality; family and community ties; tradition; sense of cultural pride; tolerance; equality; peace of mind
P16	Wife	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); male; 81; Master's degree	15-20 countries in 6 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Oceania) Visited Middle East and China early in the travel career Prefers tours, travels with wife	Married; news anchor; had Sri Lankan colleagues; interested in politics	Novelty; host-site involvement	Desired self-image (knowledgeable, experienced); tolerance; lifestyle
P17	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Melbourne); male; 71; Bachelor's degree	61 countries in 5 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America) Worked in South Africa and backpacked through Africa, South America and India Prefers tours, travels solo	Interested in history; reported getting older (declining level of physical fitness)	Novelty; host-site involvement	Autonomy
P18	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Adelaide); female; 61; Bachelor's degree	9 countries in 4 regions (Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania) Travels mainly independently with husband and/or friends (first tour and solo trip)	Married to a Lutheran; received conservative Catholic education; now spiritual; feminist; reported a life-threatening illness	Novelty; autonomy; stimulation; host-site involvement; personal development; self-actualization	Spirituality; acceptance; autonomy; equality; tolerance; individual freedoms; lifestyle

Participant	Travel companion during trip	Socio-demographic characteristics	Previous travel experience and currently preferred travel mode	Personal circumstances	Key travel motives	Other key personal stakes
P19	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; 75; high school education	49 countries in all 7 regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Volunteered in India when young; trekked in the Himalayas; and backpacked in Africa Travels both independently and on tours	Widowed; avoids conversations about politics and religion; interested in ancient history; reads widely, including international literature	Novelty; host-site involvement	Spirituality; family and community ties; equality; tolerance; peace of mind
P20	Wife	Lives in a capital city (Melbourne); male; 64; Bachelor's degree	Over 20 countries in 6 regions (Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Visited Middle East early in the travel career Travels both independently (with wife) and on tours	Married; interested in present culture and food experiences	Novelty; stimulation; host-site involvement; personal development	Desired self-image (fair; compassionate); autonomy; equality; tolerance; low power distance; lifestyle
P21	Solo	Lives in a capital city (Sydney); female; 64; Diploma	21 countries in 5 regions (Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania) Travels solo or with family, mainly on tours with independent stays before tours	Widowed; enduring fascination with India; keeps travel journals and creates photobooks after trips; has faith	Novelty; host-site involvement	Spirituality; autonomy; equality; happiness

Question 3 Previous travel experience: Significance of cultural difference, total days spent at destination, and length of stay per trip

Europe

Destination	Significance of cultural difference				
	No answer	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very
WESTERN EUROPE					
Austria	2				
Belgium	1				
France	1	1	2	6	1
Germany	2		2	4	
Luxemburg				1	
Switzerland	1		1	1	
The Netherlands	4				
NORTHERN EUROPE					
Denmark	1			1	
Estonia			1		
Finland			1	1	
Ireland	3		1		
Latvia			1		
Lithuania			1		
Norway	1		1	3	
Sweden	2		1	1	
The UK	1	4	6		1
SOUTHERN EUROPE					
Croatia	1		1	1	
Greece	4		1	1	1
Italy			5	8	1
Malta				1	
Poland	2		1		
Slovenia	1	1			
Spain	4			3	1
EASTERN EUROPE					
Belarus				1	
Czech Republic	1		1		
Hungary	4		1		
Poland	2		1		
Russia				1	1
Slovakia			1		

Destination	Total days spent at destination																		
	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
WESTERN EUROPE																			
Austria												-							-
Belgium											-								
France		90		30	50	40			28		-	60	29	10			230	50	
Germany		20			-	20				500	-	15	5						-
Luxemburg													2						
Switzerland										1000		-						15	
The Netherlands											-			-		7			-
NORTHERN EUROPE																			
Denmark				4							-								
Estonia								4											
Finland											7	5							
Ireland						120				-									-
Latvia								5											
Lithuania								4											
Norway				10					-	14	7	7							
Sweden				6					-	21									
The UK		150		90	21	350		4	730		14	-				42	60	70	-
SOUTHERN EUROPE																			
Croatia											-	7							7
Greece	30			-				21			-								6
Italy		40		80	30	40	-		72	21	6	15		14	20		17	70	21
Malta											3								
Portugal	90	7			14						-		3						
Slovenia											-	10							
Spain	90	16	40		20						-	-	5						
EASTERN EUROPE																			
Belarus								4											
Czech Republic												17							
Hungary								5			-			-					-
Poland								10			-								
Russia					-					21									
Slovakia								6											

Destination	Length of stay per trip																		
	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
WESTERN EUROPE																			
Austria											-	-							
Belgium											-	-							-
France		9		8	8	10			6		-	12	7	10			77	17	-
Germany		7			-	10				25	-	5	5						-
Luxemburg													2						
Switzerland										50		-						15	-
The Netherlands														-		7			-
NORTHERN EUROPE																			
Denmark				4							-								
Estonia								4											
Finland											7	5							
Ireland						30			-			-							-
Latvia								5											
Lithuania								4											
Norway				10					-	14	7	7							
Sweden				6					-	11									
UK		15		15	7	35		4	91		14					21	30	14	-
SOUTHERN EUROPE																			
Croatia											-	7							7
Greece	15			-			-	21			-	-							6
Italy		13		13	15	10	-		12	7	6	8		7	7		9	18	21
Malta											3								
Portugal	90	7			7				-		-		3						
Slovenia											-	10							
Spain	90	16	13		20				-		-	-	5						
EASTERN EUROPE																			
Belarus								4											
Czech Republic											-	9							
Hungary								5			-	-		-					-
Poland								10			-	-							
Russia					-					21									
Slovakia								6											

Asia

Destination	Significance of cultural difference			
	No answer	A little	Somewhat	Very
SOUTHEAST ASIA				
Cambodia	2			7
Indonesia	2			5
Laos	1			2
Malaysia	1	1	1	2
Myanmar	2			1
Singapore	1		1	
Thailand	2			2
Vietnam	4		2	7
EAST ASIA				
China			2	9
Japan	1			2
South Korea	1			
SOUTH ASIA				
India	1			10
Nepal	1			
CENTRAL ASIA				
Turkmenistan				1
Uzbekistan				1

Destination	Total days spent at destination																			
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
SOUTHEAST ASIA																				
Cambodia		12	7	7	13							-	-			5		12	14	
Indonesia		150	10	70			200		-								7		-	
Laos							70									4			-	
Malaysia					25		250			14		-					7			
Myanmar								-				-						-		
Singapore					18			-												
Thailand							40	-									7			-
Vietnam		12	10	25	14		-			30		-	17	9	10	14			10	-
EAST ASIA																				
China		10		21		35		21	42	25	-	-		10	30	24				
Japan		-										-							20	
South Korea	-																			
SOUTH ASIA																				
India	-	-		65				40	35	25	16	-			7	25		110		
Nepal	-																			
CENTRAL ASIA																				
Turkmenistan								8												
Uzbekistan								14												

Destination	Length of stay per trip																			
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
SOUTHEAST ASIA																				
Cambodia		12	7	7	13							-	-			5		12	14	
Indonesia		15	10	14			20		-								7		-	
Laos							35									4			-	
Malaysia					25		17			14		-					7			
Myanmar						-						-						-		
Singapore					3	-														
Thailand						-	20										7			-
Vietnam		12	10	25	14		-			30		-	17	9	10	14			10	-
EAST ASIA																				
China		10		21		18		21	21	25	-	-		10	15	12				
Japan		-										-							20	
South Korea	-																			
SOUTH ASIA																				
India	-	-		16				20	18	25	16	-			7	25		55		
Nepal	-																			
CENTRAL ASIA																				
Turkmenistan								8												
Uzbekistan								14												

North America and Oceania

Destination	Significance of cultural difference				
	No answer	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very
Canada	4	2	2	1	
Fiji	1		1		
NZ	3	5	2		
Solomon Islands					1
USA	6	1	5		

Destination	Total days spent at destination																	
	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
Canada					30	-	-	-		30		-		6			20	-
Fiji															18		-	
NZ		20		-	30	60			25	50	-		20			80		-
Solomon Islands			12															
USA	30				24	-	-	-	-		-	-			10	40	-	-

Destination	Length of stay per trip																	
	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20	P21
Canada					15	-	-	-		15		-		6			20	-
Fiji															9		-	
NZ		10		-	15	30			25	17	-		10			20		-
Solomon Islands			6															
USA	30				24	-	-	-	-		-	-			10	13	-	-

Middle East and Africa

Destination	Significance of cultural difference		
	No answer	Somewhat	Very
MIDDLE EAST			
Iran			1
Jordan	1	1	1
Kuwait			1
Lebanon			1
Syria			1
Turkey		3	8
UAE		1	1
AFRICA			
Egypt		2	1
Ethiopia			1
Libya			1
Morocco			4
South Africa		1	
Tunisia			1
Uganda			1
Zambia		2	

Destination	Total days spent at destination																
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P8	P9	P10	P12	P13	P15	P16	P17	P19	P20	P21
MIDDLE EAST																	
Iran							20										
Jordan	-						8						6				
Kuwait										-							
Lebanon							5										
Syria							14										
Turkey		14		40	-	20	-		7	50			12		14	20	10
UAE			-								3						
AFRICA																	
Egypt							-						10	15			
Ethiopia							12										
Libya															14		
Morocco				18	-				21			10					
South Africa														500			
Tunisia							14										
Uganda														5			
Zambia														7			

Latin America

Destination	Significance of cultural difference			
	No answer	A little	Somewhat	Very
Argentina	1		2	
Brazil	2		2	1
Chile		1	1	
Costa Rica	1			
Cuba	1			1
Ecuador			1	1
Guatemala	1			
Mexico	1		1	2
Peru			1	2

Destination	Total days spent at destination									
	P1	P2	P4	P8	P10	P13	P16	P17	P19	P20
Argentina	3								7	-
Brazil	5	14				-	7			-
Chile	3							8		
Costa Rica						-				
Cuba				6		-				
Ecuador	5	8								
Guatemala						-				
Mexico	-		21	-	7					
Peru	5	10								10

On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement

Participant	Destination	Pre-travel involvement	Key on-tour experiences	Post-travel involvement	Shared themes between post-travel involvement and on-tour experiences
P1	Japan	Watching Japanese films	Eating out; Local hospitality; Observing (work ethic; appreciation of beauty; technology) Experiences of traditional culture (bathing; accommodation)	Eating out	Food; aesthetic experience
P3	Turkey	Reading about history	Interacting with a local guide; Heritage interpretation	Reading a book about Byzantium; Watching lectures about late antiquity	Pre-Ottoman history; continuity
		Staying informed about current affairs through work and following the news	Witnessing elections preparation; Local hospitality; Visiting religious sites (Konya) Observing (religiosity; women's dress norms)	Staying informed about current affairs by following the news	Religiosity; Islamic praying; influence of religion on government
		Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior	Shopping	Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior	Traditional motifs
P4	India (2005)	General awareness	Staying at small guesthouses; Feeling the atmosphere; Being approached by locals (hawkers); Shopping (at markets); Visiting religious sites (Varanasi); Observing	Not discussed	-

On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement, continued.

Participant	Destination	Pre-travel involvement	Key on-tour experiences	Post-travel involvement	Shared themes between post-travel involvement and on-tour experiences
P4	India (2014)	Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior	Feeling the atmosphere; Visiting local artists and artisans; Shopping (at markets)	Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior	Arts; textiles; countryside; poverty
		Reading	Observing (poverty; positivity; entrepreneurship; spirituality)	Reading 'A God in Every Stone' (Shamsie, 2014); 'White Tiger' (Adiga, 2008)	Colonialism; poverty; religion; spirituality; romanticising
P6	Russia (1973)	Reading classical Russian literature	Working with Russian colleagues; Visiting religious sites; Wandering; Observing	Reading Russian historians; Collecting silverware	Soviet history; government control; economic deprivation; Western propaganda
	Russia (2015)	Reading Russian historians; Collecting silverware	Visiting religious sites; Interacting with local guides Interacting with business owners Wandering Observing (spirituality; economic activity) Shopping (at local stores) Eating out	Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior; Listening to recorded music; Reading about the history of the Romanov dynasty; a biography of Lenin; 'The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin' (Gessen, 2010); Staying informed about current affairs by following the news; Consuming ethnic food and drink at home	Icons; religion; spirituality; imperial heritage; Romanov dynasty; Soviet history; current government; relationship between religion and government; Russian tea
			Visiting local artists	Collecting works of art and craft; Decorating home interior	Paintings

On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement, continued.

Participant	Destination	Pre-travel involvement	Key on-tour experiences	Post-travel involvement	Shared themes between post-travel involvement and on-tour experiences
P6	Myanmar	Reading the news	Interacting with hotel staff; Visiting local artists and artisans; Observing (poverty; spirituality; inequality)	Reading about the British colonial rule and establishment of military government; Staying informed about current affairs by following the news; Decorating home interior	Arts; colonialism; poverty; government control
P7	Myanmar	General awareness	Interactions with the local guide; Shopping (at markets); Wandering; Observing (poverty; political situation) Visiting a historic house	Staying informed about current affairs by following the news; Staying actively informed about current affairs by maintaining contact with the local guide	Elections; government control; poverty;
P8	Italy	Learning the language Other (extensive through living in the country but not specified)	N/A	Culture learning through social networks; Attending art and history lectures	-
P9	Iran	General awareness of cultural heritage from previous travels	Heritage sightseeing; Visiting religious sites; Observing (culture of martyrdom; interaction between men and women); Interacting with the guide	Reading a book about the influence of Iranian architecture and art around the world, and India in particular	Architecture and art; interconnectedness
P10	Iran	Reading about ancient and contemporary history of Iran Watching the news	Being approached by locals Home visit Observing (culture of martyrdom; interaction between men and women; dress norms); Local hospitality	Reading about the Iranian revolution	Government control; human rights; culture of martyrdom; relationship between religion and government; women

On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement, continued.

Participant	Destination	Pre-travel involvement	Key on-tour experiences	Post-travel involvement	Shared themes between post-travel involvement and on-tour experiences
P11	Cuba	General awareness	Home visit Wandering Dancing Listening to local musicians Observing (sense of community; simplicity; economic difficulties)	Decorating home interior Listening to recorded music	Arts; countryside; salsa music
P12	Turkey	Knitting Collecting works of art and craft Decorating home interior	Eating out Shopping (at markets) Wandering Using local transport Observing (interaction between men and women; religiosity) Visiting local artisans Visiting religious sites	Carpet weaving Collecting works of art and craft Decorating home interior	Handicrafts
P13	Iran	General awareness	Heritage sightseeing; Observing (women's dress norms; gender inequality; technology; infrastructure)	Consulting online resources about ancient history	History; Islam
		Watching the news	Interacting with the local guide	Staying informed about current affairs by following the news	Theocracy; women's dress norms; women's rights
P14	Turkey	Reading novels and guidebooks Watching the news	Observing (religiosity; economic situation) Shopping Interacting with hotel staff Interacting with the local guide Home visit	Staying informed about current affairs by following the news	Government control; human rights; relationship between religion and government

On-tour sources of post-travel culture involvement, continued.

Participant	Destination	Pre-travel involvement	Key on-tour experiences	Post-travel involvement	Shared themes between post-travel involvement and on-tour experiences
P15	India	Watching movies and documentaries Reading 'Shantaram' by (Roberts, n.d.)	Wandering Using local transport Feeling the atmosphere Being approached by locals Interacting with the local guide Village home visit Visiting religious sites Observing (poverty; spirituality; positivity; tradition; sense of community)	Reading 'The Mountain Shadow (Shantaram #2)' (Roberts, 2015); 'Siddhartha' (Hesse, 1981)	Religion; spirituality; poverty; identity
P19	Iran	Reading Omar Khayyam General awareness	Observing (culture of martyrdom; women's dress; economic change); Local hospitality Sightseeing	Reading a book on Omar Khayyam and a book on Iran in general	Literature
P20	India	Watching a documentary about Varanasi	Visiting religious sites; Other heritage sightseeing; Observing (poverty; inequality) Shopping (local spice shop)	Reading 'The Silk Roads: A New History of the World' (Frankopan, 2015) Cooking Indian food at home; Shopping at an Indian grocer	Historical interconnectedness; links between religions Food; spices
P21	India	Studying history at school	Visiting religious sites; Visit to medical clinic; Other sightseeing; Observing (poverty; attitudes to the environment; spirituality; traditions)	Eating out	Food