

# TRAVEL DOWN MEMORY LANE: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY ON TRAVELING EXPERIENCES AND SNS POSTING BEHAVIOR AS A PREDICTOR OF HUMAN LIFE SATISFACTION

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**Abstract.** This research aims to see how autobiographical memory on traveling experiences and social networking sites (SNS) posting behavior as a predictor of life satisfaction. The criteria of participants in this research are young adults who have travel experience and post it on social media platforms, such as Instagram, Whatsapp Story, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Pinterest, and Locket Widget. 342 participants in this research filled out the traveling questionnaire and were asked to recall their most memorable traveling experiences. After that, they should take several questionnaires consisting of an autobiography recollection test, satisfaction with life scale, and SNS posting behavior (frequency of social media usage and revisiting posted travel content on social media). Happiness is seen from indicators of high life satisfaction, high positive emotions, and high subjective well-being. In this research, we focused on the variable life satisfaction. Statistical analysis of this research uses simple regression. This research shows that recalling autobiographical memories from traveling experiences is a significant predictor of life satisfaction (R square 0.081,  $p < 0.01$ ). When there is a moderator variable, namely SNS posting behavior, it is known that the prediction of recalling autobiographical memories from traveling experiences on life satisfaction is significantly stronger (R square 0.097,  $p < 0.01$ ). From the results of this research, ways to promote holidays can be developed to create a "healing" impact for many as is often mentioned on social media.

**Keywords:** autobiography memory, traveling experience, SNS posting behavior, life satisfaction

## INTRODUCTION

Fuggle (2015) suggests 6 travel trends for 2016, and one of these trends is the increase in Millennial tourists, stating that, by 2020, this market will grow 47% from 2013. The continued increase in millennial tourists can be explained in terms of YOLO (You Only Live Once), which generally refers to young people who enjoy leisure activities to improve their current quality of life. They make various efforts to obtain their current happiness, especially tending to invest in their free life. In 2022 the word "healing" will become a new concept to describe traveling in Indonesia, as evidenced by the high use of this word. Searches for travel topics on Google Search containing the word "healing" increased by 500 percent (YoY), compared to the same period in 2021. This phenomenon can be associated with high holiday interest in the pandemic situation which is oriented towards escapist traveling experiences or calming down to gain happiness. This condition makes the association of happiness as an indicator of mental health with holiday or traveling experiences even more significant. The difference with previous research conducted by Chung, Chung, and Yang (2017) which took place in South Korea, this research emphasizes life satisfaction as one predictor of happiness (Linley, Maltby, Wood, Osborne, & Hurling, 2009) than the tourism satisfaction and quality of life.

On the other hand, the traveling experience has gradual characteristics (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966), so it can be divided into three phases (i.e., pre-trip, on-trip, and post-trip) (McGehee & Santos, 2005). In particular, of these three phases, it is the post-travel experience that most influence tourists' daily lives, recalling memories of their tourism experience at a tourist destination. Kim (2010) argued that tourism experiences are antecedents of tourists' autobiographical memories. Therefore, components of the tourism experience such as engagement and local culture have a significant impact on the formation of tourists' autobiographical memories.

Autobiographical memory is an experiential memory (Piolino, Desgranges, Benali, & Eustacheter, 2002) primarily about "me" rather than general memory in the form of stories. Positive parts tend to be retained strongly when certain events are stored in memory (Laney, Campbell, Heuer, & Reisberg, 2004) and positive emotions retrieved from memory influence an individual's state (or mood) (Baumgartner, Sujan, & Bettman, 1992). Therefore, autobiographical memories of tourist experiences can influence tourists' happiness. There is still not much research related to traveling experiences and happiness looking at the aspects of autobiographical memory and behavior in uploading content on social media. Thus, this research tries to see the influence of travel experience on happiness mediated by autobiographical memory.

Autobiographical memory is often described in two types of long-term memory, semantic memory (knowledge about the self) and episodic memory (specific knowledge of events related to personal past experiences) memory (Tulving, 2002). The episodic memory component is considered a defining feature of autobiographical memory retrieval because it allows for detailed recall of past events (Rubin, 2005). When remembering, episodic memory processes actively reconstruct autobiographical experiences by linking disparate experience details, including perceptual and conceptual elements (Sheldon & Levine, 2016).

The theory used to measure autobiographical memory uses autobiographical recollection with seven dimensions as follows: reliving, vividness, visual imagery, scene, narrative coherence, life story relevance, and rehearsal, understood as different aspects of the way individuals experience their autobiographical memory (Berntsen, Hoyle, & Rubin, 2019). Each of the seven components is well motivated by the autobiographical memory literature. Reliving and vividness are part of most philosophical accounts of what distinguishes autobiographical memory from other types of memory (e.g., Rubin, Deffler, & Umanath, 2019) and are central to autonoetic awareness and a sense of mental passage in time. for episodic memory (Wheeler, Stuss, & Tulving, 1997). Of the various sensory components, visual imagery was shown to be most strongly associated with other features of autobiographical remembering, such as reliving. Remembering spatial layout in terms of scenes is also a key component for having memories of certain events (Rubin & Umanath, 2015). Narrative is central to autobiographical remembering from developmental, clinical, social, and personality perspectives (e.g., Adler, Lodi-Smith, Philippe, & Houle, 2016). The Autobiographical Recollection Test (ART) includes ratings of the narrative coherence of an individual's memories and the life story relevance of the memories in the context of the life lived and narrated as a whole.

When someone chooses to go traveling, one of their aims is to gain happiness outside of routine daily activities. Research related to the topic of happiness in the realm of psychology relates to subjective well-being and psychological well-being. Subjective well-being is understood as having an affective (emotional) component, a balance between positive and negative influences, and a cognitive component, an assessment of one's life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985). Subjective well-being is in line with life satisfaction. Meanwhile, psychological well-being is defined as "involvement with the existential challenges of life" (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002) and is further explained by Ryff (1989) about six factors, namely positive relations with others, self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, environmental mastery, and personal growth. For this research, we focused on one of the aspects of happiness which is life satisfaction.

As the digital world develops, human behavior when traveling is also changing. Humans store holiday memories not only in autobiographical memory but also by sharing them via SNS, such as Facebook or Instagram, with written content, photos, or videos. Various forms of tourist experiences uploaded on SNS not only symbolize or archive their tourist experiences but also enhance autobiographical memory because these cues such as photos or videos stand out for the connection between tourists' experiences and autobiographical memory by reminding them of beauty. Their memories of tourism experiences which are autobiographical memories will be better (Talarico & Rubin, 2007). Thus, tourists who upload their tourism experiences on SNS may have

increased autobiographical memory through the moderating role of SNS uploading behavior. Therefore, this research also wants to examine the influence of autobiographical memory from travel experiences on life satisfaction by adding the moderating role of SNS posting behavior.

SNS posting behavior is the behavior of uploading content (writing, photos, and videos) while traveling on social media. Tourists tend to have symbolic objects that can symbolize, enhance, and remember their tourism experiences, and with the emergence of SNS, they are replacing tourism experience symbols (Stasiak, 2013). In addition, SNS users have a strong motivation to record their experiences Lee, Lee, Moon, and Sung (2015). In this context, Lo, McKercher, Lo, Cheung, and Law (2011) studied the use of online photo-sharing technologies related to tourism experiences and found that young tourists prefer to share photos of their travels, and SNS is one of the most frequently used ones.

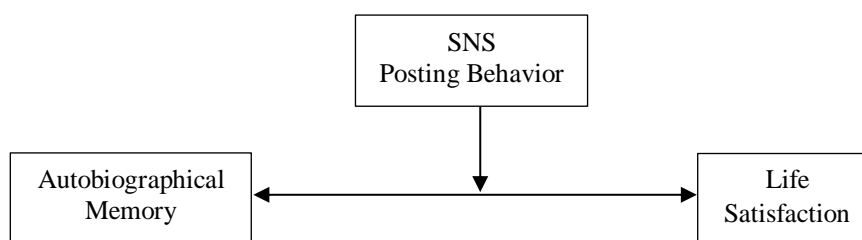


Fig. 1 Model of the research

Individuals who travel build upon experiences that are different from their daily routine and hope of gaining happiness. The happiness indicator here refers to aspects of high life satisfaction which also denotes the high level of subjective well-being (Linley, et al., 2009). The hypothesis from Figure 1 above is that recalling autobiographical memories from traveling experiences is a predictor of life satisfaction. This assumption explains that the memory of an individual's travel experience becomes stronger to increase life satisfaction when they post the content (writing, photos, or videos) of the travel experience on SNS, such as Instagram, Whatsapp Story, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Pinterest, and Locket Widget. If an individual has a high intensity of SNS posting behavior then the autobiographical memory of travel experience becomes a stronger predictor of life satisfaction.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a non-experimental quantitative approach which aims to show a relationship between variables but does not attempt to explain the relationship. In other words, this strategy does not try to produce causal explanations (Gravetter & Forzano, 2016). The variables measured in this research are autobiographical memory of travel experience, life satisfaction, and SNS posting behavior. There are two hypotheses to be tested. First, recalling autobiographical memories from travel experiences is a predictor of life satisfaction. The second hypothesis is that recalling autobiographical memories from travel experiences is a predictor of life satisfaction which is moderated by the intensity of SNS posting behavior.

This research consists of three stages. First is research preparation. In this stage, researchers look for references related to literature that is relevant to the research topic to be studied. The researcher determines the research design and sample that is relevant to the theoretical study. Characteristics of the participants in this study were young adults in the age range around 18 to 40 years old in Indonesia who have holiday experience and upload comments, photos, or videos on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Whatsapp Story, etc.). Researchers prepare the measuring instruments that will be used. This research uses several instruments which will be divided based on variables. First, the instrument used is the Autobiographical Recollection Test (ART) developed by Berntsen, Hoyle, and Rubin (2019).

There are 7 dimensions of ART, namely reliving, vividness, visual imagery, scene, narrative coherence, life-story relevance, and rehearsal with 24 items. Responses are in the form of a Likert scale, namely 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Second, life satisfaction is

measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985) which is done by responding to 5 items in the form of a Likert scale, namely a score of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with a score range of 5–35, which means the higher the score obtained, the higher the level of life satisfaction. The last one is SNS posting behavior. This construct is measured with 2 questions, namely the frequency of uploading content (writing, photos, and videos) on social media and how often you re-visit content that has been uploaded.

The next one is initial translation, the stage where the researcher will carry out the scale translation process from English to Indonesian carried out by a credible party. After that, we did the synthesis of translation, the researcher carried out a synthesis of the translation results from two institutions, and then the researcher adjusted the translation results into one general scale. Back translation, the previously synthesized scale is translated back into Indonesian. For the accuracy of the items, an expert committee review is going to be prepared. The synthesized translation scale will be reviewed by assessors who are experts in their field.

After the preparation stage, the researcher tested the measuring instruments that would be used in the research to ensure that the research instruments used were valid and reliable. All the instruments are valid and reliable. For the validity test, we use expert judgment for the quality of the item and readability test by asking the sample candidate to review the understanding of the instrument. All the items meet the standard of item discrimination power when the correlation value of the item with its true score reaches 0.20 (Crocker & Algina, 1986). The reliability of all instruments meets the standard too. The ART for measuring autobiographical memory has an Alpha Cronbach 0.938 (above 0.7) and the Alpha Cronbach for satisfaction life scale is 0.848 (above 0.7). Based on Widhiarso (2010) it's enough to select the item when the coefficient of reliability (Alpha Cronbach) is above 0.70.

After all the instruments are settled, researchers distribute research instruments directly to people who meet the criteria of population with informed consent first. Characteristics of the participants in this study were young adults in the age range around 18 to 40 years old in Indonesia who have holiday experience and upload comments, photos, or videos on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Whatsapp Story, etc.). The process of collecting data was by distributing an online questionnaire in the form of a Google form for two weeks and a sample of 342 participants was obtained. For the final stage, the researcher will transfer the questionnaire results to Microsoft Excel, and then ensure that the answers to be processed come from respondents who meet the criteria. After that, the data will be analyzed statistical analysis using linear regression as a hypothesis test.

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

### 1.1. Participant Demographic Data

Table 1. Participant demographic data

Demographic Data	Number of Participants (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender (Total)</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>100</b>
Female	276	80.70
Male	62	18.13
Unidentified	4	1.17
<b>Age Group (Total)</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>100</b>
18-23 years old	270	78.95
24-29 years old	25	7.31
30-35 years old	25	7.31
36-40 years old	22	6.43

From this research, there were 342 participants in this study consisting of 80.70% men, 18.13% women, and the remaining 1.17% were not willing to provide information about their gender. Of the total participants, the age group was dominated by 18 to 23 years with a total of 78.95%. Meanwhile, the rest are in the age range of 24 to 40 years, amounting to 21.05%.

## 1.2. Results of Research Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

**Table 2. Result of the research data analysis**

Variable	R Square
Autobiographical memory x SNS Posting Behavior * Life Satisfaction	R square = 0.097 ( p < 0.01)
Autobiographical memory * Life Satisfaction	R square = 0.081 ( p < 0.01)

Based on the results of the linear regression analysis, it is known that the Null Hypothesis is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted. It means that recalling autobiographical memories from travel experiences has a significant role as a predictor of life satisfaction (R square = 0.081,  $p < 0.01$ ). When there is a moderator variable, namely SNS posting behavior, it is known that recalling autobiographical memories from traveling experiences as a predictor of life satisfaction is significantly stronger (R square = 0.097,  $p < 0.01$ ).

## 1.3. Discussion

The result shows that autobiographical memories from traveling experiences as a predictor of life satisfaction are significantly stronger when moderated by SNS posting behavior. Tourist tends to acquire souvenir that symbolizes their traveling experiences and enhance their memory of that (Swanson & Timothy, 1998). SNS replaces the role of souvenir and the vividness of the autobiographical memory is the key role of their experience (Rubin & Kozin, 1984). The visual and linguistic cues are important factors for tourist to remember their travel experience (Talarico & Rubin, 2007). This finding is in line with the research conducted by Chung, et al. (2017) that tourists who posted their traveling experience can have more string autobiographical memories than those who did not.

Lam, Dioko, and Li (2022) researched self-concept and their travel photo-sharing on SNS among Chinese travelers. It found that the presence of different self-concepts is significantly facilitated by travelers' photo-sharing behaviors on social media networks. Travel photo-sharing and social media tools collude toward influencing existing self-concepts among Chinese travelers towards alternative conceptions previously not acknowledged. The study provides empirical evidence that social media tools and media audiences are important aspects of the travel experience and sharing behavior. This is in line with the result of this research.

Yu, Sirgy, and Bosnjak (2020) found that fulfilling holiday travel motivation has a positive influence on holiday trip satisfaction which in turn will have a positive influence on a person's subjective well-being. Research findings also show that the relationship between fulfilling travel motivation and travel satisfaction is significantly moderated by on-site experience sharing. In addition, sharing post-trip experiences was found to positively moderate the impact of travel satisfaction on tourists' subjective well-being. Overall, this research confirms that shared on-site and post-trip experiences play an important role in how fulfilling travel motivation contributes to subjective well-being. It shows that travel experience-sharing impacts travel satisfaction on tourists' subjective well-being both on-site and post-trip sharing. It is in line with this research that tourists' experience sharing (i.e. content sharing through social media platforms) can be the predictor of their satisfaction and subjective well-being.



## CONCLUSION

The research shows that recalling autobiographical memories from travel experiences has a significant role as a predictor of life satisfaction. When the role of SNS posting behavior is moderating, it is known that recalling autobiographical memories from traveling experiences as a predictor of life satisfaction is significantly stronger than before. From the results, ways to promote holidays can be developed to create a “healing” impact for many as is often mentioned on social media which means by high level of life satisfaction as one of the indicators of someone’s happiness. However in this concept “healing” is not defined as something that has a remedy effect but it has a positive impact on one aspect of human happiness, namely life satisfaction. Besides, content sharing especially photos on SNS is an important aspect of the travel experience. It shows a different self-concept than the previous self which can lead to creating a positive value of their self-concept than before.

Further research can explore the detailed aspects of autobiographical memory, such as reliving, vividness, visual imagery, scene, narrative coherence, life-story relevance, and rehearsal. Which one of those aspects gives the most memorizing part of the travel experience and its influence on life satisfaction or other indicators of happiness, such as psychological well-being, and positive or negative mood. Furthermore, it can also give the difference between on-site content sharing and post-trip content sharing.

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