



A new approach to understanding involvement: linking involvement to the memorability of experience

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Abstract

Based on the involvement literature, the current research redefines the involvement theory and proposes a new form of involvement, namely situated involvement. The research, then, develops a scale to measure this involvement employing a mixed methods procedure. Afterward, the relationships between enduring, response, and situated involvements as well as the memorability of experience are investigated using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results from a survey of 317 tourists in Queenstown, New Zealand show that the memorability of experience is only impacted by situated involvement, the type of involvement which occurs during an experience. Enduring and response involvements are found to influence situated involvement, and enduring involvement predicts response involvement.

Keywords Memorability of experience · Involvement · Scale development · Mixed methods

Introduction

Creating and offering involving experiences is placed at the heart of businesses' marketing activities, especially in the face of highly competitive markets (Pine and Gilmore 1999). The interest in adopting this strategy derives from the value that involvement leads to memorable experiences (Adongo et al. 2015) which are crucial in success (Amoroso et al. 2021; Kim et al. 2012). As a result, all businesses rely heavily on measuring customer involvement to know the level of their offerings and performance, allocate resources, and use it as a benchmark to compete with their competitors. This is specially the case for service and experience-oriented industries in which customers play an important role in experience co-creation and delivery (Wijaya et al. 2013).

A literature review reveals three types of involvement: enduring, situational and response. Enduring involvement refers to the personal importance/relevance of a product/service/experience to an individual, situational involvement is a temporary concern with a stimulus object (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008), response involvement is described as “the complexity of cognitive and other processes at various stages of the decision process” (Richins et al. 1992, p. 143). Michaelidou and Dibb (2008) concluded from their comprehensive review of the literature that situational involvement is influenced by a purchase situation and consumers who are involved situationally tend to care about what they want to purchase and try to make the right choice. They concluded, therefore, that such consumers are more concerned and tend to put considerable time and effort in their purchases. Given this assessment, it seems that consumers' degrees of situational and response involvements and the factors contributing to these involvements would be same. In addition, Richins et al. (1992) stated that capturing situational involvement is hard, whereas response involvement is possible to be assessed. Hence, the current research only focuses on enduring and response involvements.

Although the literature suggested that involvement happens before a purchase (e.g., a shopping experience), it fails to recognize involvement formed by the environmental stimuli during an experience. Houston and Walker (1996) pointed out that factors during an experience create feelings

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in consumers. Likewise, environmental stimuli during an experience may encourage the formation of involvement in customers. It has been stated that a successful experience requires active involvement of consumers (Pine and Gilmore 1999). This indicates that the existing types of involvement are ineffective when evaluating customers' experiences as they have not addressed the formation of during-experience involvement. In other words, the involvement literature has not defined or/and operationalized a type of involvement which occurs during an experience. Therefore, it is vital to conceptualize involvement as a multi-phase concept to account for its pervasive impact on customers' experiences.

Despite the undeniable importance of environmental stimuli in providing the conditions which make involvement more likely to happen, there is no reliable and valid measure which can be used by businesses to gauge the level of their offerings and performance. While Zatori et al. (2018) proposed and measured a new concept called "experience-involvement" in the context of sightseeing tours, they aimed to capture on-site experience not involvement which happens during an experience. The lack of a real-time or experience-induced involvement measure makes involvement research incomplete. Taking a during experience approach to understanding involvement in an experience-oriented context is especially important as what happens during an experience is more influential than what happens before and after the experience (Zatori et al. 2018). As a result, this research proposes a new type of involvement which occurs during an experience, namely situated involvement, and consequently, develops a measurement scale for this involvement.

In spite of its acknowledged importance in memorable experiences (Adongo et al. 2015), involvement has received little attention in the service literature. For instance, the consequences of enduring involvement have been investigated in terms of engagement and behavioral intention/actual future behavior (Organ et al. 2015), intention of local food consumption (Caber et al. 2018), decision-making of local food (Lu and Chi 2018), and wine by-the-glass consumption (Bruwer and Cohen 2019), or as a moderating effect in the relationships between food experience, destination attachment and image (Hsu and Scott 2020). While prior research contributed to the outcomes of enduring involvement, no attention has been paid to other outcomes such as memorability of experience or other types of involvement. Moreover, previous studies viewed enduring involvement as a general interest (e.g., interest in food), while it can be viewed as a specific interest (e.g., interest in a particular food/food experience).

The current research, thus, aims to address several significant gaps in the literature by conceptualizing enduring involvement as an interest in a specific type of food experience, i.e., eating in restaurants. The research also addresses a major research gap and expands the topic of involvement

through including a different form of involvement than that which is commonly used. A different perspective on how we think about involvement may provide new insights into how businesses can offer memorable experiences to their customers. In addition, the research investigates the relationships between enduring, response, and situated involvements as well as the memorability of experience.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: "Literature review and hypotheses development" section provides a review of the literature and develops the hypotheses. "Methods" section describes the methodology used in this research. "Results" section explains the results and "Discussion" section discusses these results. Finally, "Conclusions" section presents the implications for theory and practice and ends with limitations.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Memorability of experience

An experience refers to something which happens to a customer and influences his/her feelings and perceptions in a positive or negative way (Adongo et al. 2015), and is related to what customers bring with themselves in an activity in addition to what suppliers provide (Wijaya et al. 2013). Reports from previous research indicate that ordinary or even satisfactory experiences cannot guarantee loyalty of customers as more than half of customers who switched to another brand were satisfied with the previous brands. As a result, researchers suggested that memory must be incorporated into the study of experience as it mediates behavioral intentions (Kim et al. 2012).

It has been argued that the ultimate experiences which customers want to obtain are memorable experiences (Wijaya et al. 2013). The memorability should be the aim of customer-oriented businesses (Pine and Gilmore 1999) as memory is the only thing which remains after ending an experience (Zatori et al. 2018). Memorable experience refers to an experience which can be remembered and recalled after the event has occurred (Wijaya et al. 2013). Customer-oriented businesses have to create unforgettable experiences to differentiate themselves and be competitive and sustainable as providing memorable experiences results in favorable outcomes such as high levels of positive emotions, satisfaction, attachment and behavioral intentions (Hsu and Scott 2020).

Given the importance of memorable experience, tourism and hospitality studies examined what makes an experience memorable, i.e., the components of a memorable experience. For example, Tung and Richie (2011) investigated the underlying essence of memorable experiences using grounded



theory approach, and found four dimensions: affect, expectations, consequentiality, and recollection. Kim et al. (2012) quantitatively identified seven memorable experience components: hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge. They believed that their MTE scale is applicable to most tourism contexts. It seems that their scale is more comprehensive than the other ones and encompasses different aspects of tourists' experiences. The utility of this scale has also been confirmed in various tourism contexts including food tourism (Adongo et al. 2015).

Involvement

While there is a lack of consensus on the definition and structure of involvement (Celsi and Olson 1988; Wang et al. 2015), it can be described as an interest in, concern about or commitment to something (Arora 1982). Involvement is an important concept in understanding consumers' decision-making process and behavior, because involvement in something is known to impact the attitudes and behavior toward that thing (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). Extensive research has been conducted by marketing scholars in the area of consumer/customer involvement (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). Although a review of involvement literature was conducted (see Table 1 for the

most relevant studies), a full discussion of the literature regarding the types of involvement is out the scope of this research. A most recent study found that "extant research classifies involvement as enduring and situational" (Sharma et al. 2020 p. 89). Nevertheless, Michaelidou and Dibb (2008) reviewed the literature on involvement and concluded that the treatment of involvement in the existing literature can be categorized into three types: enduring, situational, and response.

Enduring involvement is arguably the most prominent type of involvement as early researchers likened involvement to a person's perceived relevance of a product/service (Celsi and Olson 1988; Zaichkowsky 1985). This involvement is also necessary for the other types to happen (Zaichkowsky 1985). Enduring involvement, as a long-term attachment, refers to the personal importance/relevance of a product, service or experience to an individual (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). A consumer can be attached to something based on cognitive elements such as values, goals (Celsi and Olson 1988), personal needs or interests (Zaichkowsky 1985). Although this approach views enduring involvement as a cognitive concept, Park and Mittal (1985) proposed that individuals can also be interested in a product/service based on the product/service's symbolic benefits derived from the use of the product/service (e.g., enhanced self-esteem or self-image).

Table 1 The most relevant studies of involvement

Authors	Nature	Constructs	Methods	Results
Arora (1982)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational, response	SEM	Positive impact of SI on RI was enhanced by EI
Zaichkowsky (1985)	Quantitative	Enduring	Factor analysis, MANOVA, Correlation	A scale was developed
Richins and Bloch (1986)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational	T-test, test-retest correlations, MANOVA	Stability of EI and temporality of SI
Celsi and Olson (1988)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational, felt	ANOVA, ANCOVA	Significant effects of EI and SI on felt
Richins et al. (1992)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational, response	MANOVA	No net effect of EI on SI
Burton and Netemeyer (1992)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational, response	SEM	Positive effect of EI on RI
Houston and Walker (1996)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational	Factor analysis, ANOVA, regression	EI and SI affected the content of purchase goals
Michaelidou and Dibb (2008)	–	Enduring, situational, response	Literature review	Summarizing the literature
Wang et al. (2015)	Quantitative	Felt	T-test, SEM	Moderating effect on loyalty programs
Organ et al. (2015)	Quantitative	Enduring	SEM	EI impacted engagement and behavioral intentions
Kim and Lee (2017)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational	SEM	EI influenced SI
Lu and Chi (2018)	Quantitative	Enduring	ANCOVA	Positive impact of EI on decision-making
Bruwer and Cohen (2019)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational, response	SEM	Effect of EI on SI, effect of SI on RI
Sharma et al. (2020)	Quantitative	Enduring, situational	Factor analysis, MANOVA, regression	Interactive effects of EI and SI on decision-making



When considering the involvement of a consumer, it is essential to refer to “all those factors particular to a time and place of observation which do not follow from a knowledge of personal (intra-individual) and stimulus (choice alternatives) attributes, and which have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behavior” (Arora 1982, p. 506). These contextual factors determine the level of situational involvement, which is defined as a temporary concern with a stimulus object usually initiated by a particular cause such as perceived risk (Arora 1982; Richins and Bloch 1986). This involvement constitutes a short-term phenomenon that occurs only in specific situations, such as a purchase or decision (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008; Richins and Bloch 1986). Thus, “both SI and EI represent a state of arousal and product interest, but they differ in their motivations and in the temporal pattern of their occurrence” (Richins and Bloch 1986, p. 280). The intensity of situational involvement is dependent on the characteristics of an object/situation (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008).

Celsi and Olson (1988) took another approach to explain involvement and referred to this motivational state as “felt involvement”, highlighting the experiential, phenomenological nature of the concept of involvement. Felt involvement was described as overall subjective feeling of personal relevance, and is an acute state that only occurs at certain times and in certain situations. Products/services which are extremely important to a consumer are not always experienced as personally relevant. Celsi and Olson (1988) argued that while previous researchers had viewed response involvement as a function of enduring and situational involvements (e.g., Arora 1982; Richins and Bloch 1986), they treated enduring and situational involvements as sources of felt involvement.

Response involvement, as the behavioral view of involvement, is described as “the complexity of cognitive and other processes at various stages of the decision process” (Richins et al. 1992, p. 143). This form of involvement refers to a concept that attitudes result in behavior and the behavior includes the information acquisition and decision processes (Arora 1982; Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). Thus, response involvement often manifests itself in paying attention, being price conscious, or being alert to brand differences (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). Researchers also argued that highly involved consumers actively process information in order to assess the products/services, compare them and choose the best one (Yen et al. 2021).

Despite differences in nuances, there seems to be a consensus that involvement includes three forms/types, namely enduring, situational, and response (Arora 1982; Bruwer and Cohen 2019; Burton and Netemeyer 1992; Michaelidou and Dibb 2008; Richins et al. 1992). These three types of involvement are important in understanding consumers’ decision-making process and behavior. However, they

each account for an impact prior to purchase (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). For instance, in food tourism as an experience-oriented context, a tourist who loves foods (enduring involvement) wants to dine out in a restaurant. There are many factors which influence his/her restaurant selection such as type of restaurant, price, location (situational involvement). The tourist may spend some time and effort to collect information about the restaurant (response involvement). These three types of involvements all happen before the tourist has his/her dining experience.

Arguably, the predominant types of involvement in the literature fail to fully capture the involvement of tourists throughout the dining experience. It has been emphasized that customers want to have experiences in which they are actively involved and not only prior to purchase (Zatori et al. 2018). Pine and Gilmore (1999) believed that experience providers can enhance their experiences by actively involving their customers. Zatori et al. (2018) studied the role of involvement in experience through introducing the concept of experience-involvement and defined it as “personal, real-time involvement in the consumption of a given experience” (p. 112). They, however, described experience-involvement as a consequence of involvement and aimed to measure on-site, real-time experiences.

An experience consists of various factors which can create feelings in consumers (Houston and Walker 1996). Some of these factors can be highly involving, and this justifies the introduction of a real-time involvement. As a result, it is assumed that various factors during an experience can create or provide the conditions which make customer involvement in the experience more likely to happen. In other words, this research introduces situated involvement to capture on-site, real-time and in-the-moment involvement which refers to an unobservable state of motivation, arousal or interest towards an experience which is evoked by the factors during the experience. The distinction between situated involvement and experience-involvement is that the former is a type of involvement happening during an experience but the latter might be its consequence.

Conceptual framework

This research builds on the S–O–R (Stimulus, Organism, Response) Theory and the Framework of Experience Economy. The relevance of stimuli can be highlighted by the S–O–R (Stimulus, Organism, Response) Theory, which suggests that the environmental stimuli can influence customers’ feelings and perceptions. In this framework, the external stimuli induce customers’ internal cognitive and affective states, which will consequently determine their responses (Jeon and Kim 2012). While this theory provides insights on the role of stimuli in customers’ responses, the expectation of the relationship between involvement and the



memorability of experience is primarily based on the framework of experience economy proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1999), who advocated for the use of involvement as a basis for experience. In the framework, customer involvement is suggested as having a crucial role in creating an effective and memorable experience. Thus, drawing from the above-mentioned theories/frameworks and related research in the tourism literature, as well as the findings of previous studies which are detailed in the following sub-section, this research proposes its expectations.

The relationship between involvement and the memorability of experience

Research on the relationships among different types of involvement in tourism has been scarce. However, the relationship between enduring and response involvements has been studied in other contexts. Arora (1982), for instance, found that the positive impact of situational involvement on response involvement was enhanced by enduring involvement in the pre-search stage. Burton and Netemeyer (1992) reported the significant and positive effect from enduring involvement on response involvement. Likewise, Richins et al. (1992) reported that enduring involvement was directly related to response involvement. Although the marketing literature has not investigated the real-time type of involvement, Poulsson and Kale (2004) argued that personal relevance as an indicator of enduring involvement has a direct impact on involvement in an experience.

Applied to tourism context, it is expected that tourists who are interested in a type of food experience tend to spend considerable amount of time and effort (Bruwer and Cohen 2019). For example, a tourist who likes dining in luxury restaurants may spend hours searching online for a luxury restaurant. In the hospitality literature, the relationship between a general food interest and investment in researching a location was supported by Bruwer and Cohen (2019) who found that enduring involvement impacted information seeking behavior of restaurant diners. Tourists with high levels of enduring involvement are also expected to be influenced to a greater extent by the factors during a food experience (Wei et al. 2021). For instance, tourists who desire an authentic food experience, tend to be more attentive to the context and be more impacted by the stimuli during their dining experience.

In addition, higher levels of response involvement may enhance situated involvement as tourists who spend considerable amount of time and effort on their food experience are more likely to pay attention to different factors which exist during the food experience, and hence, tend to be more influenced by the environmental stimuli. For example, a tourist who spends time and effort on having a specific type of food in a restaurant is expected to be more

attentive to the details in the restaurant. As a result, the stimuli during the dining experience tend to enhance the tourist's perceptions and evaluations. Therefore, based on the above empirical evidence from the marketing literature and the aforementioned discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1 Enduring involvement positively influences response involvement.

Hypothesis 2 Enduring involvement positively influences situated involvement.

Hypothesis 3 Response involvement positively influences situated involvement.

Although many researchers have shown and emphasized the importance of different types of involvement in customers' perceptions and evaluations, the concept has received little attention from tourism researchers. The literature advocates involvement as an influential factor contributing to tourists' experiences. According to Robinson and Getz (2016), when tourists are interested in a special type of food experience or the environmental stimuli encourage them, they are more likely to be actively engaged in the experience, which in turn results in the memorability of the experience (Adongo et al. 2015). For example, foodies (tourists with high enduring involvement) who are interested in trying new foods are usually motivated to dine in local and authentic restaurants that they cannot visit at home. Such dining experiences tend toward extraordinarily and memorability.

The above proposition can also be true when tourists spend a considerable time and effort for the experience, for instance, by finding a restaurant in which high quality or special types of meals are provided. When tourists visit a specific restaurant, they are more likely to have an unusual and memorable dining experience. In addition, the likelihood of having a positive and unforgettable dining experience increases when tourists are actively involved during their dining experience. For example, if the stimuli within a restaurant (e.g., the authenticity of meals, the environment and the staff) appeal to tourists, the dining experience tends to a memorable one. Therefore, it is expected that different types of involvement (enduring, response, and situated) have a positive, direct impact on the memorability of food experience. Thus, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4 Enduring involvement positively influences the memorability of experience.

Hypothesis 5 Response involvement positively influences the memorability of experience.



Hypothesis 6 Situated involvement positively influences the memorability of experience.

In sum, the relationships between enduring, response and situated involvements as well as the memorability of experience were not examined in the service & marketing literature in general and the tourism literature in particular. Hence, the present research intends to address these research gaps by proposing a conceptual model which tests the linear relationships between these constructs in the food tourism context. The conceptual model is depicted in Fig. 1.

Methods

Data collection

This research focuses on tourists' food experiences in restaurants as tourism and hospitality are both experience-oriented industries. It includes three phases: an Internet-based (study 1) survey, a paper survey (study 2), and structured interviews (study 3). It, however, only details the study 2 as it is the main study. The sample is drawn from tourists who have a dining experience in any restaurant of Queenstown, New Zealand. This town offers a variety of types of dining experiences which are located in the central part of the town surrounded by a beautiful landscape (100% Pure New Zealand 2020). This research relies on purposive sampling method which allows the researcher to approach many participants from different backgrounds. This method also causes the least interruption to the respondents and takes the sample from tourists who are easy to approach and willing to participate (Zikmund et al. 2012).

In order to get fresh response and measure the constructs accurately, the participants are approached immediately following their dining experience, waiting for the tourists to leave a restaurant to avoid interfering with normal restaurant business. The participants are selected from different kinds of restaurants at different times (between 11 am and

11 pm) to increase the generalizability of the findings. The questionnaires are distributed among the participants to be completed under the guidance of the researcher. A questionnaire is given to each tourist who agrees to participate in the survey which could be more than one, but not all members of the same group. To reduce social desirability bias, the volunteer participants are informed of the anonymity and confidentiality of the data collected and are also asked to fill out the questionnaires themselves (Krosnick and Presser 2009).

For study 1, 374 completed surveys were collected between 16 January and 19 March 2019 (450 tourists were approached, of whom 413 agreed to participate. There were 39 incomplete surveys, leading to an effective response rate of 83.1%). Since the main research (study 2) uses factor analysis to analyze the data, a sample size of 300 is sufficient as 100 and 200 have been suggested as the minimum sample sizes for exploratory (Hair et al. 2019) and confirmatory factor analyses (Kline 2016), respectively. The data for study 2 and 3 were gathered between 13 December 2019 and 17 February 2020. 350 tourists were approached and 319 agreed to participate. Among the obtained responses, 3 ones were incomplete and thereby were eliminated, resulting in 317 usable responses and an effective response rate of 90.6%. In addition, of 319 tourists, 20 ones were interviewed. The sample profile of main research (study 2) is presented in Table 2.

Research instrument

A self-administered questionnaire is developed in English. The first part includes several questions about the demographic information of the participants, while the second part consists of some close-ended questions regarding the measurement scales. The scales include several statements which are answered using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree). The answer options are verbally labeled, i.e., all points are labeled with words as it clarifies the meanings of the scale points and reduces respondents' burden, which in turn improve the quality of answers and increase the reliability and validity of measurement (Krosnick and Presser 2009).

The measurement scales are designed to be as short as possible to increase the tourists' willingness to participate and avoid their fatigue (Hinkin 1995; Kachroo and Kachen 2018; Kato and Miura 2021). While some of the scales are shorter than the full scales from which they are drawn, they are more focused and without redundant items which lead to more valid scales (McGrath 2005). Employing more items also requires a larger sample size and truly unidimensional factors could be difficult to produce (Hair et al. 2019; Petrescu 2013). However, different items are used to capture multi-dimensionality of each scale and obtain more accurate

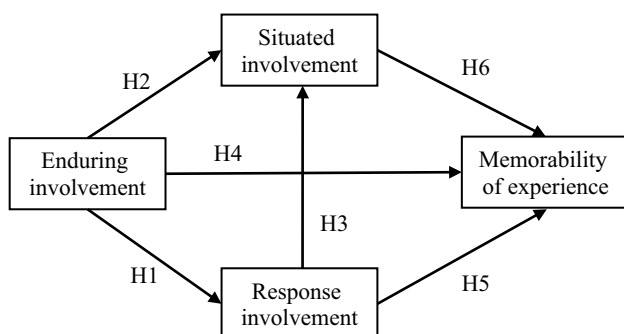


Fig. 1 The conceptual model



Table 2 Sample profile (survey in study 2)

Demographic	Frequency	Percent
Nationality		
Europe	112	35.3
Asia	97	30.6
America	52	16.4
Oceania	51	16.1
Africa	5	1.6
Gender		
Male	168	53.0
Female	149	47.0
Age		
26–35	93	29.3
18–25	67	21.1
36–45	55	17.4
46–55	48	15.1
56–65	29	9.1
> 65	25	7.9
Marital status		
Single	150	47.3
Married	146	46.1
De facto	18	5.7
Civil union	3	0.9
Educational level		
University	247	77.9
High school	61	19.2
Middle school	9	2.8
Annual household income (NZ\$)		
> 50,000	142	44.8
40,001–50,000	44	13.9
< 20,000	39	12.3
30,001–40,000	38	12.0
20,000–30,000	36	11.4
Not stated	18	5.7

information (Hair et al. 2019; Kline 2016). Situated involvement and memorability of experience are captured using multiple items as it has been recommended the use of at least three items to measure each construct (Kline 2016). However, the scales of enduring and response involvements include two items, because Hair et al. (2019) stated that employing less than three items is sufficient when the construct is not complex and easy to understand.

To support the content validity of the research instrument, the measurement scales for enduring and response involvements as well as the memorability of experience are adopted from the existing scales (Zikmund et al. 2012). However, some questions are slightly modified to fit the setting of this research as suggested by Lewis et al. (2005). To improve the content validity, the preliminary questions are reviewed and revised by several experts in the fields of hospitality and

tourism (Hair et al. 2019). The memorability of food experience is measured using seven items: enjoyment, novelty, refreshment, meaningfulness, exploration, wanted thing, and local culture. These are used from the previous studies (Adongo et al. 2015; Kim et al. 2012). Response involvement is captured by two items (time and effort) which are taken from Burton and Netemeyer (1992). Enduring involvement is measured using two items: interest and importance, which are adopted from the previous research (Organ et al. 2015; Kim and Lee 2017).

A systematic approach based on the previous paradigms (Churchill 1979; Hinkin 1995; Lewis et al. 2005) is used to measure situated involvement, involving eight steps: (1) the domain of the construct is first specified via consulting the literature review. The examination of the environmental stimuli in the current research focuses on their contribution to tourists' involvement in their food experiences, distinguishing it from previous studies of service quality in the restaurant context in terms of their ability to enhance tourists' perceptions of their dining experiences. (2) after defining the construct, a set of items are generated based on the domain. To produce a more complete list of measurement items, the following three sources are used: (a) review of marketing, hospitality, and tourism literatures focusing on involvement, (b) panel of experts in the field, and (c) findings of a survey. In addition, interviews are later used to determine whether others items should be added. 20 tourists are interviewed as no new information is obtained towards the end of the 20 interviews. It is important to note that the interviewees do not provide any new items for inclusion.

During item development, the issues of clarity is addressed so that the items measure all relevant content (content validity) and prevent overlapping with other constructs (discriminant validity). Furthermore, items which seem redundant or inaccurate are removed and the more appropriate items are retained. Following the initial generation of items, the proposed items are judged for content validity, i.e., how well the selected items represent the concept. Thus, the items are reviewed by experts to judge whether the items are appropriate and important as measures of situated involvement. Two academics with hospitality expertise and one with tourism expertise who have domain knowledge in consumer involvement are consulted; as a result, some items are removed and seventeen ones are approved by the experts.

The items emerged from the face/content validity phase are as follows: food/drink quality, physical environment, novelty, service quality, socialization, authenticity, diversity, price, innovation, catering for different cultures/religions, view, health, reputation, location, nostalgia, set-up (presentation), and sustainability. Although some of these items (e.g., novelty and authenticity) are related to the perception of the memorability of experience, they are included in the



item pool to assess all relevant domains of situated involvement as the goal in developing a measurement scale is to make sure that all key aspects of the construct are reflected in the items (Mackenzie 2003; McGrath 2005). Moreover, having items in a scale which represent other constructs is common, particularly if the scale has a fairly large number of items (McGrath 2005). It is also important to note that the interviewees also confirmed that these items are specific, concrete indicators which can help to measure situated involvement.

(3) primary data are collected and (4) the measure is purified. In order to refine the items and improve the final questionnaire, a pre-test is conducted to provide insights into whether the instrument is easy to understand and able to be completed (Lewis et al. 2005) as well as to improve face and content validities of the instrument (Hair et al. 2019). The developed questionnaire is pre-tested at a university using a purposive sample of 30 students with various backgrounds. The respondents are asked to remember their best dining experience in a restaurant which they had during the past twelve months when completing a questionnaire, ensuring that they would have a fresh memory of their food experience. They are also invited to make comments and suggestions at the end of the questionnaire on any questions which they think are ambiguous or difficult to answer; as a result, some questions are slightly changed based on the comments for purposes of clarity and shortening the length of questionnaire.

Appendix 1 shows the measurement scales in the final version of the questionnaire. (5) new data are then collected, and (6) the measure's reliability, (7) convergent and discriminant validities (8) as well as its nomological validity are assessed. These steps are detailed below.

Results

Factor analysis

Factor analysis employing exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA) is conducted. A split validation procedure is employed to initially identify and then confirm the construct of situated involvement. Therefore, the whole sample is divided into two sub-samples as suggested by Hair et al. (2019). The first sub-sample which consists of the first 117 respondents is subjected to EFA, whereas the second sub-sample which comprises 200 respondents is subjected to CFA.

Exploratory factor analysis

EFA is conducted using SPSS Software to identify the underlying components/dimensions of situated involvement.

The first step of the EFA assesses the suitability of the data and factor extraction while the second step involves the factor rotation to provide a better picture of the underlying factors of the measurement items (Hair et al. 2019; Pallant 2020). Examination of the correlation matrix shows that there are substantial numbers of correlations above 0.30. As shown in Table 3, the Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant as the p-value is less than 0.05 (Hair et al. 2019; Pallant 2020). In addition, the value of Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is well above 0.6 (Pallant 2020). These results indicate that the data are appropriate for factor analysis. While choosing an extraction method could be completely confusing (Costello and Osborne 2005; Pallant 2020), principal components analysis (PCA) is used as this method has been the most commonly used approach to reduce a larger number of variables into smaller number of components (Hair et al. 2019; Pallant 2020).

Several criteria are used to determine the number of components to extract (Hair et al. 2019). The Latent Root Criterion (Kaiser rule) records four components with eigenvalues above 1.0. However, Catell's scree test as a better criterion, recommends retaining two components as there is a clear break between the second and third components (Fig. 1). The results of Horn's Parallel Analysis generated by Monte Carlo PCA Software (See Table 4), as the most accurate test, also confirms extracting two components as only the first and second components' actual eigenvalues (generated by SPSS) exceed the random eigenvalues (generated by parallel analysis) (Hair et al. 2019; Pallant 2020). The component matrix shows that most of the items load quite strongly (higher than 0.4) on the first two components (Pallant 2020). Moreover, inspection of the rotated (varimax) four-factor solution shows twelve items load above 0.3 on the first component, ten items on the second component, eight items on the third component, and only one item on the fourth component. Therefore, the four-factor solution is not optimal as there should be three or more items loading on each component (Costello and Osborne 2005; Pallant 2020). Based on the above procedure, it is concluded to extract and rotate two components for further investigation (Fig. 2).

Although orthogonal (uncorrelated) and oblique (correlated) rotations usually lead to very similar solutions, an orthogonal method (varimax rotation) is used as the solutions produced by this type of rotation are easier to interpret and report (Costello and Osborne 2005; Pallant 2020). The results after varimax rotation show that the least factor loading is 0.410, exceeding the recommended value of 0.32 (Costello and Osborne 2005; Pallant 2020; Tabachnick and Fidell 2001). The least communality of the items is 0.378 which is above the recommended value of 0.3 by Pallant (2020). Moreover, there are few items cross-loadings (when an item loads at 0.32 or more on two or more components) after choosing 0.4 as the loading cut-off (Hair et al. 2019;



Table 3 EFA for situated involvement

Component and item	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained (%)	α
SI1: Distinguishing features		4.646	27.327	0.875
Setup	0.768			
Physical environment	0.692			
Socialization	0.685			
View	0.643			
Location	0.634			
Authenticity	0.604			
Nostalgia	0.582			
Reputation	0.575			
Service quality	0.536			
Food/drink quality	0.498			
Novelty	0.496			
Sustainability	0.451			
SI2: Value-adding features		3.199	18.816	0.727
Variety	0.789			
Innovation	0.785			
Price	0.664			
Catering for different cultures/ religions	0.576			
Health	0.410			
KMO measure of sampling adequacy=0.851				
Bartlett's test of sphericity = 761.542 (df = 136, P = 0.000)				
Total variance explained = 46.143%				

Table 4 Parallel analysis

Component	Actual eigenvalue	Random eigenvalue	Decision
1	6.221	1.736	Accept
2	1.624	1.568	Accept
3	1.122	1.448	Reject
4	1.088	1.353	Reject

Jeon and Kim 2012; Yen et al. 2021). While authenticity, reputation and service quality show cross-loadings on the second component (0.476, 0.410, 0.495), all of these items show higher relative loadings on the first component (0.604, 0.575, 0.536). Costello and Osborne (2005) suggested that if some items cross-load, they can be retained depending on the design of the research as eliminating items may lead to a construct which is not sufficiently represented by the corresponding set of items. Therefore, it is decided to retain all of the items.

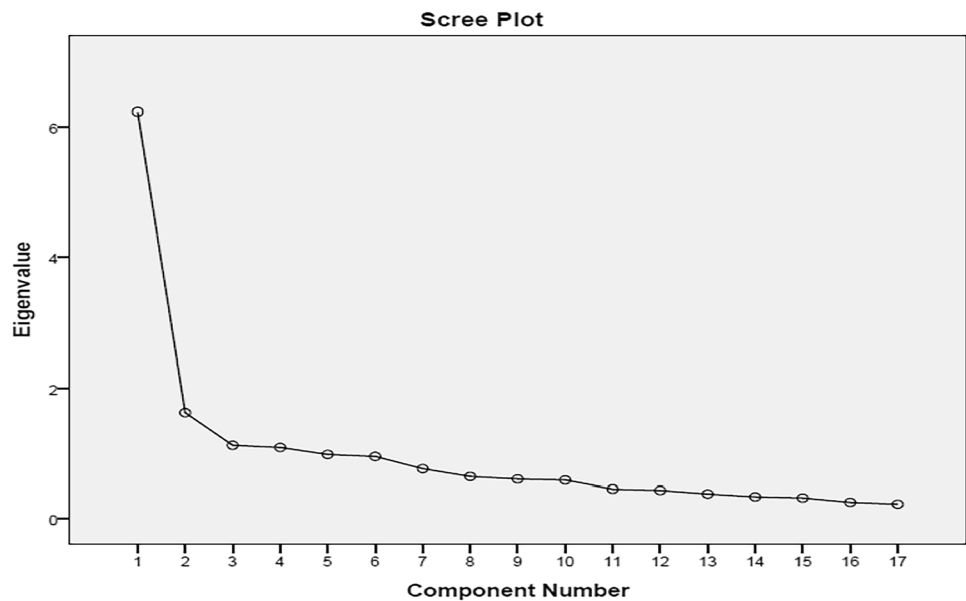
The two-component solution explains 46.329% of the total variance. This compares to about 60% explained by the four-factor solution, an expected drop given that the items are forced to load on two components. According to Pallant (2020), 46.329% is still a very respectable percentage of explained variance. The first component is entitled

“distinguishing features”, whereas the second component is labeled “value-adding features”. The alpha value of both components exceeds 0.7, demonstrating a good level of component reliability.

Confirmatory factor analysis

The values of skewness and kurtosis are within the parameters, suggesting the univariate normality (Kline 2016). The measure of relative multivariate kurtosis is 1.183 which is considered relatively small (Vieira 2011), showing that the multivariate distribution is normal. Table 5 shows the results of CFA which assess the validities of situated involvement. Two items from each component are removed as their standardized factor loadings are below 0.5, i.e., socialization and location from the first component as well as variety and price from the second component. The results reveal that all t-values are above the threshold of |1.96| which support the convergent validity. The standardized factor loadings exceed 0.5 which reinforce the convergent validity of the model (Hair et al. 2019; Vieira 2011). The good overall fit of the model further strengthens the convergent validity (Vieira 2011), i.e., $\chi^2/df = 2.09$ (less than 3), RMSEA = 0.074 (less than 0.8), SRMR = 0.06 (less than X), and CFI = 0.96 (more than 0.9) (Hair et al. 2019; Kline 2016; Vieira 2011).



Fig. 2 Scree plot of the eigenvalues**Table 5** CFA for situated involvement

Component and item	Standardized factor loading	T-value	α	CR
SI1: Distinguishing features			0.813	0.826
Food/drink quality	0.53	7.45		
Physical environment	0.64	9.35		
Novelty	0.51	7.31		
Service quality	0.60	8.76		
Authenticity	0.57	8.28		
View	0.58	8.30		
Reputation	0.56	8.07		
Nostalgia	0.50	7.10		
Setup	0.58	8.53		
Sustainability	0.60	8.56		
SI2: Value-adding features			0.618	0.634
Innovation	0.71	9.82		
Catering for different cultures/religions	0.53	7.19		
Health	0.57	7.72		

Fit indices: $\chi^2 = 125.31$ ($P = 0.00000$), $df = 60$, $\chi^2/df = 2.09$
 RMSEA = 0.074, SRMR = 0.06, CFI = 0.96

As shown in Table 5, the alpha values of both components are above the cut-off value of 0.60 in exploratory research (Hair et al. 2019), providing support for the reliability of the components. Composite/construct reliability (CR) values are higher than the cut-off value of 0.6, providing additional support for the components' acceptable reliability (Vieira 2011). Moreover, CR values further support the adequacy of the convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

Table 6 presents the results of discriminant validity. The correlation between the components obtained from the CFA model is 0.88 which indicates a marginal problem of discriminant validity. Thus, it is probably safe to interpret the components as representations of distinct concepts (Rönkkö and Cho 2022). Two CFA models are performed to examine the Chi-Square difference between the unconstrained and constrained models. The difference test result is significant, because the Chi-Square difference exceeds 3.84 (Vieira 2011). Furthermore, the CFI difference is 0.01 which exceeds the cutoff value of 0.002 (Shaffer et al. 2016). Therefore, the discriminant validity between the components is supported.

Table 6 Discriminant validity

Correlation between components: 0.88						
Constrained model (Fixed)		Unconstrained model (Free)		$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	ΔCFI
χ^2	df	χ^2	df			
132.16	61	125.31	60	6.85	1	0.01



Table 7 Correlations

Construct	EI	RI	SI	ME
Enduring involvement (EI)	1			
Response involvement (RI)	0.332**	1		
Situated involvement (SI)	0.441**	0.407**	1	
Memorability of experience (ME)	0.436**	0.385**	0.584**	1

**Significant at 0.01

Correlations

As can be seen in Table 7, there are significant correlations between the constructs at the $\alpha = 0.01$ level. The correlation values are between -1.0 and 1.0 , indicating that the correlation matrix will not be nonpositive definite to stop the structural equation modeling (SEM) program (Kline 2016).

Structural model

In order to test the nomological validity of the scale of situated involvement and evaluate the ability of the scale to demonstrate the relationship with other constructs based on theory (Hair et al. 2019), SEM is employed. Table 8 shows the fit indices of the structural model which are within the thresholds, indicating a good fit. The results support four hypotheses: H1, H2, H3 and H6 as the respective t -values exceed 2.58 for 0.01 level (Vieira 2011). In other words, the paths between enduring and response involvements ($\gamma_1 = 0.39$, t -value = 6.07, $p < 0.01$) as well as situated involvement ($\gamma_2 = 0.47$, t -value = 6.67, $p < 0.01$) are significant. Response involvement has the significant impact on situated involvement ($\gamma_3 = 0.28$, t -value = 4.57, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, situated involvement is found to significantly influence the memorability of experience ($\gamma_6 = 0.57$, t -value = 6.07, $p < 0.01$).

Table 8 Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis and path	Path coefficient	T -value	R^2	Result
H1: Enduring \rightarrow Response involvement	0.39	6.07	0.15	Supported
H2: Enduring \rightarrow Situated involvement	0.47	6.67	0.39	Supported
H3: Response \rightarrow Situated involvement	0.28	4.57		Supported
H4: Enduring \rightarrow Memorability of experience	0.15	1.70	0.49	Not supported
H5: Response \rightarrow Memorability of experience	0.08	1.31		Not supported
H6: Situated \rightarrow Memorability of experience	0.57	6.07		Supported
Fit indices: $\chi^2 = 170.41$ ($P = 0.00000$), $df = 59$, $\chi^2/df = 2.89$ RMSEA = 0.077, SRMR = 0.055, CFI = 0.97				

Discussion

This research examined the impact of involvement on the memorability of food experience in the restaurant context. The three types of involvement were considered to determine the relative importance of each type in predicting the memorability of food experience and also to find out whether the pre-experience phase (i.e., enduring and response involvements) is more important than the during experience phase (i.e., situated involvement). Since Houston and Walker (1996) stated that environmental stimuli create feelings in customers, this research proposed a new type of involvement, i.e., situated involvement. Situated involvement differs from the other types of involvement which have been used in the previous studies, have established measurement scales and happen before an experience (Organ et al. 2015; Robinson and Getz 2016). At the same time, understanding of situated involvement complemented the understanding of the other involvements. This involvement is similar to the concept of “experience-involvement” which was proposed by Zatori et al. (2018) in the context of sightseeing tours. Nevertheless, the concept of experience-involvement aimed to capture an on-site experience not the involvement evoked by the environmental stimuli during an experience. For instance, their scale included statements such as “the tour was exciting”, “the tour was unique”, “the tour was inspiring”, capturing general aspects of an experience.

On the basis of tourists’ perceptions, a rigorous and systematic scale development process was completed to develop an effective measure. The findings provided empirical validation of the two distinct facets of situated involvement, namely distinguishing and value-adding features. These two facets seemed to be appropriate in the case of situated involvement as there must be some environmental stimuli which can involve a tourist in an experience, while other stimuli need to exist in conjunction with other stimuli to enhance a tourist’s involvement. For instance, perceptions of basic requirements (e.g., clean environment or fresh food) are less likely to result in satisfactory experiences, while perceptions of additional requirements (e.g., tasty



food or unusual and surprising environment) tend to lead to enhanced and unforgettable experiences. The facet of “distinguishing features” consisted of twelve factors which seemed to be more important for most of the tourists, whereas “value-adding features” included five factors. The findings showed that tourists cared about various factors in their food experiences and environmental stimuli were not limited only to the food and restaurant.

The current research demonstrated the value of including both pre-purchase/pre-experience and on-site, real-time measures of involvement. The importance of situated involvement in restaurants was highlighted as the only type of involvement which directly influenced the memorability of food experience, emphasizing the role of environmental stimuli as the most crucial factors in the formation of a memorable restaurant experience. This indicated that the memorability of a dining experience was not necessarily dependent on the existence of all of the types of involvement and tourists tended to be influenced by the environmental stimuli during a restaurant experience rather than their own interests or the time and effort they spent.

The findings reflected the notion that what happens during a food experience was “the most powerful phase in the process of tourist experience formation in terms of influence on evaluation, memorability and representation” (Zatori et al. 2018, p. 112). This research demonstrated that the memorability of a dining experience was not entirely within the control of tourists and experience providers can play an important role. A number of reasons might contribute to this outcome. For example, even if a tourist loves eating in restaurants and spends much time and effort to find a preferred type of restaurant, this does not guarantee that the food experience will be memorable. A dining experience can be unpleasant simply because the meal is overcooked, salty or poor customer service is provided. Tourists cannot ensure memorability through interest (eating at types of restaurants which they prefer) or research (investing time learning about different eating establishments); but an experience can become memorable if the context proves to be one to which they respond during the experience. However, it is not easy for an experience provider to ensure the memorability of the experience, as this depends largely on whether or not the tourist responds to the environmental stimuli in a positive or negative manner as well as the intensity of that response, which can be influenced by many things.

While only situated involvement was found to significantly influence the memorability of experience, enduring and response involvements were both significant predictors of situated involvement. The direct impact of enduring involvement on situated involvement found in this research gave strong support to the notion that personal relevance (as an indicator of enduring involvement) may result in involvement in an experience (Poulsson and Kale 2004).

In addition, enduring involvement determined response involvement. This result was consistent with previous studies in other contexts (Burton and Netemeyer 1992; Richins et al. 1992). The direct and significant impact of enduring involvement on response involvement indicated that tourists usually spent time and effort to find food experiences which fulfilled their interests. An explanation for the non-significant effects of enduring and response involvements on the memorability of experience is that they might be more related to satisfaction than the memorability. For instance, a tourist may spend a lot of time to find a cheap restaurant. This might result in satisfaction with the food experience as being cheap does not necessarily lead to a memorable dining experience.

Overall, the findings supported the importance of tourist involvement in influencing the perception of the food experience and its memorability. Employing different types of involvement to examine the role of involvement in the memorability of experience in the context of restaurant helped emphasize the types which tourists considered more relevant than others. The current research showed that the stage of involvement was more important than its level in the memorability of experience as the findings showed that only situated involvement (which happens during an experience) predicted the memorability of experience, and not enduring or response involvements (which occur before an experience).

Conclusions

Theoretical implications

Although it has been stated that environmental stimuli create feelings in consumers (Houston and Walker 1996), marketing or tourism researchers have made no attempt to conceptualize and measure a type of involvement initiated by the environmental stimuli. Likewise, the extant literature provided limited explanation of the factors which characterize involvement in a dining experience. Based on a review of involvement literature, the present research redefines involvement and builds a new conceptual theory/framework which will guide marketing/tourism researchers in developing their research questions, formulating their hypotheses, and defining/and measuring their variables. In comparison to the previous studies which focused on involvement happening before an experience (e.g., Bruwer and Cohen 2019; Lu and Chi 2018; Organ et al. 2015; Robinson and Getz 2016), this research provides insight into a new form of involvement which occurs during a food experience. Thus, this research extends prior studies on consumer involvement and provides valuable information.

This research adds a significant new benchmark to a growing body of literature on consumer involvement.



It represents the first empirical examination of situated involvement by establishing a reliable and valid scale to measure this new type of involvement. Although Zatori et al. (2018) introduced and measured a new concept called “experience-involvement”, their proposed concept aimed to measure on-site experience not the involvement evoked by the environmental stimuli during an experience. Thus, the findings provide tourism scholars with new insights about the role of environmental stimuli in tourists’ involvement in a dining experience. From a theoretical perspective, the scale provides tourism scholars with a comprehensive and standardized measure of situated involvement. Identifying and confirming the dimensions of situated involvement provides a framework for further research on this topic in the literature. As a result, the findings can pave the way for future exploration of situated involvement in the tourism literature particularly in the restaurant context. In other words, the scale can be viewed as a useful starting point to identify the antecedents and consequences of situated involvement for further investigations.

While most of the environmental stimuli identified in the developed scale of this research might have been stated or emphasized in the literature (e.g., studies into service quality, servicescape and value co-creation) as factors enhancing tourists’ perceptions of their dining experiences, no research has viewed these stimuli as factors which can contribute to tourists’ involvement in their food experiences. In the restaurant context in which providing superior and involving dining experiences is of crucial importance and highly challenging, it is vital to understand that all aspects of a dining experience are not equally weighted. The results revealed that some stimuli are highly involving and others have little or no ability to involve tourists, providing a more up-to-date information and highlighting that tourists require more than just a service quality to be actively involved in a dining experience. The current research provides an alternative view of environmental stimuli which can help to better understanding of tourists’ experiences as the stimuli can contribute to the memorability of such experiences. Thus, it is important for tourism researchers to consider situated involvement in their future research to understand how this type of involvement changes tourists’ experiences.

Another contribution of this research is that enduring involvement is conceptualized as an interest in a specific type of food experience, i.e., eating in restaurants. This approach differs from the literature in which enduring involvement has been viewed as an interest in food in general, i.e., foodies and non-foodies. The approach used in this research, thus, can impact future prospects for the study of enduring involvement particularly in the field of tourism.

While involvement has been viewed as being at the forefront of memorable experiences, the role of involvement in experience or the memorability of experience has not been

investigated. In particular, only a limited number of studies has produced empirical evidence of the impact of involvement on tourists’ perceptions in the tourism literature (e.g., Bruwer and Cohen 2019; Lu and Chi 2018; Organ et al. 2015). While the application of involvement in the tourism context has enhanced our understanding of tourist involvement, no effort has been made to investigate the relationships between different types of involvement and the memorability of food experience. A major contribution of this research is related to applying the concept of involvement to the restaurant by developing a model which tests the impact of involvement on the memorability of experience. Closing this research gap is important as several researchers advocated the role of tourists’ involvement in improving the memorability of their experiences (Adongo et al. 2015). The three types of involvement are combined into a single model to obtain an integrated and holistic perspective. This expands the scope and generalizability of understanding the role of involvement in tourists’ experiences.

The present research provides an update to research on tourist involvement and deeper insight into the role of involvement in the memorability of experience. Empirically examining the direct relationships between some important constructs is essential for the enrichment of the body of knowledge. The findings demonstrate how different types of involvement and the memorability of experience are related to each other in the restaurant context. Therefore, the present research contributes to a better understanding of the determinants of memorable food experience and helps emphasize constructs related to the memorability of food experience which tourists consider more relevant than others. For example, the data analysis indicates that situated involvement is the only construct which directly influences the memorability of food experience.

Another contribution of this research is to investigate the theoretical relationships between enduring, response, and situated involvements which offers new insights to the tourism field. This is the first empirical research which establishes the links between these concepts in the tourism literature. By doing so, this research tests the involvement theory for the developed scale of situated involvement and shows the scale’s usefulness and importance. The results indicate that both enduring and response involvements have significant and direct impact on situated involvement. However, enduring involvement has a more impact. Enduring involvement is found to directly influence response involvement. Thus, the research contributes to a better understanding of the relationships between these three types of involvements.

The findings extend the marketing and tourism literatures which tended to focus on the pre-purchase/pre-experience phase of involvement. Given the dearth of research in this area, it is believed that the current research can act as a stepping stone to further investigations on tourist involvement.



Since measurement scales should be customized for the context of study, tourism researchers must develop a measurement scale for situated involvement in other contexts. This study presents useful tools to assess different types of involvement which future research can employ in developing new models to investigate antecedents and consequences of these involvements. For instance, the scale presented in this research can be used to empirically examine the relationship between situated involvement and engagement, satisfaction, attachment, loyalty. Tourism researchers can also employ the model used in this research as a platform for future cross-cultural studies and multi-group analyses, i.e., replicate the model in other restaurants and among other nationalities.

Practical implications

The findings can help restaurateurs understand how they can provide or create the conditions which enhance tourists' involvement in the food experiences they offer. The measurement scale provided by this research helps restaurateurs to evaluate their offerings and improve them if needed. The ability to measure situated involvement would help restaurateurs better understand in what aspects they are weak or strong in creating the conditions to enhance tourists' motivation or interest in the food experience. By doing this, restaurateurs can gain a competitive edge which is extremely important in the tourism industry as enhancing tourists' involvement in their offerings would enhance the memorability of their restaurant.

Because the most important facet in situated involvement is distinguishing features, restaurateurs should pay more attention to these factors. Among the factors within each facet, factors which have higher factor loadings require higher attention, for instance, set-up, physical environment and socialization in the distinguishing features. In particular, restaurants should create environments which are interesting and would allow tourists to become interactive. To achieve such environment, restaurateurs could conduct surveys or interviews among their customers to know their interests and what makes them feel relaxed. Whether a dining experience is involving may also depend on diners' companions; thus, encouraging tourists to eat out with their companions is highly recommended.

Dining experiences should be provided in a pleasant way, for instance, dressing the staff like local people or having live music. Restaurant staffs are encouraged to interact more with their customers. In addition, restaurants should continue their efforts to improve other factors such as view, location, authenticity, nostalgia, reputation, service quality, food/drink quality, novelty, and sustainability. Some of these factors are closely linked to each other. For example, in order to gain a good reputation, restaurants must provide quality food and services, have good locations and views, provide

novel and authentic experiences, and have environmentally friendly actions. Restaurateurs should identify what aspects of quality involve their customers and focus on those aspects.

Regarding the value-adding features, variety, innovation, price, catering for different cultures/religions, and health must be considered. Restaurants should offer various foods at reasonable prices, use innovative methods for cooking, cater for different cultures/religions, and provide healthy foods to foster situated involvement in their customers. Focusing on the above-mentioned factors not only provide the conditions which make tourists' involvement more likely to happen or increase, but also enhances the memorability of the food experience. Collectively, both facets and all factors are significant in representing situated involvement and restaurateurs should focus on the enhancement of each of the factors. Such efforts would help customers to immerse themselves in the food experiences, and thereby increasing the memorability of the experiences.

The findings highlight the role of environmental stimuli as the most crucial factors in creating memorable food experiences and point to the conclusion that what happens during an experience is more important than what is done before it. This represents an opportunity for the restaurant industry, because most of the environmental stimuli are under the control of restaurants. Restaurateurs can, thus, use the scale for situated involvement developed in this research to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their offerings and try to improve their weaknesses. This can be done via developing a checklist on which the environmental stimuli identified in the scale are prioritized. Restaurateurs should look at the factors within their offerings not only as a tool for delivering a food experience, but as a crucial experience design factor enhancing the memorability of their offerings.

It is important that restaurateurs focus on improving those factors which are most crucial to achieving what can be perceived as memorable by tourists. Therefore, restaurateurs should spend time getting to know their customers, talk with them, ask them questions, and get their feedback on the restaurant offerings. The environmental stimuli should be highly involving instead of being routine and repetitive. This can be done, for example, through periodically changing the atmosphere of the restaurant. It is also important to note that the environmental stimuli during a food experience are all interlinked with each other, and the quality of an experience depends on how restaurateurs perceive and use their resources and involve the tourists as their impressions plays a vital role in enhancing the experience.

Enduring and response involvements are not found as antecedent of the memorability of experience. However, it is important that restaurateurs also pay attention to these types of involvements and the factors contributing to them as this research finds that higher enduring and response involvements, higher situated involvement. Hence, it is important



for restaurants to focus their efforts on meeting tourists' interests as well as being aware why they spend considerable time and effort on their food experiences. These efforts may lead to higher situated involvement during a food experience which in turn leads to an enhanced food experience and remaining in tourists' memory. Enduring involvement is particularly noteworthy as it has the highest impact on situated involvement. Tourists' perceptions and interests are very important in how they evaluate a food experience, and hence, restaurants should adapt their offerings to suit various kinds of tourists. Highly customized, dynamic food experiences increase tourists' enjoyment and potentially good memories of a particular restaurant. To do so, restaurateurs are advised to identify what of these environmental stimuli are important to their customers and try to improve them.

Understanding why tourists spend considerable time and effort on their food experiences enables restaurateurs to overcome the possible problems for some tourists and could be influential in reducing those times and efforts. In addition, by knowing why tourists spend time and effort on their food experiences, restaurateurs can make it easier for tourists to get that information. For example, restaurants should create blogging platforms for their customers to write about their dining experiences and share their memorable food experiences with others. Potential customers can read those reviews and get the information that is more likely to influence them. For example, a Muslim tourist who spends considerable time and effort to find a Halal food within a non-Muslim city/country can look at those comments to find out which restaurants provide Halal foods as not all restaurants advertise this issue.

Finally, enduring involvement influences response involvement which means if tourists are interested in eating in restaurants, they are more likely to spend considerable time and effort on their food experiences. Because enduring involvement determines both response and situated involvements, restaurants should pay close attention to fulfilling tourists' interests. Customization in designing experiences was also emphasized as an important tool to form competitive advantages (Zatori et al. 2018). Destination marketers should also aim their marketing efforts at promoting those interests.

The findings suggest that destination managers must focus more on the during-experience phase of tourists' travels. Since tourism-related businesses need tools to improve the experiences they offer, they are recommended to identify involving factors which are unique in other contexts as the structure of situated involvement would differ from activity to activity. Destination marketers need to use those factors when creating marketing slogans to better position their destination by distinguishing it from their competitors. While many of the marketing efforts of destinations are based on service quality or tourist satisfaction

studies, the current research shows that offering involving experiences will result in memorable experiences and enhancing the favorability of destinations.

Limitations

While a rigorous and systematic process is used to develop the scale of situated involvement, cross-validation from a different sample is needed. Different categories of tourists may place different weights on the environmental stimuli. The current scale will benefit from continued testing and refinement. Although the sample consists of various nationalities, ages and genders, the second limitation is the use of purposive sampling method, indicating that the respondents may not represent the population. The sample is limited to tourists who have a dining experience in Queenstown, New Zealand which may limit the generalization of the results.

As this is the first research measuring situated involvement in the restaurant context, future studies should use the scale as a reference to develop scales in different types of restaurants or other contexts. This research should be seen as a starting point to encourage additional research which could explore the consequences of situated involvement in the restaurant or other contexts. Moreover, this research could be extended by replicating the model in other destinations. Another interesting avenue for future research would be to conduct the model among different types of restaurants (e.g., ethnic vs. luxury restaurants) and for specific types of tourists (e.g., poor vs. wealthy) and compare the results. It is also worthwhile to investigate the other antecedents and consequences of different types of involvement.

Appendix 1

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<i>Memorability of experience</i>					
I really enjoyed this food experience					
I experienced something new					



Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
This experience was refreshing						Presence of my family/friends/other people					
This experience was meaningful						Authenticity					
This experience was exploratory						Various options (e.g., variety in menu)					
I had an experience which I really wanted to have						Reasonable price					
I experienced the local culture via this food experience						Innovation					
<i>Enduring involvement</i>						Catering for different cultures/religions					
I have a strong interest in this type of food experience (eating in restaurants)						View					
This type of food experience is important to me						Healthy foods					
<i>Response involvement</i>						Reputation					
I spent considerable time to search for information on the experience						Location					
I spent considerable effort to search for information on the experience						Sense of nostalgia					
<i>Situated involvement</i>						Set up (presentation)					
The following factors of/in the restaurant enhanced my interest in/motivation for the experience						Sustainability factors (e.g., using environmentally friendly utilities, supporting local economy)					
Food/drink quality											
Physical environment											
Novelty											
Service quality											

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Declarations

Conflict of interest None.

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