Empirical Research Article

To Do or to Have, Now or Later, in Travel: Consumption Order Preference of Material and Experiential Travel Activities

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Abstract

The current research explores consumers' preferred timing of consuming experiential and material purchases made during their travels and its downstream affective consequence. Previous research showed that people generally show relative preference toward consuming material purchases sooner than experiential purchases. Reversing this finding, we contend that travelers who are primed with the concept of an experience exhibit relative preference toward consuming experiential purchases sooner than material purchases. Further, we contend that travelers associate greater subjective happiness from the travel schedule with sooner experiential than material consumption. To provide convergent and robust evidence supporting our hypothesis, we conducted seven empirical studies, including a field study. Our work contributes to (1) researchers in the field of travel, psychology, and marketing; (2) travelers who want to optimize their travel; and (3) practitioners who want to understand travelers' behavior and psychology.

Keywords

experiential purchases, material purchases, travel activities consumption, travel psychology

Introduction

Consumption during trips is a significant part of travel. In 2017 alone, US travelers spent $718.4 billion while on 1.8 billion leisure trips (US Travel Association 2018). Experiential and material purchases are a significant and prevalent distinction in consumption type that has recently received a great deal of attention in the psychology and marketing literature (for a review, see Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol 2015). During trips, travelers frequently make both experiential purchases (e.g., taking in a musical at a Broadway theater in New York) and material purchases (e.g., buying a new iPhone from an Apple flagship store in New York). According to a recent study (US Travel Association 2018), travelers regard dining (an experiential purchase) and shopping (a material purchase) as two of the top five leisure travel activities. In addition, according to a large survey (N = 34,016), travelers listed both experiential purchases (sightseeing 53%, dining 41%, activities 35%) and material purchases (shopping 24%, travel memorabilia 16%) as their top two things to spend money on as a special treat during a trip (Tripadvisor 2015).

In this research, we contend that a systematic pattern of order exists in which travelers prefer to consume their experiential and material purchases. According to Van Boven and Gilovich (2003), experiential purchases refer to purchases made with the primary intention of acquiring intangible life experience(s) that one lives through, whereas material purchases refer to purchases made with the primary intention of acquiring tangible object(s) to keep in one's possession. The key distinction between experiential and material purchases lies in the primary intention of making purchases. Examples of experiential purchases are visiting famous museums and examples of material purchases are clothing. Understanding how travelers schedule or order their trips is important, given that travel schedules corresponding to travelers' psychology and preferences can provide greater satisfaction from trips than travel schedules that do not do so (e.g., Nawijn 2011; Neal and Gursoy 2008). The importance of understanding the order or pattern of consumption, especially with fixed choice options, has been well known. For example, the tendency for recency effect, or preference for a happy ending, suggests that people tend to heavily rely on what is experienced last because it has a memory advantage on the overall judgment of the

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experience (e.g., Murdock 1962; Varey and Kahneman 1992). Researchers have also found evidence for a primacy effect. Primacy effect contends that people rely on the first item or first impression to render overall judgment (e.g., Anderson and Barrios 1961; Murdock 1962). For example, Russo, Meloy, and Medvec (1998) suggested the importance of the first information in overall judgment in that the valence of first attribute information could distort the interpretation of the subsequent and different valence of information. As evidenced by these works, during travel with a fixed number of activities to be done in a fixed time frame, an effective and optimal ordering of those available can influence overall satisfaction from the travel experience.

Because how travel service providers (e.g., destination planners and managers, tourism service designers, and hotels) organize and promote these activities into their traveling packages may influence the happiness from actual travel, they should decide whether to emphasize what travelers can *do* or what they can *have* (or buy). Despite its importance, however, relevant research examining the effects of travel schedules (e.g., the order of different travel activities consumption) on travelers' overall satisfaction and consumption activities while traveling is limited. Given that travel consists of a series of consumption activities related to different types of purchase (e.g., Lee and Oh 2017) and these activities tend to bring different levels of happiness to people (e.g., Caprariello and Reis 2013; Carter and Gilovich 2010, 2012, 2014; Gilovich and Kumar 2015), it would be worthwhile to investigate the way these activities contribute to enhancing the happiness derived from travel. In particular, we investigated the impact such activities are likely to have on people's happiness derived from travel. To help shed light on this research area, we explore travelers' preferred timing (i.e., preferred order) of consuming experiential purchases and material purchases, and subsequently, its downstream consequences on travelers' happiness from their trips. In this research, we conceptualize happiness as subjective, short-term happiness (e.g., Van Boven and Gilovich 2003).

Relevant to the current research, Kumar and Gilovich (2016) recently explored people's general preference in the consumption timing of experiential and material purchases: people generally prefer to consume material purchases sooner than experiential purchases because they tend to derive relatively greater satisfaction from anticipating experiential purchases. Reversing their finding, we predict that under the specific context of travel, travelers show a relative preference to consume experiential purchases sooner than material purchases. We suggest "experience priming" as the mechanism for this preference. During travel, and even at the pre-trip stage, when people prepare for travel, they tend to be contextually primed with travel-related information and the concept of experiences in general (Wyer and Srull 1981). The literature on priming suggests that an activation of a concept can influence behaviors (e.g., Bargh, Chen, and Burrows 1996; Ferguson and Bargh 2004). For example, Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) showed that participants tended to walk more slowly after being primed with the concept of an elderly. Put differently, priming can make people behave by prioritizing the primed concept. Based on this effect of the priming theory, we suggest that travelers who are primed with the concept of an experience will naturally lead to sooner engagement in experiential purchases than material purchases (Oyserman 2009).

Our paper makes the following contributions by extending our understanding of experiential and material purchases found in psychology and marketing to the travel context. First, we extend Kumar and Gilovich's (2016) work on consumption timing preference by showing that the generally preferred order of consumption is reversed in the travel context: travelers prefer to consume experiential purchases sooner than material purchases. We demonstrate travelers' preferred timing of consumption and their scheduling behaviors in multiple studies; furthermore, our research enhances a general understanding of travelers' preferences and behaviors. Second, we explore the downstream consequences of consumption timing preference by exploring travelers' happiness. We show that travel schedules with sooner experiential purchases yield greater happiness than travel schedules with sooner material purchases. To our knowledge, our research is the first that links travel scheduling of experiential and material purchases (Kumar and Gilovich 2016) with happiness, which is an increasingly important construct of interest in the fields of psychology and marketing (Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol 2015).

The present research also contributes to the tourist satisfaction literature (e.g., Nawijn et al. 2010). Some consider travel mostly as a composite of experiential purchases (e.g., G. Fuchs, Chen, and Pizam 2015), yet travel actually consists of both experiential and material purchases. Our paper makes a clear distinction between experiential and material purchases occurring in travel and examines how travelers should position them in their schedule for the optimal experience. Our findings not only provide travelers with a strategic and unambiguous way of achieving higher satisfaction from travel but also help travel agents develop better strategies in scheduling customers' activities to provide more memorable and satisfactory travel experiences.

Literature Review and Prediction

Previous Literature on Travel and Happiness

Travel benefits tourists by making them feel happier, in that tourism experiences influence people's physical and mental health in terms of relieving stress (Chen and Petrick 2013; Chen, Petrick, and Shahvali 2016), and create positive valence for travelers by engaging them in activities that enable them to attain their travel goals (Sirgy 2010). On one hand, the extant research examining the relationship between travel and happiness has been conducted at the macro level.

Some examples include examining the contribution of travel experiences to life satisfaction (e.g., Neal, Uysal, and Sirgy 2007; Sirgy and Su 2000), directly measuring whether tourists experience higher levels of happiness (i.e., subjective well-being) compared with nontourists (Gilbert and Abdullah 2004), or comparing pre- and post-trip happiness (e.g., Besser and Priel 2006; Nawijn et al. 2010).

On the other hand, travel research has recently begun to expand to explore factors influencing happiness from travel at an individual, micro level. For example, Bimonte and Faralla (2012) found a positive relationship between happiness and an individual's motivational state, such that other-oriented tourists tend to be happier than those who are self-oriented. Travel destinations provide complex and multidimensional features that are absorbed and experienced heterogeneously by each traveler (Moeller 2010). Thus, Chekalina, Fuchs, and Lexhagen (2018) explored the benefit of understanding travel as a co–value creation perspective between individual travelers (and their subjective experience) and the features provided during the travel. Importantly, Chekalina, Fuchs, and Lexhagen's (2018) work on customer-based destination brand equity discovered that travelers' subjective emotional (hedonic) dimension ("value in use") is a significant predictor of destination loyalty (e.g., revisit intention) as well as the functional (economic) dimension ("value for money"). Given that travelers nowadays are exposed to abundant information about activities available at various destinations via the Internet (Pan and Fesenmaier 2006; Xiang and Gretzel 2010), people are more interested in activities that are less financially significant but central to the travel experience (Xiang, Magnini, and Fesenmaier 2015). Insomuch as the travel experience is highly personal and dependent on a subjective evaluation of activities (Tung and Ritchie 2011), scheduling different destination activities—such as experiential (what to do) or material (what to buy) activities during the trip—is a small but important factor that can influence the overall travel experience.

Role of Travel Activities

The overall satisfaction of travel consists of the aggregated happiness from each detailed and specific travel activity (e.g., Cox et al. 2009; Saleh and Ryan 1992). Specific travel activities (e.g., where to visit, what to do, what do buy, or with whom to share a travel experience) are important for tourists, as these activities are linked together in a way that influences one's happiness associated with travel experiences as a whole (Filep 2012; Nawijn 2011). According to Neal and Gursory (2008), one's overall satisfaction with travel derived from a tourist experience depends on the satisfaction obtained across different phases of the trip. For instance, Nawijn (2011) suggested that the tourist experience can be less stressful and can increase tourists' happiness if tourists think about whom they would like to travel with *before* the actual travel experience.

While excitement from travel often starts even before travel starts, the highlight of the trip is actually the during-travel phase, during which both material and experiential tourist activities occur (G. Fuchs, Chen, and Pizam 2015; Kruger 2012). At the during-travel phase, satisfaction occurs when people's expectations about the travel destination are confirmed by their evaluations of an experience at the destination (Neal and Gursoy 2008). More importantly, during travel, activities (e.g., photographing) that can stimulate positive emotions increase tourists' happiness (Gillet, Schmitz, and Mitas 2016), given that a substantial portion of a person's happiness is influenced by voluntarily chosen activities (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade 2005).

Travel activities that tourists experience can be largely categorized as either an experiential (e.g., visiting a museum at the destination) or a material purchase (e.g., buying souvenirs) (Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol 2015; Lee and Oh 2017). While the distinction between experiential and material purchases has generally been accepted and supported by previous research (e.g., Van Boven and Gilovich 2003), this dichotomy of purchase types has occasionally been further elaborated. *Experiential products* are purchase options, such as musical instruments and sports equipment that fall between material goods and life experiences (Guevarra and Howell 2015). Souvenirs may be considered as an experiential product that shares the central characteristics of both material and experiential purchases. People buy souvenirs not only to remind themselves about their travel experiences but also to make such experiences tangible (e.g., Gordon 1986; Wilkins 2011). Despite such possibility, however, we categorize souvenirs as a material purchase for the following reasons: first, souvenirs exist in time and space as a tangible object, thus satisfying the key distinguishing feature of a material purchase (Carter and Gilovich 2010; Van Boven and Gilovich 2003). Although souvenirs can be used to protect the memory of pleasant travel experiences (Zauberman, Ratner, and Kim 2009) or to share such experiences with others as a gift (e.g., S. Kim and Littrell 2001), unlike experiences that persist only in our memories, souvenirs are tangible. Second, while souvenirs can be exchanged for money or other forms of compensation, travel experiences tend to be less exchangeable, given that they are preserved in our memory (G. Fuchs, Chen, and Pizam 2015). Thus, although some purchases possess aspects of both material and experiential purchases, following the definition of Van Boven and Gilovich (2003), a purchase is considered as a material purchase if it exists in a physical form and is tangible.

While other factors, such as tourist segments and destination types, can influence overall tourist satisfaction (Bernini and Cagnone 2014; M. Fuchs and Weiermair 2004), tourism activities may have the most significant positive influence on tourists' well-being (Uysal et al. 2016), as such activities are central to the during-travel experience itself (Xiang, Magnini, and Fesenmaier 2015). Moreover, the impact of travel activities lasts even after traveling, thereby helping to

create memorable travel experiences, which are defined as "a positive tourism experience positively remembered and recalled after the event has occurred" (J. H. Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick 2012, 13). A travel experience that is remembered, and thus may be recalled from memory, can influence various decisions for one's next trip, such as where to travel next (e.g., Kerstetter and Cho 2004) or whether to return to a similar vacation destination in the future (Wirtz et al. 2003). The extant literature on memorable tourism experiences has found that affects, such as happiness, constitute memorable travel experiences for tourists (e.g., J. H. Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick 2012; Wirtz et al. 2003). For instance, Lee and Oh (2017) demonstrated that post-trip sharing activities, especially involving experiential (vs. material) consumption, increase not only tourists' happiness but also their intention to return to the destination. Because touristic activities positively influence people's subjective well-being (Uysal et al. 2016), it is evident that such activities, no matter whether they are experiential or material purchases, are critical factors that contribute to generating memorable travel experiences. For example, physical items, such as souvenirs (i.e., material purchases), are often associated with special experiences, which are an effective means of protecting and recalling earlier memories, thus making an experience tangible (Zauberman, Ratner, and Kim 2009).

Similarly, the extant research suggests that experiential purchases tend to provide greater long-term happiness than material possessions (for a review, see Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol 2015). Thinkers and researchers have suggested various reasons for such experiential advantage. Rousseau said, "The person who has lived the most is not the one with the most years [or the most possessions], but the one with the richest experiences." According to Rousseau, happiness is derived from a state of being in the present moment and when the soul focuses on the simple feeling of existence. Consistent with Rousseau's idea, experiential purchases help people focus on the present (Dunn, Gilbert, and Wilson 2011). In addition, Aristotle proposed that happiness comes from achieving one's full potential. Echoing this idea, research showed that experiential purchases make people happier than material purchases because experiential purchases are more closely connected to our identities (Carter and Gilovich 2012) and, thus, are more self-defining and self-actualizing (Van Boven and Gilovich 2003) than material purchases. Although material purchases (e.g., wallet, coat, etc.) can be physically on the self at times, experiential purchases remain in one's memories and collectively makeup one's autobiography. The closer self-connection of experiential purchases generates greater happiness because people are motivated to evaluate self-connected entities more positively (e.g., Aronson 1992; Kunda 1990). Also, Heidegger stressed the importance of human being as a relation of being and social interaction. Consistent with this notion, Caprariello and Reis (2013) showed that one significant driver for experiential advantage is that experiential purchases tend to be consumed with others whereas material purchases tend to be consumed alone. Considering such findings from the current literature, both experiential and material purchases are likely to contribute to the construction of memorable travel experiences.

In sum, engaging in experiential and material activities during travel can influence tourists' overall satisfaction derived from a travel. Arranging the order of activities is a relatively easy and convenient means by which travelers can perceive increased control over their experiences. To enhance travelers' happiness, it is important to investigate *how* to schedule or order the consumption timing of experiential and material purchases during a trip. It has been well documented that different types of purchases can create different levels of happiness (e.g., Dunn, Gilbert, and Wilson 2011; Gilovich and Kumar 2015; Van Boven and Gilovich 2003). Thus, these researchers have continued to investigate ways in which greater levels of satisfaction can be generated by utilizing such purchases. In line with such attempts, the current research advances previous findings about travel planning by examining how people can order different types of activities (e.g., visiting museums or buying souvenirs) during a trip to increase their happiness obtained from travel experiences.

Our Prediction: Experiential Purchase Preference over a Material Purchase

Since both experiential and material purchases are important factors for overall travel experiences, it is also important to understand consumers' preferred timing to engage in these two types of activities. Should travelers first schedule what they can *do* (i.e., experience), or should they prioritize what they can physically *have*, even after travel (i.e., material goods)? To answer this question, we examine travelers' preference for the consumption order of experiential and material travel activities.

Recently, Kumar and Gilovich (2016) suggested the phenomenon that we call *material prioritization*, in that people generally prefer to consume material purchases immediately and delay experiential purchases. Their key reason for this finding is that waiting or delaying experiential consumption generates a positive state of anticipating the experiential consumption. This argument parallels that of Loewenstein (1987), in that people prefer delayed (vs. immediate) consumption for certain types of experiences in order to savor the favorable experience. For example, most people prefer to delay a kiss from their favorite movie star. In vacation studies, Nawijn et al. (2010) also found a similar pattern such that vacationers' happiness was higher during the pre- (vs. post-) trip period. In the current research, however, we predict that people's general preference of material prioritization can be completely *reversed* when people are asked to consume these types of activities while traveling.

Distinct from Kumar and Gilovich's (2016) findings, we contend that travelers will generally prefer to consume experiential purchases sooner than material purchases. We refer to

this pattern as *experiential prioritization*. There are two reasons that support our contention: (1) experience priming and (2) a relatively short consumption time span of travels (which reduces the typical motivation to delay experiential purchases). First, travelers on a trip may be primed with, or find salience in, the concept of an experience; thus, they are led to prefer more immediate consumption of experiential over material purchases. This is because travel is one of the most salient and prototypical examples of an experience (e.g., Bello and Etzel 1985). Indeed, when people are asked to recall a past experiential purchase, travel is most frequently recalled (e.g., Van Boven and Gilovich 2003). Three streams of research support the notion that travelers who are primed with the concept of an experience during a trip can lead to experiential prioritization. First, the research on contextual primes has shown that people's interpretation of information depends on the particular concepts that are currently active in their minds (Wyer and Srull 1981). Activated contextual primes can impact consumer choice and increase their preference for the prime-compatible target over another one (Labroo, Dhar, and Schwarz 2007). Second, people who are primed with travel (i.e., experiences) do the most salient and important activities (i.e., experiential purchases) first, lexicographic decision heuristics (Tversky, Sattath, and Slovic 1988) could lead to preference for sooner purchases of experiential (vs. material) purchase. In addition, the research on identity suggests that people under situational identity cues (e.g., being a traveler seeking experiences) show higher readiness to act and use procedures that are congruent with their identity (Oyserman 2009). Thus, during a trip, travelers may become more likely to prefer consuming experiential purchases sooner than material purchases, as they are contextually primed as travelers undergoing a travel experience.

The second reason for experiential prioritization is that the motivation to delay experiential purchases normally found in a nontravel context (Kumar and Gilovich 2016) may be minimal in the travel context. In the nontravel context, the utility of delaying experiential purchases (i.e., waiting utility; Kumar, Killingsworth, and Gilovich 2014) can be fully realized because purchases can be delayed for a significant amount of time (e.g., for months). Most travel, however, is completed within a relatively shorter time span ($<$30 days); thus, the maximum utility that one can acquire for delaying experiential purchases during a trip is likely to be only marginal. In particular, people who engage in leisure travel tend to decrease their travel intensity and shorten the duration of their trip (Bieger and Laesser 2002), leading them to pursue experiential activities earlier during the trip. Thus, the typical nature of travel involving a relatively short time span makes delaying experiential purchases less likely while traveling, making the influences of the experience priming (our first reason) on experiential prioritization even stronger.

In sum, based on the two different reasons (i.e., experience priming and a relatively short consumption time span of travels), we argue that travelers will relatively prefer to consume experiential purchases sooner than material purchases. Note that there could be a special type of travel that would predict the opposite of our experiential prioritization. For example, consider "shopping tourism." During shopping tourism, travelers' most important goal is to secure their shopping mission, and these consumers are less likely to exhibit experiential prioritization. Yet, our study concerns travel in general and does not consider this special type of travel. Of course, experiential prioritization during a trip can emerge for a few psychologically uninteresting reasons related to different purchasing-type characteristics. First, material purchases occupy luggage space; thus, travelers may delay material purchases while traveling. Second, many material purchases bought during a trip are used after rather than during the trip (e.g., presents for others); as a result, they trail in importance and are therefore delayed. Third, experiential purchases may be viewed as more unique and limited than material purchases; consequently, travelers who value uniqueness (Moura, Gnoth, and Deans 2015; Prideaux 2002) may prefer to make experiential purchases sooner so that they can secure such purchases. Although these reasons could also lead to experiential prioritization, we posit that these are not the only factors. To address these issues, in many of our studies we used physically non-imposing material purchase examples (e.g., a piece of clothing, jewelry, electronic gadget); we specified travel within a city (thereby making luggage constraints less salient); and we specified that all purchase options would be available during the given travel period. If we are able to rule out some of the alternative explanations proposed here, we can demonstrate strong experiential prioritization effects in the travel context.

Seven studies explored experiential prioritization, reflected in both travelers' scheduling behavior (studies 1, 3A, 4, and 6) and consumption timing preference (studies 2, 3B, and 5). Importantly, consumption timing preference in our experiments (studies 4 and 5) was directly compared between a travel and nontravel (i.e., residential) context, using the same set of purchase items. In study 1, participants scheduled multiple travel purchases (experiential and material) by the preferred order of consumption timing. In study 2, participants made a choice between an experiential- versus material- prioritized travel consumption schedule. In studies 3A and 3B, we replicated the findings from studies 1 and 2, using a set of experiential and material examples specific to the travel context. Study 4 extended study 1 by increasing the generalizability of the experiential prioritization effect on scheduling behavior. In study 5, participants compared anticipated happiness between an experiential- versus material-prioritized travel consumption schedule. Study 6 employed field data and explored travelers' past consumption behavior, as reflected in online personal travel weblogs.

Study 1: Ordering Purchases

In study 1, we explored whether travelers exhibit experiential prioritization in their scheduling behavior. Participants

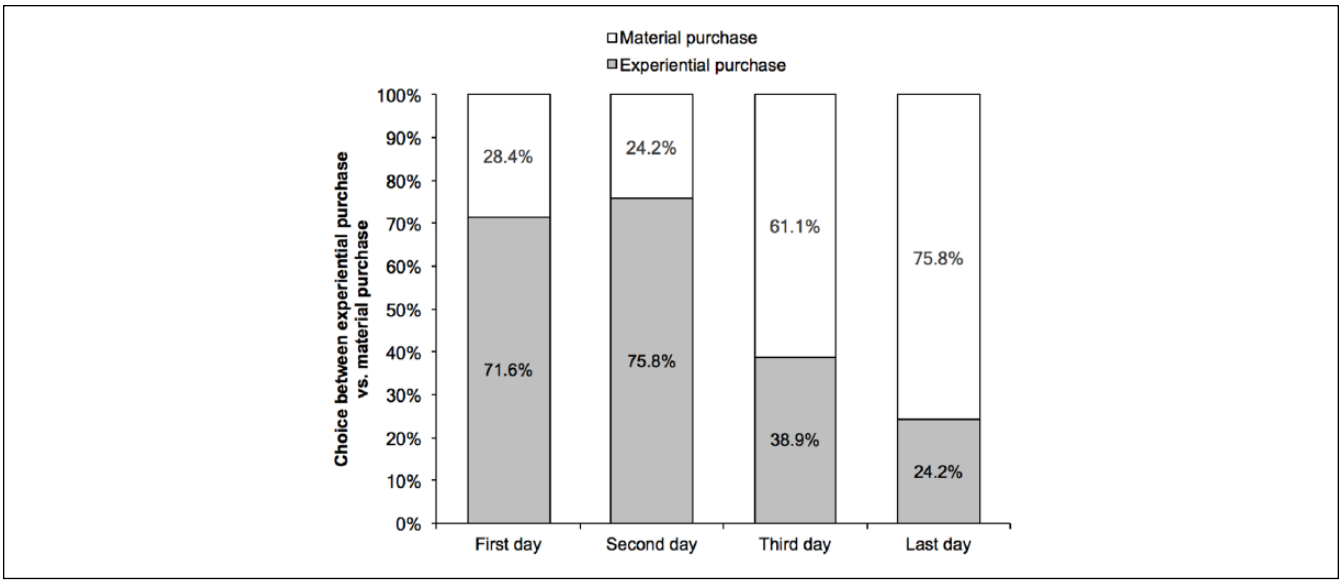

Figure 1. Choice share of experiential versus material purchases while traveling (study 1).

arranged four purchases (two experiential and two material) to be made during a trip in their preferred order of consumption. We predicted experimental prioritization.

Method

Participants were 95 students (67.1% female; $M_{age} = 22.9$, $SD = 4.1$) recruited at a large university in New Zealand. Participants imagined engaging in a 4-day trip to Sydney. Participants first read a brief description of Sydney which introduced Sydney's experiential and material attributes (see Supplemental Material for details). Then, participants were shown four purchases to be made during the 4-day trip, and they scheduled these purchases throughout the 4-day trip (one purchase per day). Participants read: "Due to other commitments, you can engage in only one activity each day. Please select a different activity for each respective day." Two purchases were experiential purchases ("taking in a show at a theater" and "going to some of the country's most famous museums"), and two were material purchases ("buying high-end clothing and jewelry" and "buying the latest gadgets"). The purchase examples were adapted from previous research (Kumar and Gilovich 2016). A post hoc analysis confirmed that purchase examples were correctly perceived as either experiential or material activities, as intended (see Table 1 in the Supplemental Material).

Results and Discussion

For each day (day 1–day 4), participants' choice was compared to 50%, indicating the point of indifference. On day 1, experiential choice was 71.6% and material choice was 28.4% (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 9.28$, $p < .01$); on day 2, experiential choice was 75.8% and material choice was 24.2% (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 13.54$, $p < .001$); on day 3, experiential choice was 38.9% and material choice was 61.1% (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 2.35$, $p = .12$); finally, on day 4, experiential choice was 24.2% and material choice was 75.8% ($\chi^2[1] = 13.54$, $p < .001$; see Figure 1). As anticipated, participants showed experiential prioritization in their consumption scheduling. Participants tended to schedule experiential purchases on earlier days and material purchases on later days of the 4-day trip to Sydney.

Study 2: Preference between the Two Schedules

In study 2, we explored whether travelers prefer an experiential-first travel schedule to a material-first travel schedule. Participants made a choice between two travel consumption schedules that differed only in their order (material-first vs. experiential-first). We predicted that participants would prefer the experiential-first schedule.

Study 2 implements several improvements to study 1. First, when the travel destination was described in study 1, the experiential attribute of Sydney was described before the material attribute, which may have led to an unintended bias toward experiential purchases. To eliminate this concern, in study 2, the order of the attribute description (experiential and material attributes) was counterbalanced. Second, to increase generalizability, study 2 tested the effect with a different participant sample (US residents) and a different travel destination (New York City). Third, to explore whether the consumption span mattered (which is related to the motivation to delay the consumption experience), study 2 included consumption span (4 days vs. 4 weeks) as a between-subjects factor.

Method

Participants were 289 US residents (51.6% female; M_{age} = 34.00, SD = 11.30) recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were asked to imagine traveling to New York City by reading short excerpts based on Kumar and Gilovich (2016). New York City was described in both experiential and material attributes. The order of the attribute description was counterbalanced, but this did not interact with any of the key variables; thus, it is not discussed further. The excerpts used for each attribute are available in the Supplemental Material.

Per experimental condition, the consumption span was set to be either 4 days or 4 weeks. In the 4-day condition, participants were asked to imagine making 4 purchases, with one purchase per day (days 1-4) during a 4-day vacation. In the 4-week condition, participants were asked to imagine making 4 purchases, with one purchase per week (weeks 1-4) during a 4-week vacation. Preference was assessed with the following question: "Due to your other business commitments, you can do only one activity each day [week]. Currently, two different schedules are available for you. Which one would you like to choose?"

Then, participants were presented with two schedule options that differed only in the order of consumption. Both schedules had the same four items, consisting of two experiential purchases ("going to some of the country's most famous museums" and "taking in a show at a Broadway theater") and two material purchases ("buying the latest gadgets" and "buying high-end clothing and jewelry"). The experiential-first option (referred to as "Schedule A") had the following order: (1) Museum; (2) Theater; (3) Gadgets; and (4) Clothing and jewelry. The material-first option (referred to as "Schedule B") had the following order: (1) Gadgets; (2) Clothing and jewelry; (3) Museum; and (4) Theater.

Results

Participants' choice was compared to the 50% indication of indifference. Experiential prioritization emerged in both conditions. In the 4-day condition, 64.7% (97/150) of the participants preferred the experiential-first schedule (vs. the 50% indifference split, $\chi^2[1] = 6.60, p < .01$). In the 4-week condition, 69.3% (97/140) also preferred the experiential-first schedule (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 10.82, p < .01$). Overall, 67% (194/290) preferred the experiential-first condition (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 32.56, p < .001$; see Figure 2). A 2-way (consumption span: 4-day vs. 4-week) between-groups logistic regression on experiential preference (0 = material-first, 1 = experiential-first) was not significant, $p > .25$, indicating no effect of consumption span.

Discussion

In study 2, participants indicated their preference between two travel consumption schedules of different order that consisted of the same set of purchases. As predicted, participants preferred the experiential-first to the material-first travel consumption schedule. This pattern emerged regardless of the attribute description order (experiential-first or material-first) or the consumption span (4-day or 4-week). The results of this study can help us unveil the underlying mechanism of experience prioritization. Specifically, this insignificant result between the two different time span conditions could exclude the previously proposed explanation (i.e., the tendency to delay experiential purchases in a relatively short time during a trip).

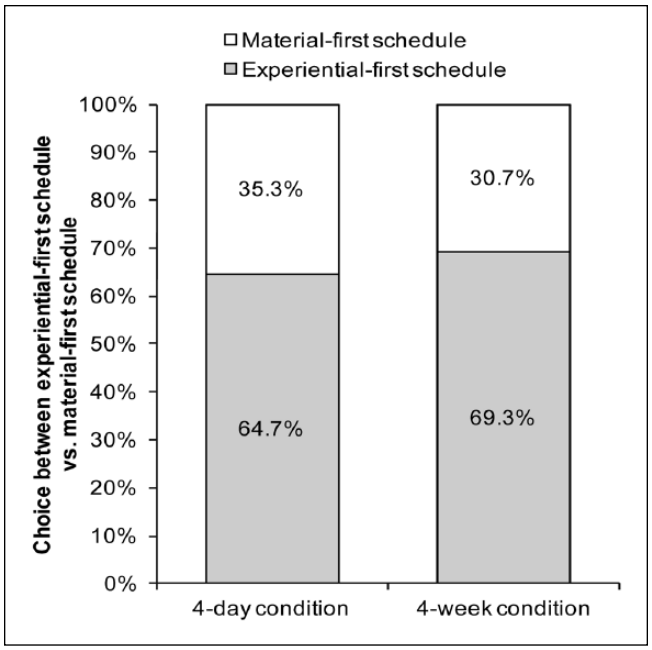

Figure 2. Choice share of experiential versus material purchases while traveling (study 2).

Although the results of studies 1 and 2 supported our prediction that travelers tend to exhibit experiential prioritization in purchases made while traveling, one weakness of these studies was the lack of a control condition. To provide a clearer test for our hypothesis, we added a nontravel condition in the following studies (studies 4 and 5) to serve as a basis of comparison.

Studies 3A and 3B: Replication of Studies 1 and 2

Studies 3A and 3B advance the findings from studies 1 and 2 by clarifying and resolving some issues that could potentially jeopardize the validity of the findings. First, the particular purchase examples used in studies 1 and 2 may not best represent typical purchases made during travel. Thus, we conducted two different pretests (see the Supplemental Material for details) to identify more representative material (e.g., local artworks) and experiential purchases (e.g., visiting local

museums) made in a travel setting. Second, we measured alternative confounding factors (e.g., income level, previous experience of traveling abroad, or perceived uniqueness of the consumption item) and controlled for these variables.

Study 3A: Ordering Purchase

The main method used was quite similar to study 1. Participants were 96 US residents (49.0% female; M_{age} = 37.15, SD = 11.90) recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were asked to imagine traveling to Paris and to read a short description of Paris. Then, they were asked to schedule four purchases across the 4-day trip, with one purchase per day, by reading the activities in Table 2 in the Supplemental Material. As expected, the results of study 3A replicated those of study 1. Participants tended to schedule experiential purchases on the first two days and material purchases on the third and final days of the trip. Specifically, on day 1, experiential choice was 88.5% and material choice was 11.5% (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 33.50$, $p < .001$); on day 2, experiential choice was 63.5% and material choice was 36.5% (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 3.59$, $p = .058$); on day 3, experiential choice was 26.0% and material choice was 74.0 % (vs. 50%, $\chi^2[1] = 11.69$, $p < .001$); finally, on day 4, experiential choice was 21.9% and material choice was 78.1%, $\chi^2[1] = 16.49$, $p < .001$). In sum, we replicated experiential prioritization in scheduling. In addition, controlling for potential confounding variables (e.g., gender, marriage status, employment status, household income level, education level, ethical background and overseas travel experience) did not change the results (see the Supplemental Material for details).

Study 3B: Preference between Two Schedules

The main method was quite similar to the 4-day condition of study 2. Participants were 185 US residents (45.4% female; M_{age} = 36.15, SD = 12.16) recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were asked to imagine traveling to a city and to read similar instructions as those of study 2. Then, the participants were presented with two schedule options that differed only in the order of consumption (See the activities in Table 2 in the Supplemental Material). The order of choice was counterbalanced such that roughly 50% of the participants were exposed to the experiential buying activities first for the first and second days, whereas the other half were exposed to the material buying activities first for the first and second days. The order of presentation was not significant; thus, it is not discussed further ($\chi^2[1] = 2.42$, $p > .12$).

As we expected, the results of study 3B replicated those of study 2. Importantly, 77.3% (143/185) of the participants preferred the experiential-first schedule (vs. the 50% indifference split, $\chi^2[1] = 29.79$, $p < .001$). In sum, participants preferred the experiential-first to the material-first travel consumption schedule. Since we controlled for the perceived uniqueness of each activity, these results exclude the possibility that our findings from the previous studies are due to an innate preference or tendency to engage in unique activities first. Again, potential confounding variables did not influence participants' preference between the different consumption schedules (see the Supplemental Material for details).

Study 4: Ordering Purchases in Travel versus Nontravel Contexts

Study 4 was an extension of study 1 with a few changes. First, study 4 was an experiment that included the consumption context as a between-subjects factor. The primary purpose of study 4 was to compare consumption timing preference between travel and nontravel contexts, using the same set of purchase examples. We used the purchase examples employed in study 1 because the purchase examples used in study 3 (e.g., buying souvenirs) were deemed as inappropriate for a nontravel (i.e., residential) context. Consistent with our central theorization that experiential prioritization is a unique characteristic pertaining to the travel context, we felt that experiential prioritization would emerge more strongly in the travel than in the nontravel context.

Second, to show that experiential prioritization is a general phenomenon and not merely a city-specific phenomenon, we did not specify the travel destination in study 4. The travel destination was specified in previous studies (study 1: Sydney; study 2: New York City; and study 3A: Paris). No city-specific influence on purchase decisions was found to exist.

Method

Participants were 102 adults (52.0% female; M_{age} = 33.22, SD = 11.34) residing in the United States recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants were assigned to one of two (consumption context: travel vs. nontravel) conditions in a between-participants design. Participants in the travel condition read the following: "Imagine that you are visiting a city for a vacation. Imagine that you have 4 days left until you leave the city. You want to engage in 4 different activities, with 1 activity each day." Participants in the nontravel condition read the following: "Imagine that you have 4 days off work. You want to engage in 4 different activities, with 1 activity each day." Because travel is not mentioned, it was likely that participants would imagine making purchases near their homes. For both conditions, the four purchase examples were the same as in study 1. For each day (days 1-4), participants indicated which purchase they would like to make. Finally, participants indicated how much they liked each purchase on a 7-point scale (1 = *don't like it at all*, 7 = *like it very much*).

Results

As predicted, experiential prioritization in consumption scheduling emerged more strongly in the travel than in the

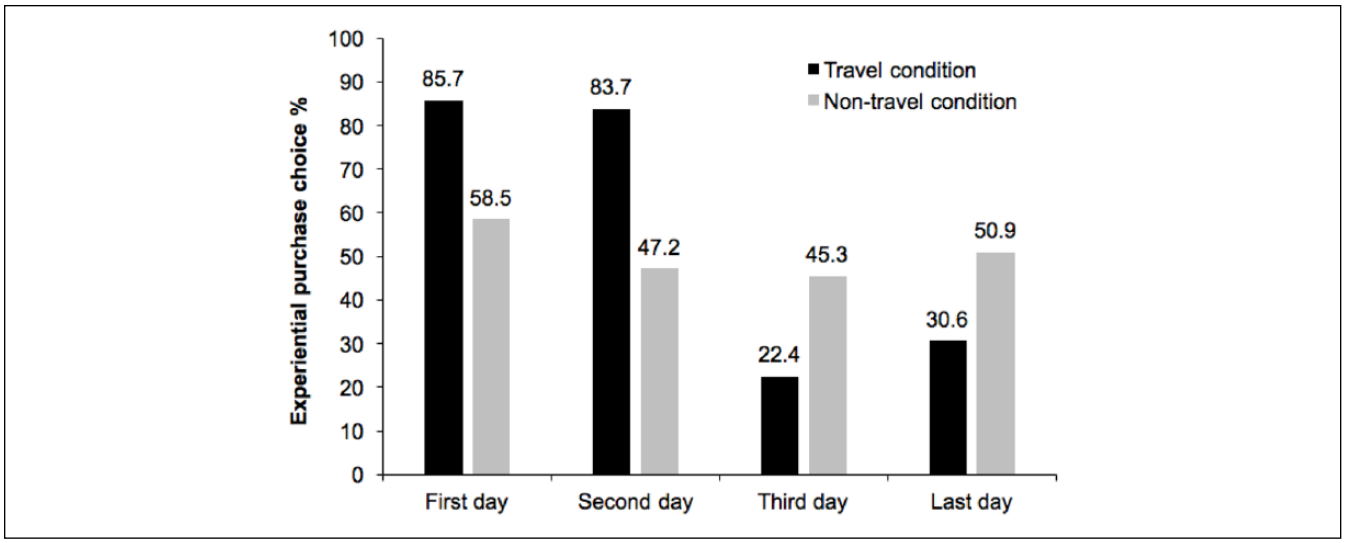

Figure 3. Choice share of experiential purchases (study 4).

nontravel condition. On day 1, experiential choice was higher in the travel (85.7% [42/49]) than in the nontravel condition (58.5% [31/53], $\chi^2[1] = 9.27$, $p = .003$). On day 2, experiential choice was also higher in the travel (83.7% [41.49]) than in the nontravel condition (47.2% [25/53], $\chi^2[1] = 14.86$, $p < .001$). From day 3, the pattern reversed. On day 3, experiential choice was lower in the travel (22.4% [11/49]) than in the nontravel condition (45.3% [24/53], $\chi^2[1] = 5.89$, $p = .02$). On day 4, experiential choice was lower in the travel (30.6% [15/49]) than in the nontravel condition (50.9% [27/53], $\chi^2[1] = 4.35$, $p = .04$; see Figure 3).

Regarding the general likability of each activity, general liking was higher for experiential purchases ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 1.19$) than material purchases ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(101) = 9.55$, $p < .001$, but the general liking for each purchase type was not moderated by the consumption context, p's $> .26$. An analysis that excluded 13 participants, who scheduled the same purchase multiple times across the four days, provided the same pattern of results.

Discussion

Study 4 improved study 1 in several ways. First, we directly compared consumption scheduling between the travel and nontravel contexts. As expected, experiential prioritization emerged more strongly in the travel than in the nontravel context. The direct comparison strengthened our theory that experiential prioritization is a unique phenomenon emerging within the context of travel, which is an experience in and of itself. Interestingly, participants in the nontravel context did not favor either experiential or material prioritization. We discuss this in the General Discussion.

Participants across both consumption context conditions showed higher general liking for the experiential than the material purchase examples used in the study. Although the higher liking of experiential purchases may have led to experiential prioritization, we believe that this finding does not tell the whole story, given the pattern reflected in the nontravel context condition. In addition, study 4 showed that the travel destination does not need to be specified for the experiential effect to emerge.

Although not presented in the manuscript, we conducted an additional study in which participants rated the optional consumption timing for 10 different purchases (i.e., five each for experiential and material purchases) separately, either in the travel or nontravel context. As predicted, the pattern of experiential prioritization emerged more strongly in the travel than in the nontravel context. For purchases made during a trip, the average preferred consumption timing for experiential purchases was sooner than that for material purchases, whereas for purchases made near one's home, the preferred consumption timing between the two purchase types was similar. This additional study replicated the results of study 4 using a larger number of purchase examples.

Study 5: Happiness in Travel versus Nontravel Contexts

Studies 1-4 explored consumers' scheduling behavior and preferences. In study 5, we explored consumers' anticipated happiness related to consumption timing scheduling. Study 2 showed that participants preferred the experiential-first schedule to the material-first schedule. In study 5, we asked participants which schedule would make them happier. As in study 4, study 5 used an experimental approach by examining happiness in two separate contexts (travel vs. nontravel). We predicted that participants would anticipate greater happiness from the experiential-first schedule and that this happiness effect would emerge more strongly in the travel than in the nontravel context.

Method

Participants were 364 US residents (49.5% female; M_{age} = 34.18, SD = 11.51) recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants began the study by reading the following: "There are certain purchases people spend money on that they want immediately and other things they would rather wait and have at some point in the future." Then, participants were assigned to one of 2 (consumption context: travel vs. nontravel) conditions in a between-participants design. Participants in the travel condition read the following: "Further, imagine that you are currently traveling and will eventually consume each of the 6 purchases during your current travel," while participants in the nontravel condition read the following: "Further, imagine that you do not have a plan to travel anytime soon. You will eventually consume each of the 6 purchases, as close to your residence as possible."

Then, participants were presented with two types of schedules. Both schedules involved the same set of 6 purchases, consisting of 3 experiential and 3 material purchases. The experiential-first schedule ("Order A") had the consumption order of (1) Tickets to a sporting event; (2) Ski passes; (3) A meal at a nice restaurant; (4) A pair of jeans; (5) A diamond necklace; and (6) A wristwatch. The material-first schedule ("Order B") had the consumption order of: (1) A pair of jeans; (2) A diamond necklace; (3) A wristwatch; (4) Tickets to a sporting event; (5) Ski passes; and (6) A meal at a nice restaurant. Anticipated happiness was assessed with the following item: "Between the two orders, which order would make you happier after you have consumed all of the purchases?" (–3 = definitely Order A, +3 = definitely Order B). Finally, as a consumption context manipulation check, participants indicated whether they had imagined traveling or not traveling.

Results

Seventy-six (18.1%) participants missed the consumption context manipulation check, but their responses were kept in the analysis because removing them did not change the pattern or significance of the results. First, we examined comparative happiness between the two consumption contexts. As expected, the relative happiness from the experiential-first schedule over the material-first schedule was greater in the travel condition (M = −0.14, SD = 2.36) than in the nontravel condition (M = 0.53, SD = 2.19, F[1, 362] = 7.84, p = .005). Second, we explored whether the response in each context condition differed from 0, the scale midpoint of indifference (similar happiness between the two schedules). The responses in the travel condition did not differ from the scale midpoint (one-sample t[177] = −0.80, p > .25). The responses in the nontravel condition were significantly higher than the scale midpoint (t[185] = 3.28, p = .001), indicating greater happiness from the material-first consumption schedule, as shown in Figure 4.

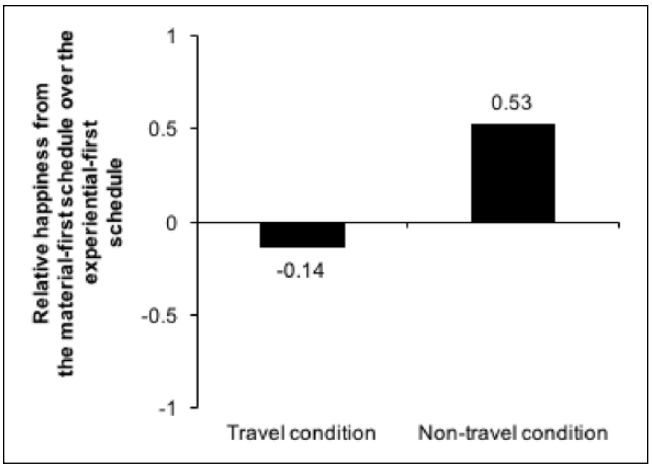

Figure 4. Relative happiness from two different schedules (study 5).

Discussion

Study 5 explored the relationship between experiential prioritization and anticipated happiness. Participants compared happiness between the experiential-first and material-first travel consumption schedules, either in the travel or nontravel context. Consistent with our hypothesis, the relative happiness from the experiential-first over the material-first schedule emerged more strongly in the travel than in the nontravel context. Although greater happiness from the experiential-first schedule did not emerge within the travel condition, this result might have been due to the specific set of purchases used in the study. However, in comparison to the nontravel condition, the overall pattern of experimental prioritization while traveling was consistent with the results of our previous studies.

Study 6: Experiential Prioritization Reflected in Blog Postings

In study 6, experiential prioritization in scheduling behavior was tested with personal online weblogs. A weblog is a website consisting of a series of entries arranged in reverse chronological order. We searched online and found 80 weblogs on past travel, and we coded the first two and last two purchases made while traveling as experiential or material purchases. We expected that more of the early purchases would be experiential purchases while more of the last purchases would be material purchases.

Method

We searched online for 80 weblogs of "Korea to Japan" travel. Japan is a popular travel destination for Korean travelers. Specifying the travel departure and destination allowed us to control for any country-specific artifacts. As search words, we used *Japan, travel*, and *first day.* The search was

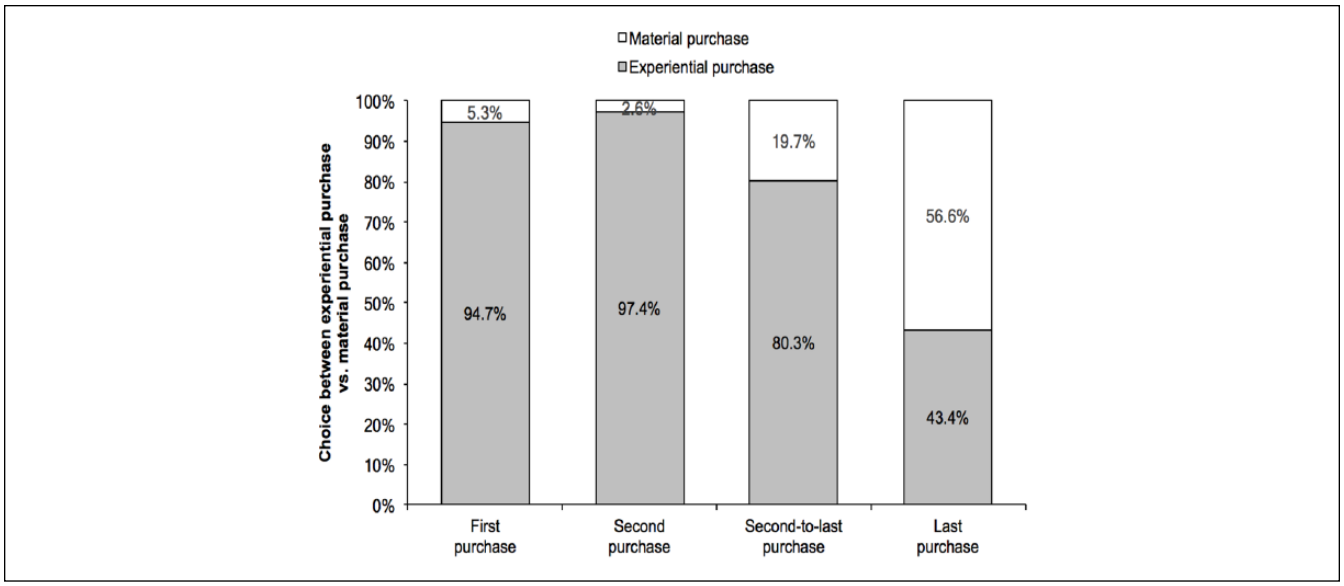

Figure 5. Relative frequency of experiential versus material purchases while traveling (study 6).

done on Daum (http://www.daum.net), which is a major Korean search engine with 10,000,000 monthly visitors (Nielson 2016). After the search, an exhaustive list of more than 50,000 weblogs resulted. Starting from the top of the resulting list, we visited each weblog to identify those bloggers who provided a clear chronological description of activities done on their trip. The search continued until we reached the predetermined sample size of 80. We also contacted the corresponding authors for more information on their weblogs and for coding.

A research assistant who was unaware of our hypothesis searched for the first and last two purchases and coded each purchase as either experiential or material. Frequently listed experiential purchases included visiting museums, hot spas, and famous restaurants, while frequently listed material purchases included buying clothes, souvenirs, and gifts.

Results

The final sample size used in our study was 76 since 4 of the initial 80 weblogs had closed down as we started our analysis. We explored whether more of the early purchases (first two purchases) were experiential purchases and whether more of the last purchases (the last two purchases) were material purchases. The predicted pattern of experiential prioritization in consumption behavior emerged. The choice share of experiential purchases (vs. material purchases) was 94.7% in the first purchase, 97.4% in the second purchase, 80.3% in the second-to-last purchase, and 43.4% in the last purchase (choice $\text{share}_{\text{first + second purchase}} = 3.9\%$ [6/152] versus choice $\text{share}_{\text{second-to-last + last purchase}} = 38.2\%$ [58/152], $\chi^2[1] = 53.52$, $p < .001$; see Figure 5).

Discussion

In study 6, we tested whether experiential prioritization in scheduling behavior was indicated in personal online weblogs. We obtained online travel weblogs that provided a chronological record of purchases made during trips. As predicted, more of the early purchases were experiential purchases while more of the last purchases were material purchases. Study 6 demonstrated experiential prioritization with the travelers' actual behaviors in their past travels. The results of study 6 were consistent with and complemented our scenario-based research in studies 1-5.

General Discussion

Summary of Studies

The current research was initiated with the goals of (1) examining travelers' preferred timing of consumption for experiential and material purchases while traveling; (2) providing a theoretical explanation behind such preference; and (3) exploring how people's consumption scheduling preference in the travel context differs from their preference for the same set of purchases in a general, nontravel context. We contended that travelers who are likely to be primed with the concept of an experience during a trip (travel is a prototypical example of an experiential purchase) would show a relative preference to make experiential purchases sooner than material purchases.

The results of the seven studies showed a consistent pattern of experiential prioritization across key aspects of consumption scheduling: scheduling behavior, preference, and anticipated happiness. Participants indicated that they would make an experiential purchase sooner than a material

purchase during a trip (studies 1 and 3A), and preferred the experiential-prioritized to the material-prioritized travel consumption schedules (studies 2 and 3B); moreover, they associated more happiness with the experiential-prioritized schedule (study 5). These patterns of experiential prioritization indicated in the participants' behavior, preference, and happiness emerged more strongly in the travel context than in the nontravel context (studies 4 and 5). Finally, using the data obtained from online personal travel weblogs, we showed that experiential prioritization occurs in the real world (study 6).

Our findings were confirmed and found to be consistent across different participant samples (college undergraduates in New Zealand, US adults recruited online, and Korean travelers of weblogs), various travel destinations (Sydney, Paris, New York City, and Japan), and primary and secondary data. For a robust examination of our hypothesis, in designing our experiments, we purposely used physically non-imposing material purchase examples (e.g., a piece of clothing, jewelry, electronic gadget); we confined the condition to travel occurring in one city (thereby making luggage constraints less salient); and we specified that all purchase options would be available during the given travel period. These specifications eliminated some of the potential nonpsychological influences that may also lead to experiential prioritization. Without these specifications, experiential prioritization would have emerged more strongly in our studies.

Theoretical Implications

First, our research contributes to the growing literature comparing experiential and material purchases (Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampol 2015), especially Kumar and Gilovich's (2016) work on consumption timing scheduling between these two purchase types. We contribute to the literature by testing this effect in a new, important, and prevalent consumption context of travel. In doing so, we find a largely reversed effect. Related to this finding, the current study clearly demonstrates the unique consumption pattern of travelers compared to general consumers. Since some travel researchers have tried to simply replicate studies from psychology and marketing for travel research, the distinctive and opposite pattern of results found in this study suggest the need to adapt procedures carefully when replicating findings from other fields in the travel context. Our results also illustrate the uniqueness of travel research with respect to other fields (e.g., Open Science Collaboration 2015; Ritchie and Filiatrault 1980).

Second, given that our prediction is unconventional and contrary to the findings from Kumar and Gilovich (2016), it would be worthwhile to consider the reasons as to why people may prefer more immediate material purchases while traveling. The first reason is that the early consumption of material purchases would allow travelers to enjoy the benefits of material purchases early on and throughout the travel period (e.g., utilizing new electronic gadgets during the trip, wearing new clothes that fit the environment). Another reason is that some material purchases can be regarded as equal to, or more unique or limited than experiential purchases during a trip (e.g., location- or time- specific). With these two possibilities outstanding, however, we anticipated and found that our abovementioned psychological reasons for experiential prioritization (i.e., minimal utility in delaying experiential purchases and higher readiness to make experiential purchases) still hold by demonstrating experience prioritization throughout multiple experiments.

Third, we contribute to the literature of experiential and material purchases by integrating the research on consumption timing preference with the research on happiness. A conventional and predominant dependent variable in the purchase type literature is happiness (Van Boven and Gilovich 2003). We tested whether the level of happiness from experiential and material purchases depends on people's consumption timing preference (study 5). Compared with the nontravel (i.e., residential) context, participants associated greater relative happiness with the experiential-prioritized over material-prioritized consumption schedule. In addition, our studies extend Kumar and Gilovich (2016) by exploring travelers' actual behavior. For example, in study 6, we obtained data from travelers' self-reported, personal online travel weblogs. We explored travelers' chronological descriptions of their activities while traveling and found that more of the early purchases of the trip were experiential purchases whereas more of the later purchases of the trip were material purchases. By using this unobtrusive methodology, we were able to show that experiential prioritization emerges in the real world.

Fourth, we found a null effect of prioritization in the nontravel context condition in study 4. Participants assigned to the nontravel context condition prioritized neither experiential nor material purchases, as they showed similar levels of preferred timing of consumption for experiential and material purchases across days 1-4. This null prioritization effect in the nontravel context was at first surprising to us because this result differed from the pattern of material prioritization that emerged in Kumar and Gilovich's (2016) studies (in which, without a specified consumption context, the participants of their studies likely imagined engaging in a nontravel consumption). Yet, we suspect that the inconsistency between the results of Kumar and Gilovich (2016) and ours emerged because the specific instructions used in our studies likely oriented the participants toward a shorter time span mode. In study 4, we instructed participants to imagine that all purchases must be made during the 4 off-work days. This instruction likely has reduced participants' usual motivation (in nontravel contexts) to delay experiential purchases more than material purchases (Kumar and Gilovich 2016), which produced the result of null prioritization. Nevertheless, the question of interest is whether consumption timing differs across nontravel and travel context conditions. As hypothesized, the consumption patterns showed a stark difference between the two conditions.

Fifth, our research contributes to the travel literature in various ways. Our results add to a clearer understanding of the findings from previous research that demonstrated greater happiness in the pre- versus post-travel phase (Nawijn et al. 2010; Wilson and Gilbert 2003, 2005). According to these researchers' explanation, greater happiness perceived during the pre-travel phase derives from the anticipated pleasure of future travel. However, given our results that travelers tend to schedule experiential purchases sooner than later, the lower-than-anticipated happiness in the post-travel phase might be due to the recency effect. That is, experiential purchases make people happier than material purchases (Van Boven and Gilovich 2003), but travelers make material purchases later, toward the end of their trip. Thus, given that their most recent purchases in the post-travel phase are material purchases, travelers cannot obtain maximum happiness, which would have been probable if the most recent purchases had been experiential purchases.

Practical Implications

The results of our research provide several implications for travel and tourism industry practitioners, as well as for individual travelers. First, the most significant message is the importance of a well-organized travel schedule, with different types of activities in the right order. Many package tour programs from travel agencies provide a fixed schedule for travelers. In order to increase the overall satisfaction and experienced utility of travelers, however, it may be better to schedule experiential (vs. material) activities first when planning a detailed schedule.

Second, the flip side of experiential-prioritization while traveling hints at the question of when and how best to induce travelers to purchase material goods. Given that travelers tend to delay their material purchases, it is not surprising that famous museums have souvenir shops near the exit. Thus, travel agencies providing package tour programs need to consider when to visit places where tourists can purchase material goods. In addition, local governments might need to consider providing more varieties of local goods at the airport when travelers depart the destination so that they can be exposed to a larger number of options for their purchase decisions. In this way, local businesses, as well as travelers, may enjoy the benefits of delaying material purchases.

Furthermore, our findings suggest a useful strategy for businesses selling material goods to travelers. Since travelers generally like to engage in experiential purchases during the early stage of traveling, it would be beneficial for businesses located at the early stage of traveling to have customers engage in experiential activities while travelers make material purchasing decisions. For example, a local candy store might offer travelers various flavored candies, as well as opportunities to make candies themselves, such that they can actually experience the candy-making process.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that suggest future directions for research. First, the current research (except for study 6) mainly used the scenario-based method, resulting in weak external validity, although the scenario-based method is frequently used in the previous travel literature (J. Kim, Kim, and Kim 2018; J. H. Kim and Jang 2014). Future studies may need to resolve this issue by using real travelers' responses and preferences, as we did in study 6.

Second, because of the cross-sectional character of survey-based tourist satisfaction studies, it is difficult to grasp the true sequential effect of travel activities on tourist satisfaction in different trip phases. Future study needs to investigate this issue in more depth.

Third, our key dependent variable was consumption timing preference. Thus, in our studies, we asked participants to imagine that they would eventually make all given purchases. However, it would be interesting for future research to examine whether the consumption context (nontravel vs. travel) may also create systematic differences regarding people's decision to abstain from (and not just postpone) consumption. Relatedly, it would be interesting to focus on and compare consumers' behaviors and preferences toward different types of experiences. For example, it would be meaningful to compare consumers' behaviors and preferences between experiences that are highly tied to creating meaning (or skill development) for consumers and other types of experiences.

Fourth, research on happiness and well-being has identified two components of happiness and personal well-being (Ryan and Deci 2001). The hedonic component focuses more on the pursuit of pleasure, enjoyment, and comfort, whereas the eudaimonic component focuses more on seeking and developing the best in oneself (Huta and Ryan 2010; Ryan and Deci 2001). Whereas most research on travel literature has predominantly focused on hedonic satisfaction/happiness (Filep 2012; J. H. Kim, Rithie, and Tung 2010), researchers have recently started to stress the importance of understanding eudaimonic satisfaction (Filep and Pearce 2013; Knobloch, Robertson, and Aitken 2017). Whereas both hedonic and eudaimonic happiness increase overall happiness (Huta and Ryan 2010), in future research, it would be meaningful and interesting to distinguish both components of happiness in the travel context.

Lastly, future research may discover some boundary or moderating factors that influence the prioritization effect, in which material prioritization (Kumar and Gilovich 2016) is strengthened in the travel context or reversed as found in our research.

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