

THE EFFECT OF SACHSENHAUSEN VISITORS' PERSONALITY AND EMOTIONS ON MEANING AND WORD OF MOUTH

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This study assessed the effect of visitors' personality and emotional response on finding positive meaning in life and the intention to spread positive word of mouth. The sample ($n = 260$) consists of visitors to Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum near Berlin. Findings indicate that the emotion of interest positively contributes to finding positive meaning in life and positive word of mouth. The effects of personality are marginal. Personality explains little of the variance in positive meaning and positive word of mouth. Emotional response accounts for 25% of the variance in finding positive meaning in life—in terms of finding personal benefit from the visit, controlled for personality. Despite the dominant negative emotional response, tourists find positive meaning in their visit. These findings correspond with those observed in studies on personal trauma and loss. Positive meaning could potentially contribute to adjustment processes to cope with what occurred. Future research should include address longer term effects on postvisit behavior.

Key words: Emotions; Meaning in life; Dark tourism; Tourist experiences; Cultural heritage

Introduction

The study of emotional responses within tourism experiences is relatively new. Earlier work focused mostly on moods (e.g., Pearce, 1981) or adopted a more general approach of emotions in terms of positive and negative affect (e.g., Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Nawijn, 2011). Psychologists emphasized that it is better to separate emotions from more general affective states (Lerner & Keltner, 2000; Zeelenberg,

Nelissen, Breugelmans, & Pieters, 2008) and to distinguish between specific emotions when studying a certain phenomenon (Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, & Ram, 2012). Specific emotions have specific consequences in terms of behavior. For instance, feeling sad will have an effect on behavior that is different from an effect of feeling guilty. However, both these emotions are considered to be of negative valence. When only valence is studied, the distinction between different emotions of the same valence

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is lost, and consequently, potential effects in terms of behavior may be lost too. Although effects of emotions are studied extensively, this is not studied in a nonhedonic tourism context. The present study addresses this gap in research and studies the effects of emotions on positive word of mouth and meaning in life.

Studies on emotions in a tourism context focus almost completely on hedonically pleasant sites or trips (e.g., Bigné, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005; Hosany & Gilbert, 2010; Nawijn & Damen, 2014). Little is known about tourists' emotional response in nonhedonic tourism contexts. The nonhedonic context of this study is the former concentration camp of Sachsenhausen. Motives for tourists to visit former Nazi camps are not different from motivations found in regular heritage studies (cf. Biran, Poria, & Oren, 2011; Isaac & Çakmak, 2014). These motivations include educational motives, emotional involvement, identity formation and affirmation, connecting to one's own heritage, and seeking an authentic experience (Biran et al., 2011).

Studies that deal specifically with emotions at former Nazi camp sites are limited. As far as the authors are aware, there exists only one study that investigated the intensity of tourists' experience via a predetermined set of emotions. Nawijn and Fricke (2015) studied visitors to the Concentration Camp Memorial Neuengamme. Their study found that tourists feel negative emotions more intensely than positive emotions, which contrasts with emotional experience at hedonic sites (e.g., Lin, Kerstetter, Nawijn, & Mitas, 2014). Although Nawijn and Fricke (2015) studied emotional response on-site, Nawijn, Isaac, Gridnevskiy, and Van Liempt (2015) studied expected emotional response and their study revealed that potential visitors to concentration camp memorials expect to feel a mix of positive and negative emotions. Emotional responses are mainly triggered by the direct environment, but tourists' emotions are also partly influenced by their personality (Lin et al., 2014). For instance, according to Lin et al. (2014), extraverted tourists experience less sadness and fear. These findings underpin the importance of studying personality and their relation to emotions in a tourism context.

The context of this study is the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum. Sachsenhausen is a former SS concentration camp located north of Berlin. Over

200,000 people were imprisoned at Sachsenhausen and an estimated 65,000 were killed (Farmer, 1995; Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, 2014). The Sachsenhausen concentration camp was built in 1936. In the early years, most prisoners were political opponents of National Socialism. From 1938 and onwards, other groups were imprisoned, such as Sinti and Roma, criminals, homosexuals, and Jews. In 1939 the camp began to include prisoners of war and people from occupied countries. By 1944, 90% of the prisoners were non-Germans, mainly from the Soviet Union and Poland. The prisoners were used as forced laborers in the industry yard next to the camp. Prisoners could also be put into so-called punishment units, which were developed by the SS. Medical experiments were conducted on some of the prisoners. Evacuation of the camp was ordered on February 1, 1945, when it became clear that the Russian Red Army was approaching. Many prisoners were murdered in the industrial yard and during the evacuation of the subcamps. Others were deported to Mauthausen or Bergen-Belsen. Sachsenhausen was liberated on April 22, 1945, by Soviet and Polish troops (Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, 2014).

Literature Review

Emotions

Emotions are short-lived affective responses caused by the direct environment of an individual (cf. Izard, 1977; Plutchik, 1980). To clarify the different phases involved in an emotional experience, Scherer (2005) distinguishes five main components, including (1) a cognitive component in the form of appraisal, (2) a neurophysiological component, which concerns bodily symptoms, (3) a motivational component that determines action, (4) a motor expression component, and (5) feelings. These phases relate to a single event. A distinction based on valence or activation (Russell, 1980) is useful to provide an overall view of a certain context. For instance, it is insightful to know that, generally speaking, a vacation increases positive emotions (Mitas, Yarnal, Adams et al., 2012), while retaining negative emotions at a stable level (Lin et al., 2014). However, a single event can coactivate multiple emotions of potentially different valence

and activation (cf. Larsen, Hemenover, Norris, & Cacioppo, 2003). Therefore, an emotion-specific approach is required, as specific emotions may lead to specific outcomes (Lerner & Keltner, 2000). An important reason to examine the valence of specific emotions is the broaden and build theory (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004), which explains the long-term quality of life outcomes of frequent positive emotional experiences. Positive emotions have motivational components that are relatively broader than neutral or negative emotions, empowering individuals to build personal resources such as relationships, information, and self-awareness over time. At the same time, negative emotions are themselves adaptive and culturally appropriate in certain contexts.

Nawijn and Fricke (2015) reviewed studies on emotional response at dark tourism sites and conclude that (1) negative emotions dominate the emotional responses reported in visitor studies at dark sites and that (2) visits to dark sites coactivate negative and positive emotional responses. Contrary to a hedonic context, the study at Neuengamme demonstrated that negative emotions explain more of the variance in behavioral intentions than positive emotions (Nawijn & Fricke, 2015). Their review underlines earlier remarks by Preece and Price (2005) and Walter (2009) that existing studies on tourists' emotions at dark tourism sites are generally descriptive rather than analytical.

Personality

Personality deals with individual differences in terms of behavior, cognition, and emotion. The current dominant view on personality is that of the Five-Factor Model, also known as the Big Five (McCrae & Costa, 1991; McCrae & John, 1992). The Big Five model posits that personality can be organized in five traits, namely openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (i.e., emotional stability). Personality is highly heritable (Turkheimer & Waldron, 2000). For instance, twin studies showed that heritability per trait ranges between 42% and 57% (Bouchard Jr. & McGue, 2003). Furthermore, four of the five traits are associated with the volume of particular brain regions (DeYoung et al., 2010), highlighting the biological basis of personality. Personality traits are relatively

stable over the life course, particularly for adults (cf. Costa & McCrae, 1994; Gustavsson, Weinryb, Göransson, Pedersen, & Åsberg, 1997). Emotions are partially determined by personality traits. For instance, extraversion is generally related to positive emotions, whereas neuroticism is more often associated with negative emotions (Rusting & Larsen, 1997).

Meaning in Life

Meaning in life is an often-discussed concept (Baumeister, 1991). The conceptualization of meaning in life is not straightforward and multiple interpretations of the phenomenon exist. This study follows a conceptualization of Davis, Nolen-Hoeksema, and Larson (1998). These authors distinguished two forms of meaning in life. One type reflects the past, in the sense that this type of meaning deals with making sense of what happened. The second type of meaning in life looks more to the future and tries to attach a positive meaning to negative events (Davis et al., 1998). This form of meaning in life is generally defined as "positive meaning." Such positive meaning can be found in times of adversity (cf. Bower et al., 2005; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003) and fits well with the context of this study. A major benefit of finding positive meaning is that it strengthens resilience, which can result in increased well-being over time (Davis et al., 1998). For these reasons, the focus is on this particular aspect of meaning in life in the present study.

Earlier work in the area of dark tourism has found that visits to such places do contribute to finding meaning in life as visits include a confrontation with death, which forces visitors to reflect on their own life and its meaning. For instance, a study of visitors to the Shoah memorial museum in Jerusalem by E. H. Cohen (2011) found that tourists' understanding of the Shoah is enhanced by the museum experience. Similarly, Thurnell-Read (2009) reported that visitors to Auschwitz have a better understanding of the Holocaust because of their visit. Potentially, a visit to a concentration camp memorial also allows visitors to find positive meaning in the sense that their reflections and comparison can contribute to finding positive meaning through their emotional experience. Holocaust

memorial visits are emotional (Nawijn & Fricke, 2015), and provide a sense of meaning to tourists (Thurnell-Read, 2009), but the link between emotions and meaning in life remains unexplored. This study addresses this gap in research.

Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how tourists' emotional response to a visit of the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum affects finding positive meaning in life and the intention to spread positive word of mouth. Extending previous research on these effects (e.g., Nawijn & Fricke, 2015), potential effects of personality are controlled for, as personality is intertwined with emotional response and an important interindividual difference for understanding and communicating with different market segments. It is relevant to study emotional response of tourists in a non-hedonic tourism context based on the principle that people tend to avoid pain and seek pleasure. This theoretical assumption of a pleasure-seeking tendency in individuals dates back to the ancient Greeks and has been confirmed empirically in numerous studies (Higgins, 1997). Also in tourism/leisure contexts it is generally accepted—and expected—that a positive consumption experience has positive effects, whereas a negative consumption experience has negative effects (Soscia, 2007). However, this notion is proven to be too simplistic (cf. Higgins, 1997; Lerner & Keltner, 2000; Zeelenberg et al., 2008). Additionally, emotional involvement is an important reason for people to visit a dark tourism site (Biran et al., 2011). By studying visitor emotions in such a context, it is expected to find that visitors do not only experience pleasure (i.e., positive emotions), but also pain (i.e., negative emotions). Thus, although a visit coactivates pain and pleasure (cf. Nawijn & Fricke, 2015), a mix of emotions of different valence is expected to be associated with positive word of mouth and an experience that is meaningful to visitors in a positive way.

By using a quantitative approach in the study of emotion and personality, including a contemporary personality scale (Rammstedt & John, 2007) and an elaborate 24-item emotion scale, this study also represents a different approach compared to earlier

work on emotional response in hedonically unpleasant tourism contexts, which used a limited 10-item emotion scale (Nawijn & Fricke, 2015) or mainly qualitative methods (e.g., Best, 2007; Stone, 2012; Thurnell-Read, 2009). The research questions of this study are: (1) How do tourists' emotional responses explain positive meaning derived from the visit over and above personality? (2) How do tourists' emotional responses explain positive word of mouth over and above personality? (3) Does positive meaning mediate the potential effect of emotions on positive word of mouth?

Methodology

Study Design and Data Collection

The data for this study were collected using a self-administered survey questionnaire at the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum between March 18, 2014 and March 23, 2014. A nonprobability diversity sampling approach was used. Visitors were approached at the exit of the memorial, which every visitor passes after their visit, and asked to participate in the survey. Data were collected on various days of the week over periods of time lasting 3 to 5 hr to increase the diversity of visitors. Two hundred seventy-nine visitors completed the survey. In terms of nationality, the largest number of respondents was German (27.3%), with visitors from Spain (13.1%) and the US (11.2%) also substantially represented. Gender division was almost equal (52.7% female; 47.3% male). The oldest respondent was 80 years old ($M = 33.15$; $SD = 15.371$).

Study Instrument

The self-report questionnaire was created in the English language and translated to German and Spanish. The German version of the questionnaire was translated from English to German by one of the authors, who is a native German speaker. The German version was checked for potential translation issues by three native German speakers and a bilingual speaker. The Spanish version of the questionnaire was translated from English by one of the authors. The Spanish version was checked by two native Spanish speakers and an English-Spanish

language teacher. Logistical limitations precluded translation into further languages. The choice for English, German, and Spanish questionnaires corresponded with observed language abilities of visitors to the site.

Emotions

Psychological as well as tourism research on emotions typically uses a list of emotion words that participants are asked to rate based on the intensity of their feelings (e.g., PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). A single, widely favored scale to measure emotions in a leisure or tourism context does not exist (cf. Buda, d'Hautesserre, & Johnston, 2014; J. Lee & Kyle, 2013; Lin et al., 2014). The current study adopts a 24-item emotion scale. Twelve positive emotions were included: awe, contentment, curiosity, fascination, gratitude, hope, interest, joy, love, positive surprise, pride, and respect. Twelve negative emotions were also included: anger, despair, disgust, embarrassment, fear, grief, guilt, horror, negative surprise, sadness, shame, and shock. The choice for these emotions was based on scales used by Nawijn and Fricke (2015) and Lin et al. (2014). Almost all emotion items of these scales were used, with some exceptions based on previous international tourism data collections in which complex emotion words were not understood by respondents (Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2013). Respondents indicated the extent to which they had felt each emotion during their visit. Every emotion item was scored on a 5-point scale that ranged from "not at all" (1) to "very strongly" (5).

Personality

The BFI-10 by Rammstedt and John (2007) was used to measure personality in terms of the Big Five (McCrae & John, 1992). The BFI-10 is a short version of the BFI-44 and especially designed for research settings with limited time constraints. Lin et al. (2014) used the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann Jr., 2003). The BFI-10 performs better than the TIPI, due to its lower intercorrelations and the clear five-factor structure. The BFI-10 captures 70% of the full variance in the BFI-44 and retains 85% of its

retest reliability (Rammstedt & John, 2007). The BFI-10 was calculated according to instructions by Rammstedt and John (2007). Intercorrelations between the traits were mostly nonsignificant ($p > 0.05$). Small significant intercorrelations were observed between extraversion and neuroticism ($r = -0.129$; $p = 0.041$), between neuroticism and conscientiousness ($r = -0.127$; $p = 0.045$), and conscientiousness and openness ($r = 0.149$; $p = 0.019$). Overall, this implies that the BFI-10 produced valid measures of personality traits.

Positive Word of Mouth

Positive word of mouth was included as a behavioral intention. Earlier work has also included revisit intention (Nawijn & Fricke, 2015). Revisit intention was excluded from the present article as revisit intention is generally low for concentration camp memorials, thus not necessarily related to the visitor experience. Furthermore, revisit intention corresponds only weakly to actual behavior (McKercher & Tse, 2012). Positive word of mouth was scored on a 5-point scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5).

Positive Meaning in Life

Three items that comprised positive meaning in life were derived from a study by Fredrickson et al. (2003). The items were "I feel I will have a positive benefit from my visit"; "I think that there is something to learn from my visit"; and "I can find positive meaning in my visit." These items used a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha for positive meaning in life (0.834) indicated good internal consistency and reliability (Cortina, 1993). A positive meaning in life variable was created by calculating the mean score of these three items.

Data Screening and Analysis

The emotion items, positive meaning in life items, and positive word of mouth were screened for severely incomplete responses. Nineteen questionnaires were omitted as more than half of responses to these key items on the questionnaire were missing. Thus, the final sample comprised 260 visitors.

It is imperative to study emotions individually rather than in an aggregated manner, especially given the specific nonhedonic context of the study. In other words, emotions in this study are considered observed variables rather than latent factors. This makes sense theoretically, but to verify this assumption empirically, an exploratory factor analysis in SPSS version 21 was performed, followed by a confirmatory factor analysis in AMOS version 22. As some correlation between the emotions was to be expected, the oblique Promax rotation technique was used. Due to issues such as cross-loadings, low communalities, and not loading on a factor, 15 emotions were removed. The exploratory factor analysis finally resulted in a two-factor solution, which explained 45.538% of the variance. One factor contained four emotions, whereas the other factor contained five emotions. The emotions in the first factor were horror, sadness, shock, and grief. The emotions in the second factor were shame, embarrassment, guilt, anger, and fear. The KMO score of 0.834 was good and Bartlett's test was significant. The factor loadings in the final model were acceptable, but the model had three emotions with factor loadings below 0.5 and the average factor loading on factor 2 did not exceed the preferred average of 0.7. The internal consistencies in terms of Cronbach's alphas were good (0.809) and acceptable (0.754), respectively. The confirmatory factor analysis showed issues of common method bias, which could only be solved by removing embarrassment. However, this did not resolve the common method bias issue. On the contrary, it led to a covariance matrix that was not positive definite. This particular issue could not be resolved and consequently the initial factor model, as exposed via the exploratory factor analysis, could not be confirmed via confirmatory factor analysis.

The first research question ("How do tourists' emotional responses explain positive meaning derived from the visit over and above personality?") was answered by performing a regression analysis on positive meaning in which all 24 emotions were added in Step 2, controlling for personality in Step 1. Effect sizes were interpreted according to guidelines proposed by J. Cohen (1988). Missing values were excluded list wise. The second research question ("How do tourists' emotional responses explain

positive word of mouth over and above personality?") was tested by performing a linear regression analysis in the same way, with positive word of mouth included in the first step (Step 1). Finally, the analysis checked whether positive meaning mediated the potential effect of emotional responses on positive word of mouth, which tackled the third research question ("Does positive meaning mediate the potential effect of emotions on positive word of mouth?"). This potential mediation was tested via a path model that tested direct and indirect effects of emotions on positive word of mouth, potentially mediated by positive meaning in life. To this end, a path model in AMOS version 22 was used.

Results

Visitors feel interest ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.791$), sadness ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.022$), horror ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.088$), and disgust ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.159$) the most intensely during their visit to Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum. Felt least intensely are joy ($M = 1.26$, $SD = 0.701$), pride ($M = 1.30$, $SD = 0.768$), contentment ($M = 1.73$, $SD = 1.052$), and love ($M = 1.75$, $SD = 1.168$). Negative emotions are felt more intensely ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.776$) than positive emotions ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 0.585$). An overview of all mean scores and standard deviations is presented in Table 1.

The visitors in the sample are generally quite willing to spread positive word of mouth ($M = 4.41$; $SD = 0.850$). Positive meaning in life is also relatively high ($M = 4.16$; $SD = 0.834$).

The first research question was answered by performing a regression analysis with positive meaning. The personality traits were entered in Step 1 as controls. All emotions were added in Step 2. The findings are presented in Table 2. The model was significant as a whole. Of the total variance in positive meaning, 31.2% was explained by the model, $F(29, 143) = 2.234$, $p < 0.005$.

Contentment ($\beta = -0.230$, $p = 0.014$), positive surprise ($\beta = 0.189$, $p = 0.023$), and interest ($\beta = 0.307$, $p = 0.000$) contributed significantly to the explained variance in positive meaning. The emotions explained 25.0% of the variance in positive meaning. The personality traits explained 6.2% of the variance in positive meaning. Conscientiousness

Table 1
Tourists' Emotional Response to Sachsenhausen

Emotion	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Interest	4.24	0.791
Sadness	4.10	1.022
Horror	3.93	1.088
Disgust	3.90	1.159
Curiosity	3.57	1.049
Shock	3.48	1.159
Anger	3.45	1.244
Grief	3.42	1.237
Respect	3.28	1.491
Shame	3.08	1.458
Negative surprise	3.00	1.285
Awe	2.97	1.346
Despair	2.94	1.262
Fascination	2.82	1.355
Fear	2.73	1.296
Hope	2.39	1.242
Embarrassment	2.39	1.356
Guilt	2.13	1.245
Gratitude	2.01	1.244
Positive surprise	1.99	1.177
Love	1.75	1.168
Contentment	1.73	1.052
Pride	1.30	0.768
Joy	1.26	0.701

Table 2
Regression for Positive Meaning With Emotions,
Controlled for Personality Traits

Variable		Sig.	<i>R</i> ² Change
Extraversion		0.429	0.062
Agreeableness		0.546	
Conscientiousness		0.337	
Neuroticism		0.709	
Openness		0.640	
Awe		0.422	0.250
Contentment	-0.230	0.014	
Curiosity		0.942	
Fascination		0.684	
Gratitude		0.836	
Hope		0.737	
Interest	0.307	0.000	
Joy		0.356	
Love		0.873	
Positive surprise	0.189	0.023	
Pride		0.064	
Respect		0.207	
Anger		0.262	
Despair		0.417	
Disgust		0.569	
Embarrassment		0.793	
Fear		0.933	
Grief		0.289	
Guilt		0.812	
Horror		0.981	
Negative surprise		0.295	
Sadness		0.419	
Shame		0.787	
Shock		0.463	

Note. Total $R^2 = 0.312$, $F = 2.234$. Reported betas are standardized; R^2 change indicated per Step.

is associated with positive meaning and with horror, shame, and joy. These emotions do not make an individual contribution in the explained variance of positive meaning in the regression analysis.

To answer the second research question, a regression analysis with positive word of mouth was performed. The personality traits were entered in Step 1, as control variables. In the following step, all emotions were added. The findings on positive word of mouth are presented in Table 3. The model was significant as a whole. The total variance explained in positive word of mouth was 32.8%, $F(29, 143) = 2.403$, $p < 0.0001$.

Shock and interest contribute significantly to the explained variance in positive word of mouth. Shock lowers positive word of mouth ($\beta = -0.289$, $p = 0.010$), whereas interest raises positive word of mouth ($\beta = 0.329$, $p = 0.000$). The emotions explained 28.5% of the variance in positive word of mouth. The personality traits explained approximately only 4% of the variance.

Finally, the analysis ended with a test of whether finding positive meaning in life mediates the effect

of emotions on positive word of mouth. In AMOS version 22, a path model was created using the emotions that have significant ($p < 0.05$) zero-order correlations with positive word of mouth. These are: awe, curiosity, hope, interest, positive surprise, respect, anger, disgust, horror, sadness, shame. The path model indicated that its fit was poor (e.g., CFI = 0.185; RMSEA = 0.186) and that there was no mediation effect. The indirect effects, in terms of the standardized regression coefficients, were all close to zero. The highest observed indirect effect was only 0.04. The direct effects were similar to those observed in the regression analyses. Therefore, it is safe to say that there was no mediation effect of positive meaning. Consequently, positive word of mouth and positive meaning should be regarded as separate outcome variables.

Table 3
Regression for Positive Word of Mouth With Emotions,
Controlled for Personality Traits

Variable	Sig.	R ² Change
Extraversion	0.724	0.042
Agreeableness	0.607	
Conscientiousness	0.511	
Neuroticism	0.409	
Openness	0.993	
Awe	0.106	0.285
Contentment	0.423	
Curiosity	0.755	
Fascination	0.252	
Gratitude	0.302	
Hope	0.177	
Interest	0.329	0.000
Joy	0.843	
Love	0.802	
Positive surprise	0.051	
Pride	0.325	
Respect	0.586	
Anger	0.055	
Despair	0.222	
Disgust	0.118	
Embarrassment	0.620	
Fear	0.962	
Grief	0.950	
Guilt	0.919	
Horror	0.921	
Negative surprise	0.774	
Sadness	0.054	
Shame	0.618	
Shock	-0.289	0.010

Note. Total $R^2 = 0.328$, $F = 2.403$. Reported betas are standardized; R^2 change indicated per Step.

Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine how visitors' emotional response to a visit of the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum affects finding positive meaning in life and the intention to spread positive word of mouth. Although emotional response explained between 25% and 28.5% in the variance in behavioral intentions and positive meaning, the personality traits explained only between 4.2% and 6.2%. Thus, the findings indicate that personality traits have hardly any effect on the consequences of the visit, in terms of finding positive meaning in life and spreading positive word of mouth.

The importance of emotion over personality in the consequences of the visit extend existing literature in multiple ways. First, some authors have asserted that a certain "type" of person could be more attracted

to or affected by dark tourism experiences such as Sachsenhausen (e.g., Wight, 2006). In contrast, the findings suggest that the experience at the site, specifically in terms of emotions, may be more powerful than stable interindividual differences, such as personality. Second, research on hedonic vacations suggests that tourists' personality can be an important determinant of emotional response (Lin et al., 2014). This study's findings suggest that—in terms of finding positive meaning in life—the role of personality is rather limited in nonhedonic contexts.

The emotion of interest is of particular importance. Interest raises the extent to which visitors find positive meaning through the visit and increases the likelihood of spreading positive word of mouth. Interest, an emotion sparked by novelty (Fredrickson, 1998), has been said to be the most common or even "default" human emotion (Izard, 1977). Foundational studies asserted that tourism experiences are generally marked by modulated pursuit of novelty (e.g., Crompton, 1979), likely leading to feelings of interest across a variety of tourism experiences, such as brief outings focused on participants' hobbies or passions (Mitas, Yarnal, & Chick, 2012). The sample's experiences of Sachsenhausen suggest that, despite a different balance of positive to negative emotions, interest is at least as prominent in a dark tourism experience as in some hedonic types of trips.

The finding that negative emotions dominate the visitor experience is consistent with that of Nawijn and Fricke (2015) and Brown (2015), and conceptual work on visitor experiences at dark tourism sites (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). Although "negative" emotions are experienced more intensely on average, "positive" emotions contribute individually to the explained variance in finding positive meaning. Interest and positive surprise have a positive effect, whereas contentment has a negative effect on finding positive meaning in life.

These findings extend the work on the tourist experience at concentration camp memorials by showing that, despite a dominant negative emotional response, tourists find positive meaning in their visit. The results match those observed in studies on personal trauma and loss, showing that effort in the form of cognitive framing (e.g., what happened was horrible, but we can learn from it to become better people) leads to positive long-term

outcomes from intensely negative emotional experiences (e.g., Bower et al., 2005; Davis et al., 1998).

The findings also partly contest the pleasure principle, which assumes that individuals simply seek pleasure and avoid pain (cf. Higgins, 1997). Even though the traumatic event that tourists are confronted with in this context may not necessarily be of a personal nature, finding positive meaning can potentially contribute to adjustment processes to cope with what happened, which in turn may lead to increased well-being over time (Davis et al., 1998).

Additionally, the findings reveal that emotional response contributes to finding positive meaning derived from the visit. This partly supports the broaden and build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004) in the sense that certain positive emotions—mainly interest—contribute to finding positive meaning. However, contentment lowers positive meaning. This contrasts theoretical assumptions of the broaden and build theory on the supposed universal positivity of positive emotions. Similarly, the factor analyses underscore the assertion of the importance of distinguishing between unique emotions (Lerner & Keltner, 2000; Zeelenberg et al., 2008), specifically in tourism contexts (Mitas, Yarnal, Adams, et al., 2012), and according to this study, particularly in specific dark tourism contexts.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study included an elaborate 24-item emotion scale. However, more emotions exist than the ones that are included (cf. Lin et al., 2014). A truly exhaustive list may have been too long to use in an on-site survey. Therefore, future research should aim to develop a feasible emotion scale grounded in current psychological theory that can be used in multiple tourism contexts.

Positive word of mouth is very important for Holocaust memorials, as the available budgets are generally tight and aggressive promotion is ethically questioned. Raising interest and lowering shock are important for positive word of mouth to be successful. Concentration camp memorials would thus benefit from assessing what exactly triggers interest and shock and carefully design their tours in such a way that interest is raised and shock is lowered (cf. Pullman & Gross, 2004). More generally, just as scientific research of tourists' emotions should

distinguish between specific emotions, it is important for destinations and attractions to measure and manage for specific emotions, as each emotion has a unique set of causes and consequences. The findings support this approach in the context of dark tourism sites.

Furthermore, the explained variances that were observed for positive meaning and positive word of mouth were somewhat low, namely 31.2% and 32.8%, respectively. Likely cognitions such as attitudes or beliefs explain part of the variance, which could not be uncovered in this study (cf. Y.-J. Lee, 2016). Therefore, future studies should include both affective and cognitive measures.

Additionally, the focal point of meaning in this study is that of positive meaning in terms of benefit finding. Another construal of meaning deals with making sense of what happened. According to Davis et al. (1998), this is a different type of meaning that likely involves a different psychological process. This type of meaning is associated with less distress (Davis et al., 1998). In this study's context, this could be related to negative emotions experienced on site. Future research would be required to test this assumption.

Also, the findings of this study pose an interesting question for future research, namely if visitors to dark tourism sites are aware of the observed long-term outcomes. It is also important to assess whether they see their visit as an unpleasant but ultimately beneficial investment in their future, or, in contrast, are unaware of the potential long-term impact of their visit.

Finally, although personality traits are controlled for in the analyses, there is the possibility of an unknown third variable effect. Longitudinal research would be needed to clearly distinguish between cause and effect.

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