



Tourism experiences vs. material purchases: Effects of eudaimonic consumption motive on consumers' reactions to invidious comparisons

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ABSTRACT

Due to easy travel information access, tourists nowadays are susceptible to invidious post-purchase comparisons (e.g. realizing a better deal after purchase), which may compromise their satisfaction and further hurt the business. To understand this less-tapped issue, particularly in a context closer to reality where people spend limited discretionary income on both tourism experiences and material possessions, this study investigates to what extent people are disturbed by invidious comparisons in tourism experiential versus material consumptions. Drawing on the experience recommendation theory and eudaimonia-hedonia literature, we propose the presence of eudaimonic consumption motive as a critical determinant of resistance to invidious comparisons. Moreover, the implicit eudaimonic motive is the key contributor to the greater resistance of tourism experiential purchases to invidious comparisons than material purchases. Findings from two experimental studies supported these propositions. This study bridges and expands both experience recommendation and eudaimonia literature, while also informs approaches for alleviating invidious comparisons.

1. Introduction

Thanks to the fast advancing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), tourists nowadays have easy access to rich information about a tourism product, no matter before, during, or even after the purchase (Christou & Nella, 2012). Such information access may also impose challenges on tourism businesses, such as the likely occurrence of invidious comparisons after a tourist making a purchase, when the tourist realizes the existence of preferable options (e.g., a better deal). Given the dynamic pricing strategies broadly adopted by tourism service providers and Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) to maximize their profits, the price level for a same product tends to fluctuate frequently even during a day (Abrate, Nicolau, & Viglia, 2019; Park & Jang, 2018; Yang & Leung, 2018). It is thus particularly common for tourists to voluntarily monitor or involuntarily get exposed to price changes of the same travel product even after their already-made purchases, e.g., via electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social media platforms or by subscribing to a price tracking alert for a travel product through various metasearch sites or OTAs (bib Feng et al 2020Feng, Guruganesh, Liaw, Mehta, & Sethi, 2020bib Feng et al 2020; Yang & Leung, 2018). A spotted price drop is likely to trigger people's counterfactual thinking, which may result in

their negative emotions such as regret, envy, unfairness, and dissatisfaction (Kimes, 2002; Mauri, Sainaghi, & Viglia, 2019; Park & Jang, 2018; Roese, 1997). It could even reduce their repurchase intention or enhance their switching intention to a different provider (Dutta, Biswas, & Grewal, 2011; Mattila & Ro, 2008). Existing tourism studies have primarily concentrated on invidious comparisons prior to purchases (e.g., Han & Hyun, 2015; Oh, 2003) rather than after. It is thereby worthy to explore to what extent would the post-purchase invidious price comparisons (abbreviated to *invidious comparisons* thereafter) disturb tourists, and provide an in-depth investigation on the underlying mechanism to shed light on the potential direction of alleviating these disturbing effects. More specifically, in reality people often need to choose between travel purchases versus non-travel consumption decisions (e.g., material consumptions) given the limited discretionary income. It thus deems more accurate to assess the patterns of tourism consumption in comparison with the competing consumptions (e.g., material consumption), in order to better capture the reality.

Drawing on *Experience Recommendation Theory* (Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003) and *Eudaimonia-hedonia* literature (Huta & Ryan, 2010; Ryff, 1989), this study derived a promising proposition for tourism products such that, tourism experiences should be more resistant than material

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consumption to disturbance caused by invidious comparisons. Extant literature on experience recommendation theory suggests that compared to material possessions, experiential consumptions in general are more resistant to invidious comparisons (Carter & Gilovich, 2010; Gilovich & Gallo, 2020; Zhang, Howell, Caprariello, & Guevarra, 2014). For example, Carter and Gilovich (2010) suggested that material purchases tend to be evaluated more comparatively than experiential purchases; consequently, invidious comparisons would be more troubling when it came to material purchases than experiential purchases. However, it is not entirely clear when experiences are less prone to invidious comparisons. Are experiences always more resistant to invidious comparisons than material possessions? Are there any conditions under which the experience recommendation does not hold true? Instead of jumping to conclusions that the experiential superiority applies in all type of experiential consumptions, we propose a potential enabling condition for the experiential superiority in invidious comparisons - the potential of eudaimonic pursuit from the engaged experience, which is often the case with tourism consumption. Deriving from the eudaimonia literature (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013), anticipated eudaimonic consumptive outcomes would render a purchase higher in the value hierarchy than monetary value, thereby ameliorating the negative effects of disadvantageous price comparisons.

This introduced factor of eudaimonic motive elucidates a key difference between spending money on tourism experiences versus on material possessions. That is, tourism experiences in nature are associated with eudaimonia, hence people tend to be subconsciously motivated to pursue eudaimonia from tourism experiences, a unique advantage absent in material consumptions. Accordingly, how likely a eudaimonic motive presents should moderate the extent to which tourism experiences are resistant to invidious comparisons relative to material possessions.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first time the eudaimonia-hedonia literature has been employed to shed light on the underlying rationale of experience recommendation. The check of eudaimonic pursuit potential helps in setting the boundary conditions for experience recommendation theory and explaining when the experiential superiority would apply versus not (Matz, Gladstone, & Stillwell, 2016; Mittal & Sundie, 2017), which extends the experience recommendation literature. To this end, this study examines whether tourism experiences would be more resistant to invidious comparisons than material consumptions and if the presence of eudaimonic consumption motive is key to the discrepancy explanation. To achieve the aforementioned research objectives, this study adopts a rigorous procedure of two experiments, with revalidation across different samples and different study designs. Different approaches are used to measure the independent variables and dependent variables, and multiple platforms are used for data collection.

2. Theoretical foundation

2.1. Experience recommendation and invidious price comparisons

Experience recommendation is the notion that people enjoy better purchase outcomes by prioritizing experiential purchases over material ones (Carter & Gilovich, 2012; Van Boven, 2005). Material purchases have been defined as purchases made "with the primary intention of acquiring a material possession—a tangible object that you obtain and keep in your possession," whereas experiential purchases are those made with "the primary intention of acquiring a life experience—an event or series of events that you personally encounter or live through" (Van Boven & Gilovich, 2003, p. 1194).

Empirical evidence shows that experiential purchases not only generate greater social and psychological benefits than material purchases (Gilovich & Gallo, 2020), but also are less subject to disadvantageous comparisons, including invidious price comparisons (Bastos, 2019; Mann & Gilovich, 2016; Pelletier & Collier, 2018). In support of

the superior resistance of experiences to invidious price comparisons, scholars have found that experiences are less tied to money than material objects (Bastos, 2019; Pchelin & Howell, 2014). A variety of explanations have been proposed to account for the experiential superiority, yet the underlying rationale for the superior resistance of experiential consumption to invidious price comparisons has not been empirically established (Mann & Gilovich, 2016). Some possible explanations for experience superiority are reviewed below to shed light on the lens used to explore such a rationale for tourism experiences.

A predominant rationale for the experience recommendation has been the *intangible* nature of experiences relative to concrete/tangible material products (Carter & Gilovich, 2010). Such intangibility could render comparisons with alternative product/price choices vague and inaccurate. Van Boven (2005) further proposed that intangible offerings are more open to individual interpretation and imagination based on personal characteristics, which results in the enhanced perception of self-relevance and greater attachment of sentimental value, hence are difficult to compare. A similar view is that experiences inherently are not as countable as materials, leading to a lower likelihood for people to engage in comparative thinking when evaluating their quality (Ma & Roesse, 2013). Consequently, scholars claim that experiential consumption is evaluated on its own terms, because people's feelings after experiential consumption suffice as the evaluation of an experience's absolute value; therefore, there is less need for relative value judgment (Hsee, Yang, Li, & Shen, 2009).

Another potential strength of experiences in the face of disadvantageous comparisons lies in the *uniqueness* of each instance of experiential consumption. The same experiential product, when offered to different individuals across various contexts, could generate different experiences and outcomes. Experiences are, in general, perceived as unique opportunities and are harder to compare than material goods, which are easily comparable through a standardized list of attributes (Bastos, 2019). Such difficulty in feature-by-feature comparison deems a more holistic evaluation necessary for experiences than for material objects (Dijksterhuis & Nordgren, 2006; Inbar, Cone, & Gilovich, 2010). Due to its uniqueness, people may also find that the value of experiential consumption is less likely to be accurately predicted in monetary terms than the value of material consumption (Mann & Gilovich, 2016).

More importantly, cumulative evidence demonstrates that people tend to assign greater value to experiences over material objects because experiences are closer to ones' self-identity (Carter & Gilovich, 2012). This line of reasoning is particularly relevant when consumers learn that the *same* product they have purchased is now available at a lower price. Carter and Gilovich (2010) suggested that experiences have unparalleled value, because experiences tend to reside in human memory and become part of individuals' identities. As such, people may adopt self-serving criteria when evaluating experiences to preserve their identities (Dunning, Meyerowitz, & Holzberg, 1989). Often, this results in favorable evaluations of their own experiences, and it makes experiences more resistant to disadvantageous comparisons.

While such reasoning is conceptually relevant and compelling, this angle still does not sufficiently explain the entirety of invidious comparisons, as it overgeneralizes that all experiences would be more likely integrated into self-identity than material consumptions. Yet material consumptions could have a similar chance, if not more, to be integrated into self-identity, depending on the context or personality. For example, a golf fan may perceive a set of professional golf gear more indispensable than a casual dining experience as the consumption purpose for the former is closer to his/her self-identity. In such cases, the major difference between the two types of consumption may not lie in the form of the consumption, but rather the purpose of the consumption. Scholars have gradually become aware of such contextual variation in experience recommendation (Kasouf, Morrish, & Miles, 2015; Rudman & Spencer, 2007). For instance, Matz et al. (2016) observed a potential violation of experience recommendation, finding that the fit between product and personality brings the most life satisfaction, regardless of experiential or

material consumption. Yang and Mattila (2017) also demonstrated that status seekers tend to prefer luxury goods to luxury hospitality services because the former has superior utility in signaling wealth/status and is perfectly aligned with their primary purchase goal and driver of happiness.

The current study thus proposes a novel angle to explain the potential context-based variation in experience recommendation. We propose the eudaimonic versus hedonic consumption motive as a critical underlying determinant of experiential superiority with regard to invidious price comparison. Namely, the resistance to invidious price comparisons depends on whether an individual anticipates the fulfillment of eudaimonic benefits from consumption or merely seeks hedonic pleasure, to be detailed in the following section.

2.2. Eudaimonia and price comparison resistance

As pivotal concepts in positive psychology, *eudaimonia* refers to the facet of individual well-being that highlights the long-term sense of self-fulfillment/actualization derived from seeking the meaning of life, whereas *hedonia* refers to the aspect of well-being that highlights temporary pleasure maximization and pain avoidance (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989; Waterman, Schwartz, & Conti, 2008). In particular, hedonia is often assessed with subjective well-being such as positive affect and life satisfaction, whereas eudaimonia is commonly indicated from psychological well-being, which incorporates all major indicators of long-term well-being such as autonomy, self-acceptance, positive relationships, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and personal growth (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). Eudaimonia has been commonly acknowledged as optimal well-being, not only because it stresses more fundamental and enduring benefits for individuals (i.e., living a meaningful life by being true to oneself and reaching one's fullest individual potential), but also because it has broader societal implications, as virtues play a crucial role in its achievement (Huta & Ryan, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Eudaimonia has been identified as an implicit life goal and is considered priceless to most people (Bauer, 2016, pp. 147–174).

According to the eudaimonic identity theory, as long as consumption has high potential for supporting eudaimonia, the consumptive experience is likely to be accepted as part of self-identity, regardless of whether experiences are successful or unsuccessful (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013). A consumption experience with high potential to support eudaimonia could be attributed to a customer being strongly driven to pursue eudaimonia, or to the existence of a eudaimonia-fulfilling context. In contrast, when there is low potential to support eudaimonia, the customer may not incorporate all aspects into self-identity. As such, experiential superiority may not be present, and invidious comparisons could continue to haunt the individual, as the self-defensive mechanism only applies to experiences incorporated into self-identity (Carter & Gilovich, 2010).

In fact, some recent empirical studies support this eudaimonic identity proposition. According to Lee, Hall, and Wood (2018), members of higher social classes whose abundant resources enable them to focus on self-growth tend to be happier with experiential purchases than with material purchases. However, this experiential advantage does not hold true among members of lower social classes. Similarly, scholars found that when materialists make purchases based on a self-signaling motive (i.e., to boost self-acceptance) rather than an other-signaling motive (i.e., to inform others about social status), material purchases become more supportive of their eudaimonia desire and thus are better integrated into their self-identities and generate greater well-being benefits than experiences (Pandelaere, 2016; Zhang et al., 2014). Findings from these studies contradict with the original experience recommendation proposition, and also point to the exceptional importance of the eudaimonic motive in securing the experience recommendation.

Taken together, it is reasonable to hypothesize that when people anticipate eudaimonic outcomes from purchases, whether experiential

or material, the unparalleled value of eudaimonia will make the consumptions integrated to their self-identities, and consequently, should result in higher resistance to disadvantageous comparisons. In other words, when facing the invidious comparisons, eudaimonic purchases should lead to less negative outcomes (e.g., disturbance and diminished satisfaction) than hedonic purchases.

H1: After learning that previous purchases are now available at a lower price, consumers who made eudaimonic purchases are (a) less disturbed and (b) have less diminished satisfaction than those who made hedonic purchases.

2.3. Tourism experiences, eudaimonia, and price comparison resistance

While ample studies have established the superiority of various experiences in enhancing well-being relative to material goods (e.g., Guevarra & Howell, 2015; Howell, Pchelin, & Lyer 2012), researchers have focused primarily on fleeting hedonic/subjective well-being (e.g., Hajdu & Hajdu, 2017; Mogilner, Whillans, & Norton, 2018). Inconsistent findings were spotted among the limited attempts exploring experiential superiority in boosting eudaimonia (Hwang & Lee, 2019). Some studies have implied that experiences have the potential to outperform materials in terms of increasing vitality and promoting positive social relationships, factors that are closely related to eudaimonia (Howell & Hill, 2009; Kim & Jang, 2017); while other scholars found no such advantage of experiences over materials in producing long-term well-being (e.g., Sääksjärvi, Hellén, & Desmet, 2016). One possible reason for such mixed findings could be due to the lack of differentiation among various types of experiential consumptions. For example, a regular dining out can be very different from attending a spa retreat. The later could possibly result in higher eudaimonia than the former.

In fact, increasing evidences have suggest that experiences may not always support eudaimonia better than material objects. For instance, scholars observed the superiority of experiences in boosting eudaimonia only when they promote social benefits (e.g., when individuals share experiences with others or feel connected with others who purchased the same experiences) (Kumar, Rajan, Gupta, & DallaPozza, 2019; Sun, Harris, & Vazire, 2019), when experiences are unique enough to affirm one's self-identity (Hornik & Diesendruck, 2017), or when experiences satisfy all the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Guevarra & Howell, 2015). These findings indicate that not all types of experiences can cultivate the long-term eudaimonic well-being (Vittersø, 2013). Therefore, the current study highlights the need to differentiate experiences based on their tendency to facilitate eudaimonia. Experiences that can more reliably produce superior outcomes to materials (e.g., resistance to invidious comparisons) should be those that inherently offer more opportunities to cultivate eudaimonia or are naturally associated with eudaimonic benefits in people's minds.

Tourism experiences are accordingly proposed as a classic example of this type of experience. Aligned with existing empirical evidence, current research conceives tourism experiences as inherently supporting eudaimonia. Many studies have demonstrated how tourism experiences can benefit individual eudaimonia (McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Smith & Diekmann, 2017; Vada, Prentice, Scott, & Hsiao, 2020). For instance, eudaimonia has been identified as a major purpose of tourism when tourists search for authenticity as a way to increase self-awareness, and to learn more about themselves, the world, and their place in it (Laing & Frost, 2017). Empirical evidence shows that tourism supports eudaimonia through six pillars: autonomy, self-acceptance, positive relationships, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and personal growth (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). As tourism can naturally cultivate these pillars of eudaimonia (elaborated in the following paragraphs), the benefits received by tourists without having to intentionally pursue them, tourism thus tends to be intuitively associated with eudaimonic benefits in people's minds. Accordingly, eudaimonia can manifest as an implicit desire, and not necessarily as an intentional goal to pursue.

First, scholars found how people increasingly pursue tourism experiences for expressing their unique identities rather than receive recognition from others on wealth and social status (Bronner & de Hoog, 2018). The growth of special interest tourism also indicates the evolvement trajectory of tourism experiences as toward more autonomously driven than motivated by external incentives such as social recognition (Ma, Kirilenko, & Stepchenkova, 2020). Such experiences provide opportunities to exercise *autonomy*, which may not be exercised often in daily life due to limitations imposed by work and family responsibilities (Buzinde, 2020). Second, existing research has revealed that tourism experiences offer opportunities for self-exploration/reflection and re-examination of authentic self-identity. This opportunity is less available in daily life and can foster existential authenticity (Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017a), the state whereby individuals behave in accordance with their own values (Wang, 1999). As such, people cultivate *self-acceptance*, an essential pillar of eudaimonia (Ryff, 1989), with discovery and embracement of one's true self-identity. Tourists may not consciously realize or pursue such eudaimonic benefits in real time, but may notice them later when comparing their experiences in everyday life versus those during their trips (Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017b).

Third, according to Lewis, Kerr, and Burgess (2013), tourism is primarily a social activity that involves family, relatives, friends, or other reference groups. Moreover, people are motivated to share their novel tourism stories via word-of-mouth, both online and offline. Thus, a wide variety of venues exist in tourism to satisfy tourists' basic psychological need for positive social relationships (Lee & Oh, 2017), another key component of eudaimonia (Ryff, 1989). This relative strength of tourism is expected to surpass many other types of experiences, including material consumption (Minnaert, Maitland, & Miller, 2009). Fourth, evidence shows that tourism supports eudaimonia by actively engaging tourists in meaningful activities, even as simply as paying towards activities with noble initiatives such as contributing to poverty or inequality alleviation (Coghlan, 2015; Heintzman, 2013), through which tourism provides opportunities to enhance *purpose in life*, a necessary pillar of eudaimonia as well (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989).

In addition, tourism can enhance individual *environmental mastery*/competence, another pillar of eudaimonia (Ryff, 1989), both objectively and in terms of self-appraisal. Objective elevation is commonly achieved through: (a) enabling individuals to develop knowledge and skills about how to navigate new destinations and engage in new activities, and (b) overcoming physical (e.g., exhaustion) and/or mental (e.g., fear and anxiety) challenges (Huta, 2013). Tourism experiences also empower tourists by enhancing their self-evaluation of own abilities; for example, older adults who travel form positive appraisals of their own health, which further predicts their eudaimonia (Kim, Nam, & Kim, 2019; Ruthig, Chipperfield, & Payne, 2011).

One final pillar of eudaimonia, *personal growth*, entails constant self-improvement (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Novel settings encountered and activities engaged in tourism experiences often take tourists out of their comfort zones and push them to reach their full potential, which is a significant contributor to more enduring eudaimonic benefits (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017). For instance, although tourists may experience anxiety/stress when engaging in some tourism activities (e.g., participating in an outdoor activity for the first time), successfully completing such activities leads to stress- and courage-related personal growth (Matteucci & Filep, 2017).

Taken together, given the intuitive association between tourism and eudaimonia, it is conceivable to argue that people tend to derive eudaimonic benefits from tourism, even if it is not the explicit purpose of their trips. Conversely, material products may not exhibit such a natural semantic association with eudaimonia unless people intentionally pursue a eudaimonic purchase motive. Therefore, when engaging in a hedonic consumption, the implicit eudaimonic benefits of a tourism experience will make it a part of individuals' self-identities and consequently result in the superior resistance to invidious comparisons of

tourism consumption to material objects.

H2. When consumers with a hedonic consumption motive learn their purchases are now available at a lower price, those who purchased tourism experiences are (a) less disturbed and (b) have less diminished satisfaction than those who purchased material objects.

In contrast, when both tourism experiences and material purchases are intentionally driven by a eudaimonic motive, both types of purchases become a part of consumers' self-identities and exhibit similar level of resistance to invidious comparisons. For example, with the intention to advance golf skills, buying a set of professional golf gear and going for a golf retreat would both make an individual enjoying eudaimonic benefits, and consequently, lead to the disappearance of experience superiority when facing invidious comparisons. Therefore, we propose:

H3. When consumers with a eudaimonic consumption motive learn their purchases are now available at a lower price, those who purchased tourism experiences and those who purchased material objects exhibit similar levels of (a) disturbance and (b) diminished satisfaction.

3. Methodology

The current study conducted two experiments to test the proposed hypotheses. Study 1 manipulated the level of eudaimonic consumption motive to examine whether eudaimonic purchases are more resistant to invidious price comparison than hedonic purchases (H1). More importantly, it sets out to examine whether the superiority of tourism experiences becomes salient when consumers were asked to explicitly pursue hedonic benefits (H2), since tourism experiences have an implicit cultivation of eudaimonia. On the other hand, the difference between tourism experience and material possession is expected to disappear when consumers were asked to explicitly pursue eudaimonic benefits (H3), supporting the presence of eudaimonic motive as a key determinant for the superior resistance to invidious comparisons. In order to further strengthening the testing robustness and external generalizability, Study 2 employed a different data collection platform as well as another factorial design, with eudaimonic motive being captured by a set of measurement items instead of manipulation.

3.1. Study 1 design

A 2 (product type: tourism experience vs. material possession) x 2 (purchase motive: hedonic vs. eudaimonic) experimental design was used to test our hypotheses. A total of 142 respondents recruited from MTurk in July 2019 were randomly assigned to one of the four scenarios. The sample size surpasses the minimum sample size of 128 required for the ANCOVA analyses to be conducted, estimated with medium effect size ($f = 0.4$) as well as at power of .8 and significance level of .05 using G*Power program. Only respondents located in the U.S. and over age 18 were eligible to participate. After completing the survey, \$0.50 was credited to each respondent's Amazon account. Among the 142 respondents, 62.7% were male; 82.4% were Caucasian, 7.7% were African American and 6.3% were Hispanic. The majority of respondents had some college education or higher (83.8%); 46.5% reported an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$75,000.

All respondents were told that the researchers were interested in how they spend their discretionary money (i.e., money spent with the intent of increasing their life happiness), which excludes money spent on needs and everyday necessities (e.g., toiletries, utility bills, etc.). Then, they were asked to recall and write down either a tourism experience or a material object that they had purchased with either a hedonic or eudaimonic motive within the past 6 months that had cost more than \$50. Participants were informed that purchases driven by a hedonic motive are made "in order to entertain/indulge yourself, something that gives you a sense of enjoyment," whereas purchases driven by a eudaimonic motive are made "in order to experience something meaningful for yourself, something that gives you a sense of fulfillment." A sample

manipulation scenario is provided in Appendix A.

After writing down the recalled purchase, consumers were then asked to imagine that they had discovered online that after they had made their purchase, the price had been lowered. After reading the scenario, participants rated how disturbed they would be by knowledge of the lower price and how much their purchase satisfaction would be diminished by that knowledge.

3.2. Measurements

Two items adopted from Carter and Gilovich (2010) were used to capture the individual resistance to invidious price comparisons, involving disturbance (i.e., “How disturbed do you feel by the knowledge that the price had been lowered?” 1 = *not at all*, 7 = *extremely*) and diminished satisfaction (i.e., “How much does the price drop information diminish your satisfaction? 1 = *not at all*, 7 = *extremely*). As a manipulation check, eudaimonic happiness was captured using eight items adapted from Wirth, Hofer, and Schramm (2012) and Waterman et al. (2006) (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.874). Data regarding purchase cost (i.e., “How much did it cost?”) and elapsed time (i.e., “How long ago did you make the purchase?”) were also captured as control variables. Finally, to assess whether participants attached the same average level of importance to the material and tourism experiential purchases, participants rated how much they cared about the type of purchase they had been asked to recall. All questions were rated on 7-point Likert scale.

3.3. Study 1 results

The data of Study 1 was analyzed with SPSS 25. An independent sample *t*-test was employed as a manipulation check. The results indicate that respondents who recalled a eudaimonic purchase reported significantly higher eudaimonic happiness ($M = 5.02$) than those who recalled a hedonic purchase ($M = 4.24$; $t = 4.41$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, the manipulation of purchase motive was successful.

To exclude an alternative explanation, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with *purchase importance* as the dependent variable and *product type* and *purchase motive* as the independent variables to determine whether consumers care about certain types of purchases more than the others. Results show no significant main effect of product type ($F = 2.25$, $p = 0.14$) or purchase motive ($F = 2.72$, $p = 0.11$), nor any significant interaction effect ($F = 0.15$, $p = 0.70$). Consumers reported caring about their recalled purchases across the four conditions at similar levels ($M_{\text{hedonic_material}} = 5.03$, $M_{\text{eudaimonic_material}} = 5.33$; $M_{\text{hedonic_experiential}} = 5.30$; $M_{\text{eudaimonic_experiential}} = 5.78$). Therefore, any difference in participants’ levels of disturbance upon finding out about a lower price cannot be attributed to any difference in the importance assigned to the particular material/tourism experiential and hedonic/eudaimonic purchases they recalled.

To test H1a, H2a, and H3a, an ANCOVA was performed with *disturbed by the lower price* as the dependent variable, *product type* and *purchase motive* as the independent variables, and *cost*, *elapsed time*, and *purchase importance* as the control variables. The main effects of both product type ($F = 13.70$, $p < 0.001$) and purchase motive ($F = 82.58$, $p < 0.001$) are significant. Consumers who made eudaimonic purchases ($M = 2.38$) felt significantly less disturbed than consumers who made hedonic purchases ($M = 4.47$), supporting H1a. More importantly, the interaction effect between product type and purchase motive is also significant ($F = 5.03$, $p = 0.027$). The post hoc planned comparison test reveals that for hedonic purchases, consumers who made tourism experiential purchases ($M = 3.81$) felt significantly less disturbed than those who made material purchases ($M = 5.03$, $t = 4.13$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2a. Consistent with H3a, for eudaimonic purchases, the difference between material purchases ($M = 2.61$) and tourism experiential purchases ($M = 2.24$) is insignificant ($t = 1.29$, $p = 0.20$) (see the interaction plot in Fig. 1).

A similar set of analyses with *diminished satisfaction* as the dependent

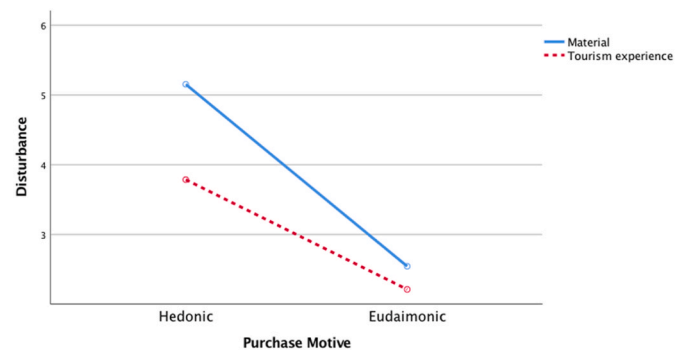


Fig. 1. The interaction effect of product type and purchase motive on disturbance.

variable was performed to test H1b, H2b, and H3b. The main effects of product type ($F = 13.15$, $p < 0.001$) and purchase motive ($F = 87.37$, $p < 0.001$) are significant. Consumers with a eudaimonic motive reported significantly less diminished satisfaction ($M = 1.75$) than those with a hedonic motive ($M = 3.69$), supporting H1b. More importantly, the interaction effect is also significant ($F = 15.25$, $p < 0.001$). The post hoc test reveals that among consumers with a hedonic motive, satisfaction was more diminished for material purchases ($M = 4.47$) than for tourism experiential purchases ($M = 2.86$, $t = 5.33$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2b. Among consumers with a eudaimonic motive, the difference between material purchases ($M = 1.68$) and tourism experiential purchases ($M = 1.78$) is insignificant ($t = 0.45$, $p = 0.65$). Therefore, H3b is also supported (Fig. 2).

Taken together, the results from Study 1 demonstrate that the reduced price that evokes potentially troublesome counterfactuals has different effects depending on the purchase motive and product type. The mere knowledge of a price drop is significantly more disturbing when purchases are driven by a hedonic motive than when purchases are driven by a eudaimonic motive. More interestingly, consumers also indicated that price drop information is more disturbing for a material good than for a tourism experience. However, such an effect is only salient in the hedonic motive condition. When consumers purchase a product for eudaimonic purposes, the difference between material and tourism experiential consumption disappears. Therefore, Study 1 provides empirical evidence indicating that the eudaimonic motive is indeed a key dimension that explains differences between material and tourism experiential purchases, and may help mitigate the negative impact of invidious comparisons.

4. Study 2

To further increase robustness based off Study 1, Study 2 was performed. First, instead of manipulating consumers’ purchase motives,

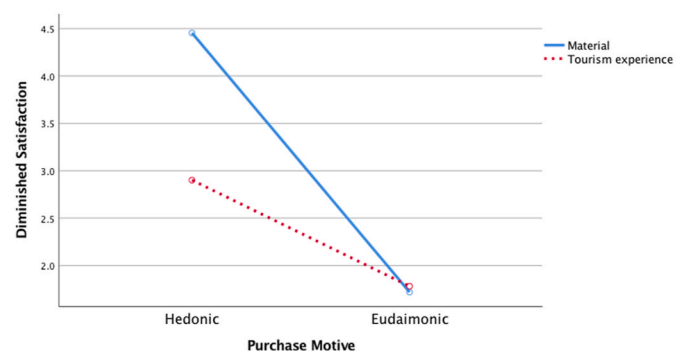


Fig. 2. The interaction effect of product type and purchase motive on diminished satisfaction.

Study 2 measured the eudaimonic consumption motive using six items adapted from Huta and Ryan (2010). Second, because disturbance and diminished satisfaction were measured using a single item in Study 1, reliability could not be measured and content validity may have been low. Therefore, multiple items were used to capture these two variables in Study 2. Lastly, respondents were recruited in Oct 2019 from a different platform, Qualtrics (a leading online survey company), to increase external generalizability. Among the 216 participants, 50.5% were male; a majority had an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$99,999 (62.1%); 37% had some college education, and 41.7% held a bachelor's degree or higher; 77.3% were Caucasian, 13% were African American, and 4.6% were Hispanic.

4.1. Study 2 design

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions (material vs. tourism experience). The main procedure for product type manipulation was similar to Study 1. After writing down the recalled purchase that was made to advance life happiness, consumers first rated their purchase motive, then they were asked to imagine the following scenario: "One day while you are browsing online, you discover that some customers made the same purchase as the one you just wrote down. They posted pictures of their purchases along with the prices they paid. You realize that these customers received a much better deal with a lower price than what you paid." After reading the scenario, participants rated how disturbed they would be by the knowledge of the lower price and how much their satisfaction with their purchase would be diminished by that knowledge.

4.2. Measurements

Eudaimonic consumption motive was assessed using six items adapted from Huta and Ryan (2010) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.904). Disturbance was captured using three items adapted from Carter and Gilovich (2010) (i.e., "To what extent does information about the lower price make you feel disturbed/upset/bothered?" 1 = not at all, 7 = extremely) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.915). Diminished satisfaction was measured using three items adapted from Carter and Gilovich (2010) and Cronin and Brady (2001) (i.e., "To what extent does information about the lower price result in diminished satisfaction/happiness/enjoyment with regard to your purchase?" 1 = not at all, 7 = extremely) (Cronbach's alpha = 0.813). Similar to Study 1, purchase cost, elapsed time, and importance of the recalled purchase were captured as control variables. All questions were rated on 7-point Likert scale.

In addition, convergent and discriminant validity were examined with AMOS 25. Average variance extracted (AVE) for each latent factor is greater than 0.6, and all composite reliability scores (CR) are higher than 0.8, thus providing good evidence of strong convergent validity. The square roots of AVE values are greater than any of the inter-construct correlations, thus providing strong evidence of discriminant

Table 1
Convergent and discriminant validity.

	Convergent Validity		Discriminant Validity		
	CR	AVE	Eudaimonic Motive	Disturbance	Diminished Satisfaction
Eudaimonic Motive	0.90	0.61	0.78		
Disturbance	0.91	0.78	-0.16	0.88	
Diminished Satisfaction	0.84	0.64	-0.02	0.53	0.80

Diagonal elements represent the square root of average variance extracted (AVE). Off-diagonal, lower-triangle entries are the inter-construct correlations.

validity (please see Table 1).

4.3. Study 2 results

Because purchase motive was captured as a continuous variable, Hayes's PROCESS procedure (Hayes, 2019) (Model 1) with the recommended bias-corrected bootstrapping technique (5000 replications) in SPSS 25 was used to test H1a, H2a, and H3a. Product type and purchase motive were entered as independent variables, disturbance was used as the dependent variable, and purchase cost, elapsed time, and purchase importance were considered as control variables. The results indicate that the main effect of eudaimonic motive is significant and negative ($B = -1.05, t = -5.17, p < 0.001$), suggesting that a purchase made with stronger eudaimonic motive is more resistant to invidious comparison, supporting H1a.

More importantly, the two-way interaction also has a significant effect ($B = 0.52, t = 4.49, p < 0.001$) on customer disturbance after reading the invidious comparison scenario. To test H2a and H3a, the Johnson-Neyman (J-N) technique was used to reveal the values of eudaimonic motive within the data such that the p-value of the interaction between product type and purchase motive is significant. The results reveal a cutoff point of 5.29, suggesting that when the eudaimonic motive is below 5.29, the interaction effect between product type and purchase motive is significant, such that consumers who made material purchases felt more disturbed than those who made tourism experiential purchases after learning that someone else had received a better deal. Therefore, H2a is supported. In contrast, when the eudaimonic motive is above 5.29, the impact of product type is insignificant, supporting H3a. The results indicate that when purchases are driven by a strong eudaimonic motive, consumers exhibit a similar level of disturbance upon learning of a lower price, regardless of the product type. Please refer to Fig. 3 for the interaction plot.

To test H1b, H2b, and H3b, another PROCESS model with bootstrapping technique (5000 replications) was employed with the same independent variables and control variables as above, but with diminished satisfaction as the dependent variable. The results reveal a significant and negative main effect of eudaimonic motive ($B = -0.54, t = -2.00, p = 0.047$), indicating that a purchase driven by a stronger eudaimonic motive is more resistant to invidious comparisons supporting H1b. In addition, the interaction between product type and purchase motive ($B = 0.342, t = 2.20, p = 0.029$) has a significant effect on diminished satisfaction. The J-N analysis results indicate a cutoff point of 4.63, suggesting when the eudaimonic motive is below 4.63, consumers who made material purchases experienced more diminished satisfaction than those who made tourism experiential purchases, supporting H2b. Consistent with H3b, when the eudaimonic motive is above

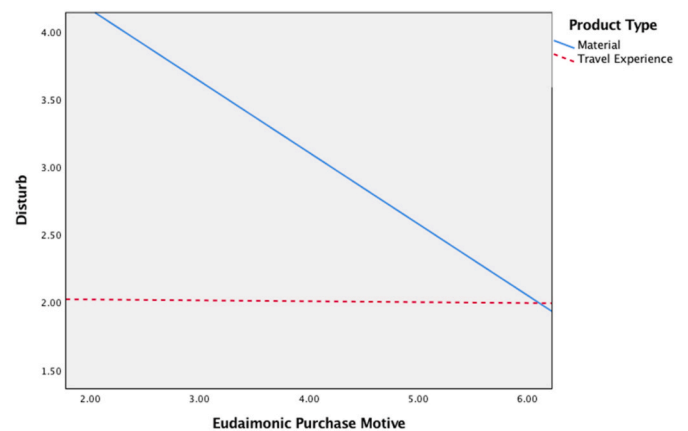


Fig. 3. The interaction effect of product type and eudaimonic purchase motive on disturbance.

4.63, the interaction between product type and purchase motive disappears such that consumers experience similar levels of diminished satisfaction, regardless of product type. Please refer to Fig. 4 for the interaction plot. Above all, Study 2 supports the robustness of findings in Study 1 and accepts H1-3.

5. Discussions and conclusion

While technological advances empower people with richer information and real-time updates about tourism products, tourism businesses in the meantime need to deal with potential negativities associated with such improved information access. One possible outcome, with people easily becoming aware of the alternative prices available for the same tourism product, is that people could be disturbed by invidious comparisons and experience negative emotions, which can further lead to their diminished satisfaction or decreased repurchase intention. It is thereby necessary for tourism research to explore the potential scope of impacts of invidious comparisons on tourism experiential versus competing material purchases, and further understand its underlying rationale in order to find a solution. Comparing tourism experiences with material possessions can be particularly relevant under the COVID pandemic influences, while consumers may want to use their discretionary income to advance life happiness, but unexpectedly challenged with choosing between tourism and material purchases for similar purposes due to the shrinking income. This phenomenon of importance yet has been largely untapped in tourism research.

To extend the experience recommendation literature (e.g., Carter & Gilovich, 2010; Van Boven, 2005), we draw on eudaimonia literature (Ryff, 1989; Waterman & Schwartz, 2013) and hypothesized the key role of eudaimonic motive in resistance to invidious comparisons (H1). It was further hypothesized that the implicit eudaimonic motive was a key underlying mechanism that results in the greater resistance of tourism experiential purchases to invidious comparisons (i.e., less disturbed and have less diminished satisfaction due to price comparisons) than material purchases (H2-3). Empirical results from two experimental studies provide strong support for these hypotheses. The results from Study 1 demonstrate that knowledge of a price drop was perceived to be more disturbing for hedonic purchases than for eudaimonic purchases and support H1. Consumers also perceived the price drop information to be more disturbing when the purchase was a material good than when it was a tourism experience. More interestingly, such a difference is only evident in the hedonic motive condition but not significant among consumers whose purchases were driven by the eudaimonic motive, which supports H2 and H3.

Study 2 provides further support for and extends the findings of Study 1 using a different method to capture consumers' eudaimonic

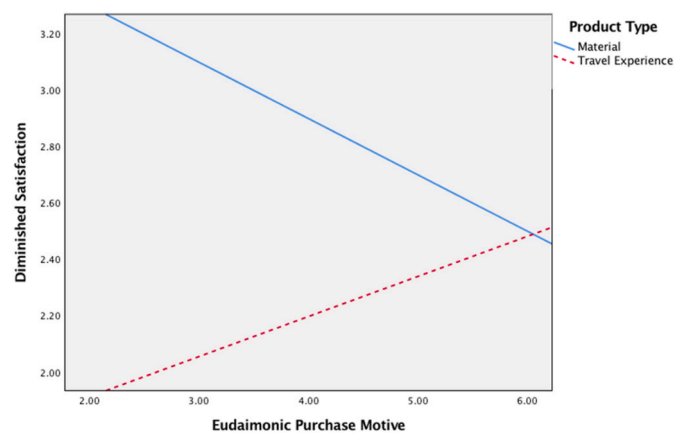


Fig. 4. The interaction effect of product type and eudaimonic purchase motive on diminished satisfaction.

motive and a different platform to collect data. Results offer additional empirical evidence indicating that the eudaimonic motive could mitigate the negative impact of invidious comparison and serve as a factor that explains the differences between tourism experiential and material purchases in resistance to invidious price comparisons. These findings have a number of theoretical and practical implications that warrant further discussion.

5.1. Theoretical implications

This study is among the first to draw on *eudaimonia* literature to shed light on the *experience recommendation* conceptualization. It bridges these two areas of studies by proposing the presence of eudaimonic consumptive motive as a key rationale to explain experiential superiority in invidious comparisons. The study findings also extend the experience recommendation literature, specifically those pinpointing the underlying rationale for experiential superiority, with new lens. That is, we add a novel factor of eudaimonia pursuit in explaining why experiences can be less susceptible to invidious comparisons.

Also, existing experience recommendation literature has taken diverse perspectives to interpret the experiential superiority in face of resistance to invidious comparisons, such as the intangibility (Ma & Roesse, 2013) or the incomparable sentimental value of being treated as a part of identity (Hellén & Gummerus, 2013; Carter & Gilovich, 2012). Yet there remain observed contexts in which these angles insufficiently explain, such as the condition-based integration of experiences into self-identity (e.g., Kasouf et al., 2015; Rudman & Spencer, 2007). Our findings further supplement with an angle that can lend better support to explaining the context-based variations of experiential superiority. This was achieved by establishing the role of eudaimonic motive in rendering consumptions more comparison resistant, as eudaimonia should significantly boost the value of consumptions into an unparalleled level and allow the integration of consumptions into self-identity (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013), regardless of experiential or material. In addition, the findings suggest a specific type of experiences, tourism experiences, to be paid special attention to in experience recommendation application as this type of experiences is expected to be more consistently superior to material consumption in terms of resistance to invidious comparisons, due to their exceptional capacity to intuitively foster eudaimonia.

Moreover, this study contributes to the eudaimonia literature by pushing the boundaries of potential benefits people could receive from eudaimonia pursuits. Specifically, we provided empirical evidence supporting the benefit of purchasing out of a eudaimonic motive for resisting invidious comparisons and potentially associated negative emotions. Our findings also contribute toward bridging the gap between positive-psychology recommended concentration on eudaimonia boosting and the hedonic focus of “dopamine economy” and the contemporary industrial practices (e.g., Su, Tang, & Nawjin, 2020). It adds to the scarce attempts in revealing the practical value of eudaimonia-cultivating products to businesses, in terms of mitigating the negativities attached to invidious comparisons resulted from information transparency. As such, it can be a promising step forward in incentivizing the business involvement, in collaboration with positive psychology scholars, to assess the eudaimonia-enhancing interventions established in labs with field experiments, which is rather lacking yet deems necessary to push forward the positive psychology progresses.

Lastly, the findings further advance the tourism well-being conceptualization, by supporting the inherent and implicit association of tourism experiences with eudaimonia in people's mind, even when people explicitly pursue hedonia as the primary travel motive. Such an intuitive association between tourism and eudaimonia is an advantage absent for material consumptions. It is a meaningful step forward towards the facilitation of eudaimonic benefits from tourism experiences. Scholars could explore and unveil potential hurdles preventing such implicit connection from being transferred into the actual enduring eudaimonic benefits (Diekmann, Smith, & Ceron, 2020; Su, Tang, &

Nawjin, 2020), and therefore solid progress can be made in fulfilling the eudaimonia benefiting potential of general tourism activities conducted by the majority of tourist population.

5.2. Practical implications

Findings from this research also have important practical implications for the industry. The international tourism industry is experiencing a series of unprecedented challenges amid the COVID-19 global pandemic. All around the globe, consumers are changing or limiting their tourism plans; among all economic sectors, tourism and hospitality services has been hit the hardest during this public health crisis. Marketers across a number of tourism sectors such as airlines and hotels/resorts are adopting price promotions with the purpose of stimulating tourism activities by lowering prices. Yet a potential concern for businesses would be the negative customer reactions to invidious price comparisons, and their possibly resulted holding off of instant booking with anticipation of a better deal in the future. This study offers some level of assurance and relief to tourism industry concerning the potential negativities with price promotions. Taking an integrated approach and evaluating tourism consumption in the context of total individual consumptions (i.e., tourism versus material), our study suggests that tourism experiences in general are relatively more resistant to such invidious comparisons, at least compared to the competing material purchases. Such positive news is of timely relevance when many people have to make calculated decisions on purchases and often need to choose between material and travel experiential purchases.

This study has particularly demonstrated that a eudaimonia generating potential is the key to enhancing consumers' resistance to invidious comparisons. This is a pioneering attempt to unveil the unique value (i.e., the eudaimonia-generating potential) that sets even the most common tourism offerings apart from many other consumption activities. Such uniqueness can be a valuable shield for tourism businesses from the collateral damage such as invidious price comparisons caused by price wars. It further enlightens the promising direction of eudaimonia-oriented add-value offerings or marketing to further bolster the resistance of tourism purchases to invidious comparisons, in order to enhance consumption satisfaction and enduring positive image of a business. As such, tourism and hospitality practitioners may consider adding some activities with eudaimonia generating potential into the product design, such as introducing a "meditation at beach" option into a nature excursion, or a cultural encounter associated with a "helping the community" initiative. Or else, simply highlighting the eudaimonia-associated benefits of the trip in promotional materials should also aid in alleviating the possibility of invidious comparisons.

Furthermore, tourism practitioners can also adopt marketing communications at various consumption stages to effectively emphasize the actual or potential eudaimonic aspects of their offerings across different types of products. For example, instead of positioning its fitness and spa programs as physical amenities, a resort may promote how these facilities and services can help guests engage in self-reflection and rejuvenate to find purpose in life. For a regular tourism activity such as a cultural encounter with local people, the eudaimonia-cultivating potential should be stressed, such as how through such an encounter the tourists can: (1) feel a sense of *environmental mastery* and *self-growth* through the gained knowledge about an exotic culture and developing their cultural intelligence; (2) fully satisfy the curiosity and passion about cultural exploration (*autonomy*); (3) strengthen their affiliation with others (*social relationship*) by connecting with the hospitable locals as well as peers sharing the similar cultural interest; and (4) get immersed in a spiritual experience sparked by the power of an authentic culture presentation, which empowers people to reflect on their own ways of living (*purpose in life*) and celebrate for their authentic self (*self-acceptance*). All these creative ways connecting the tourism/hospitality offerings with eudaimonia outcomes can potentially enhance the unique value of products and somewhat spare businesses from concerns about invidious price

comparisons conducted by customers. Furthermore, in designing their marketing communication messages, tourism and hospitality service providers may place a greater importance on associating their brand images with eudaimonia to prime a stronger and more relevant association with their brands, and to maximize the potential for brand image transformation.

In addition, material products such as facilitating goods (e.g., souvenirs) that are closely linked to the eudaimonia-generating tourism experience (e.g., the first bungee jump in life) can be offered alongside to strengthen the extent/endurance of eudaimonic tourism benefits. This is not only because they are imbued with symbolic meaning and function as constant physical reminders of tourism experiences (Masset & Decrop, 2020), but also because they have inherent potential to cultivate eudaimonia by inspiring future growth and self-development.

6. Limitations and future research

As with all research, in interpreting the findings of this study, it is important to acknowledge several inherent limitations, which provide potential avenues for further research. First, this study adopted a scenario-based experimental design, which allowed causal inferences to be drawn, relatively realistic stimulus materials to be developed, and extraneous variable(s) to be controlled for. However, this research method may have limited the number of conceptually relevant variables that could be comprehensively and simultaneously examined in a single investigation. In future research, scholars may consider using different methods, such as observational research through large-scale surveys, to examine additional predictors and outcome variables, thereby expanding our understanding of the wider nomological network. In the future, researchers could also adopt an experiential sampling technique to measure attitudes and behaviors during experiences, as well as a longitudinal method to capture consumer responses prior to consumption, during consumption, and after consumption.

Another potential limitation is associated with the realism of the task. Although we asked respondents to recall and write down either a real tourism experiential or material purchase with a hedonic or eudaimonic motive, they were asked to imagine that they had discovered that since the time they had made their purchase, the price had been lowered. As such, our study captured consumer responses as a result of imaginative manipulations; thus, the results may not exactly reflect consumers' responses in real life settings.

Future ongoing research is also warranted to examine different facets of the underlying phenomenon, such as the differences derived from framing the same tourism product as experiential versus material, and how research settings of other disadvantageous comparisons such as social comparisons are similar to or different from those of the current study in order to examine the consistency of the research findings. Moreover, consistent with prior research, the findings of this study may vary between countries and cultural backgrounds. Thus, it may be worthwhile to test the validity and generalizability of the research findings using samples from various countries and cultural groups.

Lastly, whereas this study focused on tourism experiences to fill a specific knowledge gap in the literature on experience recommendation and eudaimonic/hedonic purchases, the specific nature of the research setting may also limit the generalizability of the findings. In the future, researchers could potentially compare tourism experiences with other types of service experiences to validate the natural advantage of tourism experiences in fostering eudaimonia. Future experiments can even explore how to strategically combine the experiential and material offerings during a trip to maximize the perceived unique trip value by tourists and subsequently reduce their price sensitivity.

Author contribution

Dr. Wan Yang contributed to the conceptualization, research design, data collection and analysis as well as writing of the paper. Dr. Ye Zhang

contributed to the conceptualization, research design, as well as writing of the paper. Dr. Kevin So contributed to the writing and editing of the paper.

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Declaration of competing interest

None.

Appendix B. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104247>.

Appendix A. Scenario and Measurement Items

- Study 1 Scenario – eudaimonic tourism experiential purchase

We are interested in how you spend your discretionary money. Discretionary money refers to money spent with the intent of furthering your happiness. This excludes money spent on needs and everyday necessities (e.g., toiletries, utility bills etc.). There are many ways in which people can choose to utilize their money. One such way is by acquiring a tourism experience. The primary focus of this expense should have been on a tourism/leisure activity - doing something - and not on buying something that could be kept. Please recall a recent time (within the past 6 months) when you made a **tourism experiential purchase** for more than \$50 in order to **experience something meaningful for yourself, something that gives you a sense of fulfillment**. Please describe the purchase you made in the following space:

Now, please imagine that one day while you are browsing online, you discover that some customers made the same purchase as the one you just wrote down. They posted pictures of their purchases along with the prices they paid. You realize that these customers received a much better deal with a lower price than what you paid.

Measurement Items in Study 1

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
• Eudaimonic Happiness				
This purchase challenged my way of seeing the world.	2.99	1.593	.674	-.356
I have a good feeling because the purchase has made me reflect on my life and myself.	4.23	1.645	-.341	-.899
I had the feeling that the purchase delivered central values of life in an authentic way.	4.25	1.603	-.389	-.588
This purchase made me feel like I am in charge of my own life.	5.40	1.209	-1.030	1.806
I have a good feeling because the emotions that I felt after the purchase challenged me in a positive way.	4.97	1.414	-.774	.413
I have a good feeling because the purchase I made has shown me how content I can be with my own life.	5.35	1.256	-.912	1.058
I feel good because now that I made this purchase I recognize my life as fulfilled and meaningful.	4.51	1.501	-.429	-.368
This purchase gives me my greatest feeling of really being alive.	4.55	1.687	-.541	-.647
• Disturbance and Diminished Satisfaction				
How disturbed do you feel by the knowledge that the price had been lowered? (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely so)	3.37	1.618	.201	-.594
How much does the price drop information diminish your satisfaction? (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely so)	2.64	1.568	.592	-.776

Measurement Items in Study 2

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
• Eudaimonic Purchase Motive				
Regarding the purchase you just write down, to what degree did you make the purchase with each of the following intentions, regardless whether you actually achieved your aim? (1 = not at all, 7 = very much)				
Seeking to pursue excellence or a personal ideal	5.00	1.794	-.717	-.313
Seeking to use the best in yourself	4.00	1.922	-.163	-1.026
Seeking to develop a skill, learn, or gain insight into something	4.16	1.931	-.185	-.952
Seeking to do what you believe in	4.52	1.914	-.432	-.838
Seeking to do something meaningful	3.80	2.127	.099	-1.269
Seeking self-actualization	4.53	1.912	-.425	-.834
• Disturbance				
To what extent does information about the lower price make you feel ___? (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely so)				
Disturbed	2.77	1.645	.501	-.681
Upset	2.69	1.634	.723	-.128
Bothered	2.38	1.480	.958	.412
• Diminished Satisfaction				
To what extent does information about the lower price result in diminished ___ with regard to your purchase? ((1 = not at all, 7 = extremely so)				
Satisfaction	2.61	1.675	.818	-.243
Happiness	2.53	1.832	.935	-.249
Enjoyment	2.44	1.740	.970	-.200

Impact statement

Tourists can easily encounter invidious post-purchase comparisons nowadays give the information abundance. While people aim to advance life

happiness through travel consumption, such invidious comparisons may nevertheless diminish their satisfaction and further hurt the travel business. This study is one of first kind examining to what extent people are disturbed by invidious comparisons in consuming tourism experiences. Moreover, it is conducted with a novel integrated approach by comparing tourism with competing material consumptions. It is especially relevant at the moment as many people are challenged to spend their shrinking disposable income with discretion on tourism versus material purchases given the COVID influence. The results offer an assurance to tourism industry by revealing the stronger resistance of tourism experiences to invidious comparisons due to its natural advantage of implicitly cultivating eudaimonia. It further suggests adding eudaimonic benefits in tourism offerings to overcome the challenges of invidious comparisons and advance consumer happiness.

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