# The moderating effect of mental simulation on destination image created through motion pictures

A study using the TV2 drama series 'Badehotellet'

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## Abstract

Research within the area of destination promotion has found motion pictures to have a great impact on viewers' travel decisions, increasing visitor numbers and the general image of locations shown in the motion pictures. Within the literature on narrative transportation, research suggests that mental imagery results in a more positive product evaluation together with the advertisement that causes the simulation. This thesis combines the two research areas, and thus aims to investigate how the use of mental simulation moderates the positive effect which motion pictures have on a destination's image. Based on a review on image, a model that links overall destination image to three components, that is the cognitive, the affective and the behavioral component, is proposed. Using a case study method (N = 220) based on TV2's drama series 'Badehotellet', the underlying hypotheses are tested through quantitative survey data. Contrary to previous studies, the analysis shows motion pictures to have a negative effect on destination image, and thus it is neither possible to prove the moderating effect of mental simulation on motion pictures' favorable effect on the image of a tourist destination. All the stated hypotheses are therefore rejected. A number of covariates are controlled for in order to reveal possible explanations for this rejection. The investigation shows that the negative relationship between motion pictures and destination image is mediated by whether or not respondents like the ad they are exposed to in the experiment. However, this is only a partial explanation since it does not make the relationship positive, but only neutralizes parts of the image. Thus, this experiment has not succeeded in proving the joint effect of motion pictures and mental simulation on destination image, but arises several interesting research areas for future studies.

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# 1. Introduction

*"Tourists travel to New Zealand to walk in the footsteps of Frodo to see the many marvelous places from 'Lord of the Rings' and 'The Hobbit'. And Ystad in Sweden has managed to create a huge industry around the 'Wallander' series. The phenomenon is called movie tourism and has existed for many years."* (Jyllands-Posten, 2014: author translation).

Movies and TV series (hereafter referred to as *motion pictures*) are not produced in order to induce tourist visitation of certain destinations. Nor are the settings chosen *"…for the expressed purpose of creating travelogues…"* (Riley & Van Doren, 1992: p. 269), but to complement the given story in the best possible way. Nevertheless, motion pictures undoubtedly have *"…the potential to offer fantastic marketing opportunities as they act as virtual holiday brochures."* (Soliman, 2011: p. 225). Like this, tourist agencies can use the media attention of motion picture releases to attract potential visitors. An example is The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), who heavily advertised its attractions during the release of 'The Beach' (Grihault, 2003). Not only did TAT advertise heavily in cinemas, but they established collaborative campaigns with 20th Century Fox as well as arranged familiarization trips for United Kingdom journalists and travel agents. Another way to attract attention to a destination is by promoting it during the actual screening of the motion picture. When 'Braveheart' was screened in cinemas, The Scottish Tourist Board handed out direct-response postcard adverts inviting the cinemagoers to send information on the Braveheart Country (ibid.). Also, movie maps and guided tours have been found successful in promoting destinations (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006a). In 1996, VisitBritain produced its first movie map featuring 200 motion picture settings around Britain, and after 'Harry Potter' several institutions guide visitors around the many locations portrayed in the movies. Further, attractions, museums and hotels used in motion pictures are also often promoted to the public in order to generate tourism and destination awareness (ibid.).

Several studies have established the positive effect of motion pictures on destination image (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006a; Iwashita, 2008; Riley et al., 1998) and, as the above paragraph reveals, the use of motion pictures in branding and promotion of destinations is no newly developed marketing strategy. Therefore, the question is now how this positive effect can be further increased.

## 1.1 Research question

Mental simulation, that is encouraging consumers to image themselves in a given event has shown to affect ad attitude and brand evaluation (Escalas, 2004). By making consumers image themselves in a story, consumption becomes more realistic and persuasion is thus more powerful (Fazio & Zanna, 1981). Therefore, the outlined issue in the previous section leads to the central research question on which this thesis is based:

***How does the use of mental simulation moderate how motion pictures affect the image of a destination when promoting it?***

In order to answer this research question, the thesis leads off with a theory section introducing posterior theory on motion pictures and mental simulation in connection with destination image. The theoretical model is presented, and the hypotheses for further analysis are stated. This is followed by a case presentation, presenting the chosen case for the experiment and the thoughts behind this choice. Methodology and the experimental design are hereafter discussed and data are analyzed. Results are then presented, leading to a comparison of theory and the found results as well as a discussion of the image model and possible covariates. A section propounds the limitations of the experiment before a final conclusion is drawn. The thesis ends with a section stressing the theoretical and practical implication of the experiment.

## 1.2 Problem delimitation

During the last couple of years, Danish motion pictures have gained international acknowledgement and inspired foreign tourists to visit Denmark (VisitDenmark, 2014). The movie tourism flourishes and the number of offers to movie tourists is increasing – not only to foreign tourists, who wants to see the locations of e.g. 'The Killing', but to native motion picture enthusiasts as well (Jyllands-Posten, 2014). As examples, VisitAarhus has created an online-universe where users via an app are navigated around locations appearing in the TV series 'Dicte' about the Aarhus journalist, who repeatedly becomes involved in criminal matters. Likewise, Randers Municipality has created a website about the authentic movie 'The Hvidsten Group' about the resistance movement group operating during World War II. (ibid.).

Further, also foreign produced motion pictures displaying Danish locations are popular in inspiring tourists to visit certain parts of Denmark. Like this, VisitDenmark (2016a), at the moment this thesis is written, uses the movie called 'The Danish Girl' to attract tourists to Copenhagen. 'The Danish Girl' is the story about the Danish painters Gerda and Einar Wegener, and how Einar becomes *"…the first person to undergo sex reassignment surgery."* (ibid.). The movie pictures several locations in Copenhagen, counting among others Nyhavn, The Royal Theater and The Marble Church (VisitDenmark, 2016b). Whereas the effect of motion pictures on destination image is established in several studies, little is known about the effect of motion pictures on domestic tourism (Soliman, 2011). Despite several tourist agencies seem to have realized the effect of using motion pictures to attract travellers, domestic tourism is thus still a largely untouched area within the area of promoting destinations through motion pictures.

Further, research has to a high extent focused on English-oriented productions, leaving a dearth of research into non-Western motion pictures where the spoken language is not English (Kim et al., 2006). Thus, in order to fill the above-mentioned gap in previous research, at least partially, this thesis delimits itself to solely concern a Danish context. That is, the present thesis does not fill the gap of research into non-Western motion pictures, but reach out to the gap of motion pictures not in the English language. In order to answer the previously stated research question, the case of the Danish TV series 'Badehotellet', using the North Sea as a backdrop, is chosen.

# 2. Theoretical background

The first step in the process of answering the research question for this thesis is to sum up the theoretical background by outlining the existing theory regarding the specific research area. The following sections provide a literature review divided into two main parts. The first part describes the theory on motion pictures and how they can affect destination image. The second part discusses mental simulation as a moderator of this relationship. Finally, a section outlines the hypotheses for the thesis and illustrates the research in a figure.

## 2.1 Effect of motion pictures on destination image

The first part of the theoretical background focuses on how motion pictures can have an effect on the image of visitor destinations. First, motion pictures are analyzed as a media for promotion, including how it is capable of creating and retaining an image for destinations. Second, the four image components are examined while focusing on how the different components can be affected by motion pictures. Finally, the results of the motion picture effect are outlined. These include awareness and increase in visitor numbers, which both are effects of the impact of motion pictures, providing evidence that motion pictures do have an impact on the image of visitor destinations.

### 2.1.1 Motion pictures as a promotion tool

Since the beginning of the 21st century, place marketers have found that motion pictures can serve as a very beneficial PR tool (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 151f.). Even though individuals might never have visited a certain destination before, the motion picture can form a positive image about the place, which can possibly result in a desire to visit the destination (ibid.). The concept of tourists visiting a destination, based on the image portrayed in a motion picture, is referred to as movie tourism (ibid.). Furthermore, different types of marketing activities can be identified to promote movie tourism (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006a).

When a motion picture promotes a certain destination, it can be defined as a hallmark event. Ritchie (1984) defines hallmark events as follows:

> *"Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention."* (Ritchie, 1984: p. 2).

Riley & Van Doren (1992) use Ritchie's definition to describe a subcategory of hallmark events, which is categorized by being *non-marketer controlled*. Motion pictures make up the category, and even though they might not always be produced primarily to promote a destination they often create an interest and necessity to visit the place in order to confirm what is being portrayed. The essential thing about this category is that the place marketer himself is not in control of the destination image gained from the motion picture. However, as described by Hudson & Ritchie (2006a), it is important to acknowledge the opportunities for influencing the effect of the motion picture on the destination image.

#### 2.1.1.1 Creating the destination image

According to Riley & Van Doren (1992), the awareness and appeal created by motion pictures have the potential of a stronger impact, as the viewer's interaction with the destination is longer. Furthermore, when focusing on the presented story, people's involvement may increase. This is presumed to affect the image of the portrayed destination.

When promoting destinations it is essential to have an effective destination positioning strategy. To be able to differentiate from competitors a key component is *"…the creation and management of a distinctive and appealing perception, or image, of the destination."* (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991: p. 2). According to Bolan & Williams (2008), two key types of image formation processes have been identified: *organic images* and *induced images*. The former is affected by media, not specifically associated with tourism, such as newspaper stories, movies etc. The latter is based on conscious marketing and advertisements for visitor destinations (ibid.). The organic images created by motion pictures can work as a very strong reinforcement of the desired induced images. As mentioned above, viewers of the motion pictures interact longer with the portrayed destination. Furthermore, the information given about the destination through this medium is often considered to be more objective and unbiased (Kim & Richardson, 2003). This is also a consequence of the fact that the location for motion pictures is usually not specifically chosen to promote the destination.

Following a motion picture's release, the opportunities for marketing activities occur. These opportunities are generated when there is a release in a cinema, DVD rental/purchase, television etc. (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b). The task is to transform people's interest in the motion picture into a choice to actually travel to the destination (ibid.). Here, the organic images created by the motion picture can be used to create the necessary induced images to be able to convert the viewers into actual tourists.

#### 2.1.1.2 Retaining destination image

One of the reasons why motion pictures can be described as a subcategory of hallmark events is due to the limited duration reflected in limited viewing (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Additionally, motion pictures become recurring events after the initial viewing period as they can be repeated in television and converted into DVD's etc. (ibid.). This can result in continued interest in the destination portrayed in the motion picture and maintain its image as a tourist attraction.

In order to be successful, motion pictures *"…rely on uniqueness, status or timely significance…"* (Riley & Van Doren, 1992: p. 269). If a motion picture, portraying a certain destination, has these qualities, there is an increased chance for tourists to recognize the potential of the destination for a longer period of time (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Consequently, even though awareness, appeal and the resulting profit from a motion picture will decrease over time, it is possible to retain the destination image created by it.

#### 2.1.1.3 Pull media in a push location

The motivation for tourists to travel can be explained by two different factors: *push factors* and *pull factors* (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 74). Push factors are the ones that result in a need to go travelling, which can be e.g. a wish to take a break from the daily routine, peer pressure or others talking about their travels (ibid.). In contrast, pull factors try to affect individuals in their choice of travel destination (ibid.).

According to Riley & Van Doren (1992), the promotion of a destination in a motion picture can be described as using a pull media in a push location. Individuals can have strong desires to travel to other parts of the world due to different push factors as mentioned above. The areas which contain these predispositions to travel can be referred to as tourist-generating

locations. Also, it would be possible to refer to them as push locations (ibid.). The motion pictures are trying to affect the choice of travel destination by displaying the attractions available in the place of tourism receivership (ibid.). Thereby, the motion picture works as a pull factor in a push location.

According to Bolan & Williams *"...the intangible nature of any service presents immense challenges to marketers in so much as communicating a product's offering favourably to a potential market."* (Bolan & Williams, 2008: p. 383). It can be difficult to communicate the offerings of a visitor destination to the individuals in the push location. However, the relatively long period of exposure during the viewing time of a motion picture has made them a very effective pull factor in the attempt of generating tourism (Bolan & Williams, 2008).

### 2.1.2 Components of the destination image

From the previous section it can be concluded that motion pictures portraying a destination can be defined as a subcategory of hallmark events. The creation of destination images involves different types of formation processes, and within some of these processes motion pictures can be a very useful marketing tool. However, it is important to focus on the need to retain the image created by a motion picture, which can require some work. Nevertheless, motion pictures are effective pull factors to use in relevant push locations.

After a general outline of the use of motion pictures as influencers when trying to create and retain a destination image it is now necessary to describe, in more detail, the different components of a destination image. Here, motion pictures are linked with these components to get a better idea of how they work in forming a destination image.

Avraham & Ketter describe how researchers argue that *"...image is the simplification of numerous associations and pieces of information related to a place and the cognitive product of the attempt to process large amounts of information."* (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 20). These numerous associations will result in an overall evaluation of the attractiveness of a destination. Boulding (1956) indicates that a destination image consists of four components: cognitive, affective, evaluative and behavioral. These four components will provide the structure for the following sections, which will review the theoretical contributions regarding the formation of a destination image.

#### 2.1.2.1 Cognitive component

According to Baloglu & McCleary (1999), the first component of the image concept is the cognitive component. The component is described as *"…the beliefs or knowledge about a destination's attributes…"* (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999: p. 870). Moreover, it can be argued that there are two major factors, *stimulus* and *personal*, forming an image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The former is concerned about external stimulus and previous experience and the latter about the social and psychological characteristics of the perceiver (ibid.). The following paragraphs cover how motion pictures, through these factors, can affect the cognitive component in forming the overall image of a destination.

The first type of stimulus, which is mentioned by Baloglu & McCleary (1999), is the information sources to which an individual is exposed. This includes the different types as well as the amount of sources. Woodside & Lysonski (1989) present a model in which information sources are referred to as a marketing variable. Marketing variables are one of two primary forces affecting the perceptions of the consumers and hereby also the cognitive evaluations. The use of information sources will result in destination awareness for the consumer (ibid.). Destination awareness is additionally divided into an individual's consideration set, inert set, aware set and inept set. These are the destinations that first come to mind, the destinations that are easy to visit but not considered, the destinations that are found difficult to visit and the destinations that are not believed to be interesting to visit (ibid.). It is argued that these different categories of destination awareness can be affected by motion pictures. In an article, Kim & Richardson (2003) test a hypothesis implying that the interest in visiting a certain destination is different depending on whether or not individuals have viewed a motion picture portraying the destination. This difference is found to be significant (ibid.). From this it can be argued that both the consideration set, the inert set and the inept set can be affected by motion pictures. The inept set is directly related to the perceived interest in the destination, but the study also suggests motion pictures to be effective in generating interest in destinations that normally would not even be considered (the inert set). Furthermore, it implies motion pictures to be capable of resulting in different 'top of mind' destinations for the consumer (the consideration set). Consequently, the choice of a motion picture as an information source can influence the individual's cognitive evaluation and thereby the destination awareness.

Another stimulus mentioned by Baloglu & McCleary (1999) is previous experience. According to Woodside & Lysonski previous destination experience is characterized as a traveler variable, which is *"…related positively to the inclusion of the destination in a consumer's consideration set…"* (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989: p. 10). This makes it relevant regarding the cognitive image component. However, the conclusion is that no significant association is found between the two factors. Yet, it seems that this might be different if a motion picture is considered a type of previous experience. Kim & Richardson (2003) hypothesize that destination images will be significantly different depending on whether or not individuals have been exposed to a motion picture. The hypothesis is tested with three cognitive image variables including cultural/natural attractions, community characteristics/infrastructure and basic needs/comfort. All variables show significant differences (ibid.). Thus, previous experience with a destination through a motion picture can result in a different cognitive evaluation by the individual.

Besides stimulus factors, the personal factors also influence the formation of an image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The type of personal factors most relevant for the cognitive component of an image is the social characteristics (ibid.). Regarding motion pictures, social characteristics can be argued to have an indirect effect. Characteristics such as age, education, gender etc. will have an effect on the type of motion picture individuals choose to watch. As an example, Fischoff et al. (1998) prove that certain movie genres are mostly viewed by women and others mostly by men. Furthermore, the popularity of genres tends to vary according to age and race differences (ibid.). Even though the study only focuses on three types of social characteristics, it still indicates the influence of this personal factor. As the destination images, resulting from motion pictures, might vary depending on the genre, different social characteristics might result in very different cognitive evaluations.

From the above it can be stated that two stimulus factors and one personal factor can affect the cognitive components of an image. The stimulus factors are the choice of a motion picture as information source and the degree of former experience through motion pictures. The personal factor is the individual's social characteristics, which determines movie genre choice.

#### 2.1.2.2 Affective component

Apart from the cognitive component, the image concept also contains an affective component (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The affective component of the image of a destination refers to *"…feelings toward, or attachment to it."* (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999: p. 870). As well as with the cognitive component, the affective component is also affected by stimulus and personal factors, respectively (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The next section tries to outline how motion pictures have a differing effect on the affective image component compared to the cognitive.

Previous experience can also be considered an important stimulus regarding the affective component. Even though Woodside & Lysonski (1989) view previous experience as a traveler variable, which is not directly linked with the affective associations, they still stress the following: *"…the affective associations are usually positive for destinations a consumer would consider visiting and negative for destinations a consumer has decided definitely not to visit…"* (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989: p. 8). This implies that the affective associations are formed by the consumer perceptions about destinations, which are formed by the traveler variable. Thus, the affective associations will be indirectly formed by the traveler variable. This is reinforced by the test of the hypothesis stating that consumers connect destinations in their consideration sets with positive associations and destinations in their inept sets with negative associations (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989). The hypothesis is supported (ibid.).

As previously mentioned, Kim & Richardson (2003) hypothesize that a destination image will differ based on whether or not individuals have watched a motion picture. Here, four affective image variables are tested of which only one, the relaxing-distressing quality, is found to be significantly different. As a consequence, it might be reasonable to suggest that previous experience with a destination through motion pictures does not have a significant effect on the individual's affective associations about the place. However, Baloglu points out in a study about visitation intentions: *"Affective image (feelings) about a destination was influenced by perceptional/cognitive evaluations only."* (Baloglu, 1999: p. 88). Here, motion pictures as an information source is specifically mentioned to be a stimulus (Baloglu, 1999). It indicates that previous experience with a destination, through motion pictures or other information sources, can only be shown to indirectly affect affective associations towards destinations. Yet, it is still believed to be an important component of a place's image, making it an important element to research.

Also, regarding the affective component of an image, personal factors can have an influence (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The affective component can be affected by social and psychological characteristics, respectively (ibid.). Social characteristics, including age, education, gender etc., and psychological characteristics, including values, motivations, personality etc., can both be argued as important determinants of the affective associations with a destination, derived from a motion picture.

As with the cognitive component, the effect of social characteristics on affective associations can also be considered indirect. Above, it has been described that the popularity of movie genres depends on race, age and gender (Fischoff et al., 1998). Furthermore, a study by McCarty & Shrum (1993) shows that demographics are related to television behavior, especially gender and age. When different types of TV programs or movies portray a destination differently, it seems reasonable to suggest that individuals will show different affective associations towards the place depending on their preferences within motion pictures. Thereby, the social characteristics will affect the affective evaluations.

Apart from social characteristics, psychological characteristics can also be argued to have an indirect effect on affective associations towards a destination. McCarty & Shrum (1993) suggest that an individual's personal values influence the choice to watch television as well as the type of TV program. Values are a good indicator of an individual's personality, making it possible to argue that psychological characteristics, in general, can influence an individual's choice of TV program or motion picture. Again, if different programs and motion pictures create distinctive destination images, it can be reasoned that they will also create distinctive, affective associations with the place.

Hereby, the conclusion is that regarding the affective component of an image one stimulus factor and two personal factors are essential. The stimulus factor is the previous experience with a destination attained through motion pictures. Next, the personal factors include social and psychological characteristics, respectively, resulting in distinctive choices of TV programs and motion pictures.

#### 2.1.2.3 Evaluative and behavioral components

Apart from the cognitive and affective image components, the image concept also has an evaluative component and a behavioral component. The evaluative component is described as "*how one evaluates the place or its residents."* (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 20), whereas the behavioral component is *"whether one considers immigrating to/working in/visiting/investing in a certain place"* (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 20). The two components are interrelated as they are both essential factors of the tourist consumption process and determinants of tourist behavior in general (Chen & Tsai, 2006). The components involve the whole process of tourist consumption, comprising the choice of destination, the onsite evaluation as well as future behavior intentions. The next paragraphs discuss how motion pictures have an effect on the two components and thereby the overall tourist behavior.

While the cognitive and affective components are the knowledge about a destination's attributes and the feelings about the place, respectively, the evaluative component is the overall trip quality, perceived value and satisfaction level (Chen & Tsai, 2006). Even though Bigne et al. (2001) argue that evaluations of a destination are affected by the image, it is also stated that it will influence and modify the image the other way around (ibid.). Consequently, evaluations of attractiveness, including perceived quality, value and satisfaction, are viewed as the evaluative component of an image. The results of the study by Bigne et al. conclude that image affects both destination quality and satisfaction. Thus, perceived quality and satisfaction can also be argued to influence and modify destination image. The study results of Chen & Tsai (2006) support these findings. They argue that image affects evaluations and satisfaction level through quality and perceived value. Based on this, it can be claimed that perceived attractiveness, quality and satisfaction with a destination have an impact on the image of the place. Thus, the evaluative component of an image is mostly concerned with the satisfaction level and perceived quality as a consequence of having visited a destination. However, this thesis researches the differences in image as a result of promotions, which makes it irrelevant to use the two abovementioned factors as indicators. Still, evaluative perceptions might be derived from a motion picture portraying the destination, but overall attractiveness will be the only indicator. Yet, overall attractiveness is also an indicator of the overall image in itself, which means that the evaluative component and the overall image are considered to be the same concept in the context of this thesis.

As mentioned above, the evaluative components of an image is difficult to distinguish from the behavioral component. However, the behavioral component can be differentiated from the evaluative component, as it has to do with the behavioral intentions, including the intention to visit and the willingness to recommend the destination to others (Chen & Tsai, 2006). Bigne et al. (2001) conclude that the relationship between image and intention to visit and probability of recommendation, respectively, can be proven to be significant. Favorable destination images result in increasing tourist visits and recommendations. The same is argued by Chen & Tsai (2006) as they state that a positive destination image has an effect on the future behavioral intentions. Similar to the section above, image is here argued to affect behavioral intentions. Yet, image is still claimed to contain a behavioral component, which modifies the overall image together with the rest of the components. It is also necessary to mention that the studies of Bigne et al., (2001) and Chen & Tsai (2006) both view the behavioral intentions as effects of having visited the destination at an earlier time. Therefore, the behavioral intentions merely include revisits in these studies. However, it can be argued that behavioral intentions can be based on experience with the destination through a motion picture. Kim & Richardson (2003) display in their research that respondents who have viewed a motion picture, portraying a specific destination, show a higher interest in visiting the place, opposed to those not having viewed the motion picture. Consequently, the behavioral component of a destination image can be formed by motion pictures. This can increase the number of tourists who search for further information, the intentions to visit, and the chance that they will recommend it to others.

Hence, based on the above, it can be concluded that the evaluative and behavioral components are both essential parts of an image. Nevertheless, in the context of this thesis the evaluative component can only be measured by the attractiveness of a destination, and is thus considered to be the same as the overall image. Furthermore, motion pictures can also lead to an increase in behavioral intentions, including information search, actual visits and recommendations to others.

### 2.1.3 Results of the motion picture effect

The previous sections have outlined how an image consists of four components: the cognitive, the affective, the evaluative and the behavioral component. Regarding all of the four components, it has been shown how motion pictures can have an effect on the image. The following sections include a review of the results of the motion picture effect on destination image. Overall, these include awareness and familiarity as well as an increase in visitor numbers.

#### 2.1.3.1 Awareness and familiarity

Entertainments such as watching television and going to the cinema are central parts of most people's daily life. However, a study by Iwashita (2008) suggests that people do not use watching television and going to the cinema solely as entertainment, but also use these as media to become more knowledgeable and more familiar with visitor destinations. Investigating the roles of motion pictures in international tourism, using the case of Japanese tourists to the UK, Iwashita concludes that a motion picture's greatest impacts on international tourism *"…lie in its ability to create destination awareness, consciousness, and images leading to a stronger interest in the destination and actual travel to the destination."* (Iwashita, 2008: p. 151).

Destination awareness arises as people's interest in a certain destination is generated or increased after having seen a motion picture using that certain destination as a backdrop. A female respondent from Iwashita's study explains, *"Kings Cross was not a special place, but it became a place where I can visit with an awareness that it featured in the film."* (Iwashita, 2008: p. 149). Hereby, she indicates that the London railway terminal was not of her interest before the 'Harry Potter' movies, but that the movies have created a new awareness of the railway terminal as a sight. Similarly, another female respondent expresses, *"When watching* Sherlock Holmes *series on television, I was impressed by the beauty of the scenery and streets featured in the production as well as its interesting storyline, so I wanted to visit a country which has produced such television programs by all means."* (Iwashita, 2008: p. 145). Despite the reasons for visiting Kings Cross and the United Kingdom, respectively, being different, both cases come down to the fact that the awareness is generated by the motion pictures. Whereas the latter respondent might have become interested in the United Kingdom in other ways

such as through documentaries or books, it seems less likely that Kings Cross ever would have come into interest as an attraction had it not been for the 'Harry Potter' movies. Thus, it was found that motion pictures to some extent generate interest in the UK in general in the first place and to a large extent increase interest in visiting or re-visiting the UK (Iwashita, 2008). Besides drawing attention to new potential visitor destinations, increased awareness also helps creating images of destinations (ibid.; Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Motion pictures display the destinations and contribute to the overall image, consisting of the components mentioned above. As an example, 'Sherlock Holmes' may have a powerful effect on viewers as the same or similar locations are displayed repeatedly, accumulating certain images of the UK (Iwashita, 2008). However, watching multiple motion pictures featuring the same region or country may have the same effect. A male respondent from the study conducted by Iwashita (2008) tells, *"British films such as* Brassed Off*,* The Full Monty*, and* Billy Elliot *gave me an impression that UK is a class-based society and a complicated country although I had thought that British society was well-structured and affluent."* (Iwashita, 2008: p. 146f.). Another example of how awareness may contribute to creating destination image is Southfork Ranch, the family home portrayed in the television series 'Dallas'. As such, there seems no reason to go visit the ranch no other than its connection to the series and further, spectacle is limited and closed to on-site inspections. Yet, it is yearly visited by 500,000 people (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). These, however, are mostly not Americans, but overseas tourists (ibid.). According to Elam (1991) foreigners relate Southfork with authentication of the 'American Dream', encapsulating rich people, open spaces, cowboys and "opportunity". In that way, 'Dallas', among other motion pictures, has contributed to not only awareness of certain locations, but also to the creation of an image of America as an open and democratic country (Iwashita, 2008).

As mentioned previously, motion pictures do not only create awareness of potential visitor destinations, but are also used by viewers to become more familiar and knowledgeable with destinations. In preparation for an actual visit, many people seem to look to motion pictures for images or to get an idea of a destination they have never visited before (Iwashita, 2008). As a non-marketer controlled subcategory of hallmark events, motion pictures allow consumers to develop a more comprehensive destination image through indirect consumption (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Extended exposure to destinations through motions pictures enable potential visitors to gather knowledge and information about vacation

opportunities, leading to a feeling of security and comfort and thus a lower anxiety level. Causing increased confidence in destination choice, motions pictures may make a vacation experience less threatening (ibid.; Olsen et al., 1986). For others, however, motion pictures are solely used as joyful reunions giving pleasure of seeing something already known or familiar (Iwashita, 2008). A female respondent from Iwashita's study expresses, *"I went to see* Sliding Doors *(1998) and* Tube Tales *(1999) because of their settings of London Underground. I felt happy when I saw the familiar places where I have been, thinking that I have been there!''* (Iwashita, 2008: p. 149). However, whereas some people feel comfort when experiencing already known destinations, familiarity may also have negative effects (Olsen et al., 1986). Introducing the idea of *optimal familiarity*, Olsen et al. indicates that familiarity with a destination and attractiveness of that destination are positively related to a certain point, after which they are negatively related due to the reduced novelty.

From the above, it can be argued that motion pictures do not only have the purpose of entertaining but also work as a medium to increase knowledge and familiarity with visitor destinations. The viewers become aware of the destinations and the motion pictures contribute to the different image components by displaying the destination in a certain way. Motion pictures increase confidence in destination choice and decrease anxiety for the visitors. However, high familiarity can be negative if it reduces the novelty too much, which is important to have in mind.

#### 2.1.3.2 Increase in visitor numbers

Apart from increased awareness and visitor familiarity with destinations, several studies have linked motion pictures to increases in visitor numbers at destinations they depict (Riley et al., 1998; Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Tooker & Baker, 1996). In a study, Riley et al. (1998) found support for previous research indicating motion pictures as having a significant impact on tourism. Gathering data from 12 different motion picture locations in the United States, Riley et al. found evidence for increased visitor numbers in the years following the respective releases in all cases[1]. Further, Riley et al. found that motion pictures can continue to draw

[1] As the only case, 'Gettysburg' showed a decrease in visitor numbers the first year after the release. However, they *"…increased dramatically in subsequent years and well beyond the extrapolated line. The unexpected decrease was explained by an October 1993 release date. This date was the start of the off-season for this National Battlefield. Therefore, immediate visitation impetus was not evident in the 1993 attendance figures."* (Riley et al., 1998: p. 926).

visitors many years from the release date. As such, they found an estimated 54 % increase in visitation to be evident at least five years later. Additional sources suggest similar effect. When filming 'Close Encounters of the Third King', the igneous intrusion Devils Tower National Monument was used as a backdrop in several key scenes leading to an exceptional increase in visits in the year following the release (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Moreover, when conducting research 11 years after the release, it was found that 20 % of the visitors acknowledged viewing 'Close Encounters of the Third King' as their main source of knowledge about the Devils Tower (Workman et al., 1990).

In the years between 1981 and 1988 Australia experienced an annual increase in tourists of 20.5 % from the United States (Lassiter, 1990). Whereas some of the increase in tourism in the 1980s can be explained by favorable exchange rates, successful rock groups and a number of hallmark events, few of these events were culturally significant for Americans (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Instead, Riley & Van Doren suggest Australian motion pictures as the pull factor. With box office successes as 'Mad Max' (1980), 'The Road from Snowy River' (1982), 'Mad Max: Beyond the Thunderdome' (1985), 'Crocodile Dundee' (1986) and 'Crocodile Dundee II' (1988) Australia gained considerable recognition as a tourist destination (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). According to The Economist Intelligent Unit the impact of the motion pictures were convincing that it *"…lamented the end of the 'Crocodile Dundee era' in overseas promotion."* (Riley & Van Doren, 1992: p. 273).

The presented literature show clear evidence that motion pictures can have a positive effect on visitor numbers. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the measurement of movie-induced tourism comes with a number of difficulties (Busby & Klug, 2001; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b). In small towns and rural areas the impact of motion pictures are easily proven. After the release of the 'Heartbeat' series in 1992 visitor numbers to Goathland (the setting for the 'Heartbeat' village Aidenfield) rose tremendously (Tooker & Baker, 1996). In 1993, just one year after the first season had aired, coach visitors had increased by 278 % and the number of total visitors by 41 % to a total of 480,500 (ibid.). On the other hand, the issue is quite different when it comes to larger cities, as visitors tend to visit for multiple reasons, motion pictures just being one of many (Busby & Klug, 2001). Investigating the potential impact of the movie 'Notting Hill' on the part of London going under the same name, Busby and Klug

(2001) found that only 5 % visited the part of town due to having seen the movie whereas 55 % stated they were visiting Notting Hill because of shopping. In connection with this, Macionis (2004) has developed a continuum of movie-induced tourism ranging from the specific film tourist who actively seeks out places that has connection to motion pictures to the serendipitous film tourist who just happens to be in a destination used in a motion picture. In between is the general tourist not drawn to a motion picture location as such, but who participates in motion picture activities while at the destination.

Thus, the conclusion is that the image of a destination, created by motion pictures, does have an effect on the number of visitors on the destination. Even though measuring the impact of motion pictures on visitor numbers can be difficult due to several reasons, there is clear evidence that motion pictures do affect the image of destinations.

## 2.2 Mental simulation as a moderator

The second part of the theoretical background focuses on how mental simulation can work as a moderator of the effect of motion pictures on destination image. First, mental simulation is described as a linguistic tool, providing clarification of the definition of the term. Second, it is examined how mental simulation works, focusing on the different instruments affecting the consumers. Finally, the results of mental simulation are outlined, which will include a persuasive ad appeal and increased product comprehension. Both of these point to the fact that mental simulation can work as an effective moderator.

### 2.2.1. Mental simulation as a linguistic tool

To encourage consumers to imagine themselves in a positive setting, while interacting with a product, is a marketing tactic used widely by marketers today (Escalas, 2004). The method is referred to as mental simulation. According to Taylor & Schneider (1989), *"Mental simulation can be thought of as the cognitive construction of hypothetical scenarios…"* (Escalas, 2004: p. 37). Furthermore, it is added by Fiske (1993): *"…which are usually in the form of stories or narratives."* (Escalas, 2004: p. 37). These two phrases are a clear definition of mental simulation and therefore they will also form the structure for the following sections. They provide an outline of the theoretical contributions concerning mental simulation as a linguistic tool.

#### 2.2.1.1 Cognitive construction of hypothetical scenarios

As mentioned above, the first part of the definition of mental simulation has to do with the fact that individuals, when simulating events, mentally construct hypothetical scenarios by thinking about own actual or potential behaviors. Another way Taylor & Schneider (1989) describe the process is to say that it is *"…the imitative mental representation of some event or series of events*" (Escalas, 2004: p. 37). This phrase provides a wider understanding of the term as it implies that it can involve both past and future events. As described by Taylor et al. (1998), mental simulation is useful in psychology when trying to address how individuals self-regulate their behavior. This can be to recall past events to try to figure out what could have been done differently. Also, it can be to imagine future events to decide which way to handle a specific situation. However, studying self-regulation of behavior will identify how individuals consciously use mental simulation as a coping mechanism. In contrast, this thesis merely focuses on how the use of mental simulation as a linguistic tool in promotions can have a more unconscious effect on individuals and their actions. Escalas (2004) concludes that promotions using mental simulation result in a better product evaluation, compared to promotions not using mental simulation. The explanation for this might be that when mental simulation is present, events often seem more real and true (Taylor et al., 1998). The following example describes this:

> *"For example, anticipating an idyllic vacation of lying on a beach, swimming, sailing, and snorkeling may make the experience seem so real that it propels a person into the sometimes lengthy and tedious process of making the vacation plans."* (Taylor et al., 1998: p. 430).

Thereby, it is possible to conclude the following: If a promotion linguistically contains mental simulation, it will construct a hypothetical scenario with the consumers, it will seem more real, and the consumers might end up making the scenario happen in real life.

#### 2.2.1.2 Formed by stories or narratives

The second part of the definition of mental simulation is based on the idea that when individuals engage in mental simulation, they are persuaded by the same mechanism as when they are persuaded by stories (Escalas, 2004). According to Green & Brock (2000) stories persuade by transporting individuals into a text:

> *"To the extent that individuals are absorbed into a story or transported into a narrative world, they may show effects of the story on their real-world beliefs."* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 701).

Thus, when individuals are transported by a story, they engage in a process of being increasingly absorbed by the narrative. First, readers tend to accept the narrative world created by the author as a consequence of loosing access to facts from the real world (Green & Brock, 2000). Next, they can be very emotionally involved with the story and motivated by the events taking place in the narrative world (ibid.).

As a consequence, it can be concluded that the persuasion process under mental simulation is to transport the individual into the narrative of the simulation. The hypothetical scenario will be accepted, and the individual will be more involved, compared to if the mental simulation was not present.

### 2.2.2 How mental simulation works

Now, it has been disclosed that the linguistic use of mental simulation in promotions will result in the construction of hypothetical scenarios for the consumer. This will appear to be real and will increase the change of the consumer realizing the scenario. The process is a transportation of the individual into the narrative of the simulation, which leads to more involved consumers. Next, the following sections go into detail with the process of mental simulation and lead to a deeper description of how mental simulation works. The first part focuses on the importance of visual attention under mental simulation as well as discuss how it creates experience value. The second part addresses imagination as the processing strategy for mental simulation and evaluate the narrative element in more detail.

#### 2.2.2.1 Visual attention and experience value

According to Feiereisen et al. (2008), mental simulation can be referred to as a learning strategy, which will result in a better understanding of a product's features and benefits. In their study they research mental simulation as one of two learning strategies for consumers to understand the features of really new products. Furthermore, they contribute to the theory on visual attention and how it works in marketing by affecting the learning outcomes for the consumers. As described by Rayner (1998), when reading a text, individuals' eye movements

are referred to as saccades. Between saccades, fixations happen, where the eyes are relatively still for 200-300 milliseconds. During the fixations, visual attention takes place. Even though Feiereisen et al. (2008) only research the role of visual attention regarding product innovation, they still have some interesting views regarding how visual attention has a major effect under mental simulation. The results of the study on variations in visual attention *"…show a very strong positive correlation in the verbal mental simulation condition, which suggests that in this condition an increase in the number of fixations to the learning element was indicative of an actual increase in attention and ultimately comprehension."* (Feiereisen et al., 2008: p. 602f.). Consequently, in order for mental simulation to have the desired effect in a promotional setting, fixations are important, as they allow the visual attention to take place. According to the sensory-semantic model used with cognitive psychology (Nelson, 1979), pictures have *"…a superiority effect over words on learning."* (Feiereisen et al., 2008: p. 596). This is in line with the fact that individuals spend more time encoding text than pictures, as they need fewer fixations to process the information from a picture (Feiereisen et al., 2008). In the cases where mental simulation is triggered by pictures, one half of the foundation is established right away, and all the consumer has to do is to imagine him- or herself in the situation (Phillips, 1996). Is mental simulation instead triggered by an explicit text instruction to imagine, this request should aid the creation of a mental simulation scenario (Feiereisen et al., 2008). Hence, whether pictures or text has the greatest effect on encouraging mental simulation is an entire study in itself and will not be discussed further in this thesis.

When a promotion succeeds in creating visual attention and thereby achieves to construct a hypothetical scenario through mental simulation, these scenarios can work as product trials. Regarding this, Kahneman & Tversky (1984) discuss the distinction between experience values and decision values. The perceived value from an outcome or product can be divided into the two mentioned categories. Experience value is *"…the degree of pleasure or pain, satisfaction or anguish in the actual experience of an outcome…"* (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984: p. 349), whereas decision value is *"…the contribution of an anticipated outcome to the overall attractiveness or aversiveness of an option in a choice."* (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984: p. 349). From this it is possible to argue that mental simulation, which is a construction of hypothetical scenarios for the future, will provide some sort of experience value for the

consumers before a purchase. Hereby, mental simulation gives the consumers a better understanding of the product for them to be able to make more informed decisions.

In a study by MacInnis & Price (1990) the results show an unexpected relationship between concrete experience and satisfaction. In the study, concrete experience is measured by the familiarity the respondents have with activities they are planning in their spring break. Here, the results show that experience has a negative effect on the satisfaction with spring break (ibid.). Thereby, experience can also be seen as a negative influencer. However, the concrete experience with spring break activities is seen as something completely different than the imagery experience individuals will get from mental simulation. Thus, mental simulation is evaluated to provide positive experience value for the consumers in a promotional setting.

Consequently, it can be stated that visual attention is important in a promotional setting when verbal mental simulation is used as a learning strategy for the consumers. Using visual attention, promotions can work as tangible product trials by constructing hypothetical scenarios. Hereby, mental simulation can provide experience value and even though some types of experience will be negative, mental simulation in promotions is evaluated as a positive type of experience value.

#### 2.2.2.2 Imagery processing and the narrative element

Besides researching the relationship between experience and satisfaction, MacInnis & Price (1990) also investigate whether imagery processing affects the satisfaction and expectations of consumers. This is also very relevant for mental simulation as its features are imagination and the construction of hypothetical scenarios. In the study by MacInnis & Price (1990), measures are used to assess whether respondents generate imagery about spring break. The results show that when individuals engage in imagery processing, it generally seems to lead to higher levels of expectancy confirmation and satisfaction. Thus, they are more satisfied with their spring break. Moreover, this effect seems to be reinforced if the individuals have low experience with the type of vacation beforehand (ibid.). According to MacInnis & Price, *"…imagery appears to help low experience individuals predict what to expect."* (MacInnis & Price, 1990: p. 46). This statement is in line with the abovementioned theoretical contributions of Phillips (1996) and Kahneman & Tversky (1984), respectively. They both

argue that the construction of hypothetical and imaginable scenarios makes possible future purchases seem more tangible.

Furthermore, theory indicates that the imagery processing, as a part of mental simulation, can lead to recall of the promotion. According to Bower (1972), imagery instructions facilitate incidental learning. He states that individuals' motivations to learn are superfluous if they are exposed to a material and required to respond to it. In addition, he argues: *"For later recall, the cognitive and imaginal elaboration itself is the important ingredient..."* (Bower, 1972: p. 68). In relation to promotional materials, this is valuable information. If promotions contain mental simulation, and thereby imagery instructions, it convinces consumers by facilitating incidental learning.

According to Fiske (1993), mental simulations are often narratives. As described earlier, mental simulation is a process of being increasingly absorbed in a narrative. It has been outlined that the narrative part of the simulation makes the individual more involved and more willing to accept the simulated scenario. How this part of mental simulation works will now be described in more detail.

In an article, Adaval & Wyer (1998) explore how narratives have an effect on consumer judgment and decision-making. The research is based on the idea that consumers do not examine and evaluate products using a piecemeal computational procedure. Instead they make purchase decisions based on an imagined sequence of events focusing on the use of the product (ibid.). The results of the study show that the impact information has on consumer judgments is bigger when it is communicated through narratives opposed to through a listing of features. Furthermore, Adaval & Wyer show that there is an increased effect when using narratives if certain other factors are present. One of the factors is the stimulation for respondents to imagine themselves experiencing the described situations (ibid.). This is particularly relevant for this thesis as it is a central part of the concept of mental simulation. Adaval & Wyer hereby confirm that mental simulation is an effective approach in affecting consumer judgments, and it can be concluded that it works well when described as a narrative. The reason for this is that the structure of the simulation will seem similar to consumers' daily life experiences and it calls for a more holistic judgment of the product (ibid.).

In addition, Pennington & Hastie (1992) outline in their research that jurors' decisions in trials are mediated by the semantic structure in the summary of the causal relationships between the events, which is believed to have happened. During trials, jurors engage in a process trying to make sense of the information given to them. This is done *"…by attempting to organize it into a coherent mental representation."* (Pennington & Hastie, 1992: p. 190). In the study it is found that the respondents make stronger decisions when evidence is organized using a story compared to when it is organized by legal issue. Hereby, the claim is that stories or narratives are the mediating factor for the mental representation that forms juror decisions. Even though this research is based on decisions made in legal trials, it has relevance for the use of mental simulation in promotions and how it affects consumer decisions. If narratives have an effect on jurors' ability to make decisions, it can also be argued to be a key element for the simulation of consumer usage in promotions. Mental simulation and the construction of scenarios will facilitate more informed consumer purchase decisions.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that imagery processing, which is a central mechanism in mental simulations, lead to higher levels of expectancy confirmation and satisfaction with a product. Additionally, mental simulations are often narratives, which have a positive effect on consumer judgments and result in more informed purchase decisions.

### 2.2.3 Results of mental simulation

Above, it has been concluded that verbal mental simulation works through visual attention, which is important in the creation of hypothetical scenarios resulting in a perception of product trial and experience value. Furthermore, the convincing mechanism of imagery processing leads to a higher satisfaction level and the use of mental simulations, which is often in the form of narratives, results in a more holistic judgment of a product. Following, the next sections outline the results of using mental simulation in promotions. First, the ad appeal is discussed with the argument that mental simulation persuades by transportation. Second, it is described in more detail how mental simulation can result in a better understanding of a product.

#### 2.2.3.1 Persuasive ad appeal

As mentioned, mental simulation often appears as stories or narratives, and hence it is argued that individuals engaging in mental simulation are persuaded by transportation.

Traditionally, persuasion research has been directed by dual-process models such as the elaboration likelihood model (ELM; Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann, 1983) and the heuristic-systematic model (HSM; Chaiken, 1980), both describing how attitude may change. Since transportation is assumed to *"…be related to belief or attitude change..."* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702), it may be beneficial to distinguish between transportation and cognitive elaboration, which is usually treated in dual-process models of persuasion like the aforementioned (Escalas, 2004; Green & Brock, 2000). Whereas elaboration has its focus on *"…major points of an argument…"* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702), transportation is defined as *"…immersion into a text…"* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702), that is how "lost" an individual becomes in a story or narrative (Escalas, 2004). Thus, elaboration leads to persuasion through logical consideration and argument evaluation, and transportation through mechanisms such as reduced negative cognitive responding, a realistic narrative experience and creation of strong feelings toward the stories' characters (Green & Brock, 2000). The three mechanisms are further elaborated below.

According to Rubin (1994), individuals *"…are motivated to at least temporarily accept a fictional world, often for enjoyment purposes."* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702). For that reason, it has been argued that compared to a nonfictional situation, where an individual becomes aware that an advertiser has been making false claims and very unlikely would stop distrusting this advertiser when presented to the product's attributes, a transported individual would be less likely to disbelief or argue against the claims of the story (Green & Brock, 2000). Thus, transportation may reduce negative cognitive responding and hence change people's attitude towards a brand, an ad or the like (ibid.). Further, transportation may persuade by making *"…narrative experience seem more like real experience."* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702). The more a narrative succeeds in imitating a realistic experience, the more powerful the lessons implied by that narrative become, and the greater impact has the narrative, compared to a non-narrative mode (Green, 2004; Green & Brock, 2000). Despite the reader being aware that the events in the story are not real, true emotions and the belief that the events could actually happen may still arise (Green, 2004). As direct experience can

contribute to forming attitude (Fazio & Zanna, 1981), vivid narratives therefore may have a powerful effect on persuading. The last mechanism leading to persuasion via transportation is the one concerning feelings towards story characters. According to Surmelian (1969) and Radway (1997) the *"Character is the driving force in fiction."* (Green & Brock, 2000: p. 702), and thus it has been argued that attachment to a story's characters is vital in influencing readers' belief (Green & Brock, 2000). Contrary to e.g. rhetorical communication, where source credibility is normally given externally, the main character in fictional or narrative communication often functions as an internal source of information, and thus a greater liking for the character may be caused by transportation (ibid.). Green (2004) found support for her hypothesis when investigating the role of prior knowledge and perceived realism in transportation into narrative worlds. It is concluded that knowing a person in real life who shares noteworthy characteristics with the main character (in Green's study, sexual orientation) will increase the probability for that individual being transported. However, the study further stresses that it is still possible for readers not having these acquaintances to become transported, just not as strongly as their counterparts. To sum up, people reading a story or a narrative do not only enter a narrative world, but they may also become involved with the characters in it, and what these characters do or believe may change the reader's attitude and beliefs (Green & Brock, 2000).

In her study about the favorable effect of ad-encouraged mental simulation on ad attitude and brand evaluation, Ecsalas (2004) found evidence that narrative transportation will lead to a more persuasive ad appeal compared to consumers engaging in an analytical process. Thus, promoting a product using mental simulation will lead to *"…a higher evaluation of that products, as well as the advertisement that elicits the simulation."* (Escalas, 2004: p. 46). As such it is found that mental simulation transports away attention from negative thoughts and instead creates strong affective responses, which result in more favorable ad attitudes and brand evaluations when the emotions are positive (Escalas, 2004). It is argued how negative emotions can enhance persuasion as well, but it is not further examined and neither will it be in this thesis. Furthermore, the study concludes that individuals not engaging in narrative processing will instead resort to analytical processing (ibid.). Analytical processing (previously treated under the term of "cognitive elaboration") results in more critical thoughts and fewer positive responses and thus leads to *"…less favorable ad attitudes and*

*brand evaluations, compared with the narrative processing evoked via mental simulation."* (Escalas, 2004: p. 46.)

Other than the abovementioned persuasion mechanisms, studying self-focused mental simulation, Krishnamurthy & Sujan (1999) find contextual detailed ads, that are ads which contain *"…considerable information on the physical setting or locale, the spatial arrangement of objects and people, and the activities associated with the consumption of the product.",* to be facilitative in enhancing the persuasive effects of mental simulation (Krishnamurthy & Sujan, 1999: p. 56f.). Self-referencing distinguishes between anticipatory self-referencing defined as *"…self-referencing in which the ad is processed with reference to imagined experiences and events relating to one's future."* (Krishnamurthy & Sujan, 1999: p. 56) and retrospective self-referencing defined as *"…self-referencing in which the ad is processed with reference to autobiographical experiences and events from one's past."* (Krishnamurthy & Sujan, 1999: p. 56). The type of self-referencing most relevant for this thesis is argued to be anticipatory self-referencing as it examines how mental simulation is used in ads with reference to imagined events in the future. Krishnamurthy & Sujan find anticipatory self-referencing to be more persuasive with high degrees of contextual details contrary to retrospective self-referencing, which is found to be more persuasive with low degrees of contextual details. This difference is explained by *"…the match between the actual content of the ad and the content of memory."* (Krishnamurthy & Sujan, 1999: p. 67). However, this finding has not been supported unconditionally. Examining self-focused mental simulation in the context of advertising herself, Escalas (2004) does not believe narrative transportation to be dependent on self-referencing and refers to Escalas et al. (2003) who find that *"…the degree to which a television ad tells a well-developed story affects the degree to which the ad "hooks" the viewer."* (Escalas, 2004: p. 38).

From the above, it can be concluded that transportation as a consequence of mental simulation leads to a more persuasive ad appeal compared to the analytical process. Transportation persuades via three mechanisms: reduced negative responding, a realistic narrative experience and the creation of strong feelings towards the story characters, respectively. Further, evidence shows that these mechanisms are reinforced by the degree of contextual detail, however, whether self-referencing is a necessity or not in the context of ads containing mental simulation has not been concluded unanimously.

#### 2.2.3.2 Increased product comprehension

In addition to persuasive ad appeal mental simulation may also result in an increasing product comprehension. It has been mentioned earlier how mental simulation can work as product trials, and below it is elaborated how this results in a better understanding of a product.

According to traditional models of consumer decision-making, when in a buying situation, an individual is faced with a set of alternatives, each described by a number of attributes (Bettmann et al., 1991). Taking a car buy for example. Here, each car has a different engine size, passenger capacity, mileage etc. When deciding which car to buy, the individual will first identify the relevant attributes, then evaluate these attributes and last choose the car with the greatest overall utility, based on attribute values and importance (Phillips et al., 1995). However, Phillips et al. (1995) does not acknowledge this process. Traditional models of decision-making might work for familiar, conventional products, but flaw when it comes to decisions of which an individual has little experience or for really new products, which customers by definition have limited knowledge about (ibid.; Hoeffler, 2003). In these situations, mental simulation may help consumers to better understand the benefits of the product (Feiereisen et al., 2008; Hoeffler, 2003). By enabling consumers to evoke relevant personal experiences, mental simulation may facilitate a merge between really new products and already existing usage patterns. This leads to a reduction of the uncertainty related with the new product by *"…acting as a surrogate experience with a prospective product."* (Hoeffler, 2003: p. 408).

Used as a learning strategy for better understanding a product's features and benefits, mental simulation is closely related to the notion of *consumer visions* (Feiereisen et al., 2008). According to Walker & Olson (1994), a consumption vision is *"a visual image of certain product-related behaviors and their consequences ... (they consist of) concrete and vivid mental images that enable consumers to vicariously experience the self-relevant consequences of product use"* (Phillips et al., 1995: p. 280), and thus may work as a product trial before a purchase. Imagine the following scenario:

> *"A 22-year-old woman is planning to take a vacation to celebrate her completion of college. The options under consideration are: touring Europe, relaxing on the beach of a tropical island, or hiking at a mountain retreat."* (Phillips et al., 1995, p. 280).

As mentioned above, following the traditional model of consumer decision-making the young woman would first identify the relevant attributes of each type of vacation, then evaluate the various attributes and finally select the vacation with the greatest overall utility. However, in a situation like the one above, this procedure may not be the most optimal (Phillips et al., 1995). Instead, it might be helpful for the young woman to create consumer visions picturing the different vacation scenarios. Within each simulated vacation, she can imagine herself consuming different products, experiencing the consequences of her choices and the related emotional reactions. Imagining the possible outcomes allows her to create cognitive and affective basis for her alternatives and ultimately develop a preference for one of the vacation types (ibid.). It will be like she has visited the destinations before. Yet, Phillips et al. (1995) argue that individuals do not only create consumer visions when it comes to big events like a vacation or e.g. a wedding, but also in less important situations as wearing a sweater.

Thus, from the above it can be concluded that mental simulation, as an imagined product trial, increases product comprehension for unconventional or really new products. Consumer visions may help identify different scenarios and thus lead the consumer to preferences based on experience and emotions.

## 2.3 Hypotheses

After having described the existing theory from the relevant research areas, the next step is to outline the hypotheses, which the specific research of this thesis is based on.

The first hypothesis for the thesis is related to the already mentioned relationship between the use of motion pictures in promotions and destination image. It has been presented how motion pictures can be effective in the process of creating a destination image. Motion pictures can be defined as a pull media in a push location, as they tend to pull individuals to certain destinations based on their own desire to travel. Furthermore, it can be concluded from existing theory that motion pictures potentially can affect all four components of an image. These are the cognitive, affective, evaluative and behavioral components, concerning

the knowledge, feelings, attitude and intentions, respectively, to visit a destination. However, in this thesis, the evaluative component and the overall image are considered the same concept. Thus, the evaluative component is excluded in the following study. The motion pictures increase knowledge and familiarity with visitor destinations while entertaining. When visitors through motion pictures become more aware, it can result in a higher confidence with the choice of destination and decrease anxiety. It has been examined how motion pictures displaying a destination do have an effect on the number of visitors. This further indicates that motion pictures affect the destination image. Based on that, it seems reasonable to hypothesize the following:

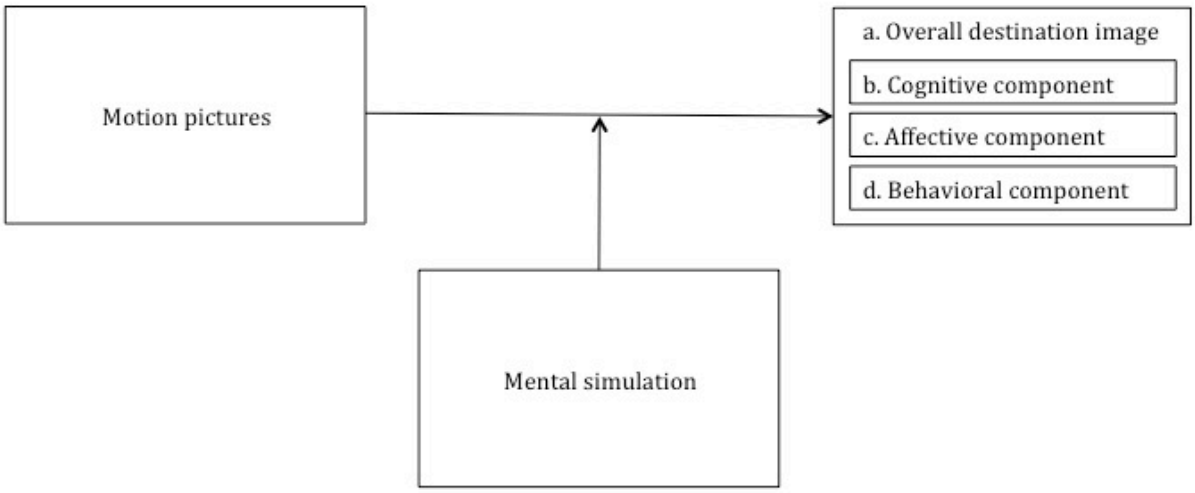
> **H1:** *The use of motion pictures in the promotion of a destination will result in a positive effect on the image of the destination (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component).*

The second hypothesis for the thesis focuses on mental simulation as a possible moderator of the relationship between motion pictures and destination image, as stated in the first hypothesis. The existing research describes mental simulation as a linguistic tool which constructs hypothetical scenarios for the consumer. Furthermore, it usually transports the individual into a narrative. Hereby, the simulation seems real, and the consumers tend to get more involved. Mental simulation works through visual attention where the hypothetical scenarios lead to a perception of product trial providing experience value. Imagery processing helps to convince the consumers and increases satisfaction. Furthermore, studies show that it results in more holistic consumer judgments when mental simulations are evoked as narratives. Mental simulation transports individuals, which leads to more persuasive ad appeal compared to a more analytical consumer evaluation. This seems to be reinforced by the degree of contextual detail, but it has not been established unanimously whether self-referencing is a necessity in ads containing mental simulation. Additionally, mental simulation as a type of product trial results in a better product comprehension, especially for new and unconventional products. It creates consumer visions, which helps the consumer to develop preferences for the products. Based on these reflections on mental simulation as a promotion tool and its results, it is possible to state the following hypothesis:

***H2:*** *In case of mental simulation the positive effect of using motion pictures on the destination image (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component) will be stronger than in case of not using mental simulation.*

The hypotheses and relationships that are hypothesized in this thesis are illustrated in Figure 2.1:

Figure 2.1
*Hypotheses*



# 3. Case: 'Badehotellet'

In order to examine how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect destination image, the case of 'Badehotellet' is chosen. A brief summary of the series is presented followed by a section showing the series' contemporary relevance in a promoting aspect. The section ends with an explanation of why the specific case of 'Badehotellet' is chosen to answer the stated research question.

## 3.1 About 'Badehotellet'

'Badehotellet' is a Danish television drama series created by Stig Thorsboe and Hanna Lundblad, which premiered on the 30th of December 2013 on TV2 (VisitDenmark, 2015a). At the moment, the series counts for three seasons, while further three seasons are planned (TV2, 2014a).

Set by the North Sea, 'Badehotellet' depicts the everyday life at Andersens Badehotel, a small seaside hotel driven by Mr. and Mrs. Andersen, in the years of 1928-1933. The series centers on the chambermaid Fie, but follows the wealthy regulars from Copenhagen, the hotel's remaining service staff and their interrelationship and affairs as well.

The idea of the series taking place at a seaside hotel arose from the screenwriters' wish to make a Danish version of the classic British 'upstairs-downstairs'-series. In their research, the couple found an old article about the popular seaside hotels where fashionable guests from Copenhagen and North Zealand returned year after year to spend their vacation by the North Sea. Hereby the foundation for a story portraying the interplay between rich families and local servants was laid (TV2, 2014b).

In reality, the hotel does not exist. According to Michael Frandsen, the producer of 'Badehotellet', densely built cottage areas made it impossible to film on an existing seaside hotel, as the illusion of the 1920s would have been hard to create. Only Svinkløv Badehotel seemed suitable, but due to the hotel's popularity it was not possible to lend it for shooting. Therefore, all scenes including the hotel are shot in a studio in Albertslund, however, the bathing scenes are filmed on different beaches in Jammerbugten (VisitDenmark, 2015a).

The two first seasons have been met with brutal reactions from critics calling the series unambitious and boring in more than one aspect (Berlingske, 2015; Ekstra Bladet, 2015; Politiken, 2013). However, on average 1.5 million viewers followed the first season, making 'Badehotellet' TV2's most popular drama series since 'Strisser på Samsø' from the late 1990s (DR, 2014), while the second season was the third most watched TV program in 2015 (BT, 2016). Also in Sweden, the audience has received the show well with almost 1 million Swedes watching the opening episode on the 27th of Marts 2014 (TV2, 2014c).

## 3.2 Seaside hotels today

In Denmark, the first seaside hotels opened in the late 1800s. Soon, they became very popular and in the 1910s more than 100 seaside hotels were ready to welcome guests who wanted to spend their summer away from home. The guests came as individuals or in smaller groups and just like in the series they spent the days bathing, playing games and socializing with other lodgers. After World War II, however, many Danes longed to go abroad, and vacations at local seaside hotels were replaced by charter trips (Information, 2014).

Today, only about 40 seaside hotels remain, spread out over the country with a larger concentration in Northern Jutland and along the west coast. These hotels have become a time wrap where history almost has appeared to stand still and invite to a vacation with soul, charm and a relaxing atmosphere (VisitDenmark, 2015b). In an interview with Berlingske (2013), Maria Haugaard Christensen, international project chief in VisitDenmark, tells how a seaside hotel is the definition of the dream about the simple, comfortable and cultured vacation and how the popularity of seaside hotels has increased during the last 10 years resulting in fully booked hotels almost every season.

Thus, 'Badehotellet' has a high degree of contemporary relevance. Further, as previously mentioned Danish motion pictures have gained great international acknowledgement the last years. In Norway and Sweden, 'Badehotellet' has become a great success with hundred of thousands viewers. VisitDenmark has used this success in the promotion of Danish seaside hotels as well as experiences and vacation opportunities in Northern Jutland (VisitDenmark, 2014).

## 3.3 Choice of case: 'Badehotellet'

Certain destinations are likely to have a more powerful pull for movie tourism than others (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b). According to Riley & Van Doren (1992), the key for the ideal motion picture location to encourage movie tourists is a formula of *"…idyllic or extraordinary landscape qualities, a unique social and cultural vantage point, and/or an image that tourists identify with and wish to explore or rediscover."* (Riley & Van Doren, 1992: p. 274). In this thesis, the television series 'Badehotellet' is chosen to examine how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect the image of a destination in promotions because the cinematic narrative of the series seems to include all of the abovementioned qualities. Second, it has been suggested that a motion picture's setting, how long the setting is showed and when, and how explicit the setting is, also play a significant role in affecting viewers' perception of a potential destination (Cohen, 1986). Again, 'Badehotellet' appears suitable as the seaside hotel and its surroundings are important for telling the story. Third, when selecting a proper case for the study, motion pictures built over historical incidents were excluded right away. In these cases, tourists respond to the historical aspect rather than the scenery (Frost, 2006). Further, historical motion pictures are already known stories and tourists' knowledge and expectations may be affected from other sources such as books, plays, songs etc., which over time have created and maintained a certain interest (ibid.). The choice of a historical motion picture as a case is avoided to overcome these possible influencers. Last but not least, 'Badehotellet' is chosen due to its novelty. As the effect of motion pictures is central for this study, it seemed important that the chosen motion picture is still fresh in memory of the respondents tested, as the series is not shown to them beforehand.

# 4. Methodology

Before introducing the experiment, which is used to answer the research question, the methodology behind it has to be explained. First, the philosophy behind the thesis is clarified, including research strategy, ontological and epistemological assumptions as well as the chosen paradigm. Next, the theoretical and empirical foundations are outlined.

## 4.1 Philosophy of science

After having defined a research question, it is important to outline the process which is used to answer it. First of all, the type of question is essential in deciding how to provide the best answering strategy. Research can be divided into two categories: basic research and applied research. The first is about producing knowledge to understand theoretical issues and the second is about producing knowledge to be able to act on practical problems (Blaikie, 2010: p. 49). The most typical research questions for basic research are 'what' and 'why' questions, whereas the questions for applied research is usually 'how' questions. The research question for this thesis is a 'how' question, meaning that *"…a possible state of affairs has to be described and ideas about how to get there have to be provided."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 80). The answer to a 'how' question is generally built on other answers to 'what' and 'why' question, respectively, as it is complex and needs great knowledge about the context of the question (Blaikie, 2010: p. 105). In this thesis, the theory in the literature review composes several answers for underlying 'what' and 'why' questions. It is examined what an image is formed by as well as what kind of linguistic tool mental simulation is. Furthermore, it is established why motion pictures can affect a destination image. Based on this, it is now possible to examine which research strategy is used in the thesis.

### 4.1.1 Deductive research strategy

Blaikie states that *"A research strategy, or logic of enquiry, provides a starting-point and set of steps by means of which 'what' or 'why' questions can be answered."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 81). Regarding the answer for 'how' questions, several research strategies claim to be useful. However, as the research question for this thesis is about explaining and understanding relationships between two variables and a moderator, the deductive research strategy is most suitable. The main reason for this is that the strategy works to offer a theory which explains the relationship between two concepts, and to test it (Blaikie, 2010: p. 85). Furthermore,

research strategies differ in their starting points and steps of logic. Regarding the deductive strategy, the researcher starts by identifying a subject which needs to be explained. Next, a theory is constructed and hypotheses are stated. Finally, these hypotheses are tested using data (Blaikie, 2010: p. 84).

### 4.1.2 Realist ontology and epistemology of falsification

The different research strategies also differ in their ontological and epistemological assumptions. As explained by Blaikie, *"The ontological assumptions are concerned with the nature of social reality."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 92) and *"The epistemological assumptions are concerned with what kinds of knowledge are possible…"* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 92).

Concerning the ontological assumption, this thesis views reality to have an independent existence. This is the essential standpoint of the cautious realist ontology (Blaikie, 2010: p. 93). When studying the moderating effect of mental simulation on motion pictures' impact on destination image, a cautious and critical attitude is adopted to be able to analyze without the impact of the mind of the observer. Consequently, the overall reality is an independent observation of the relationship between the concepts. However, it is important to mention that the cautious realist ontology recognizes that observing is an interactive process (ibid.). Because the human senses are not perfect, reality cannot be observed directly or accurately. Hereby, it is necessary to be very critical and develop a testing process, which can falsify or confirm the relationship between the variables in the research question.

The thesis views theories and knowledge from the perspective of falsification. When knowledge is produced, falsification argues that it is tentative and open for revision (Blaikie, 2010: p. 94). When reality cannot be observed directly, trial and error processes determine knowledge and theory, which is done through tests using empirical data (ibid.). Regarding the research on mental simulation and motion pictures' impact on image, the theoretical literature review outlines the existing theory relevant for the thesis. However, it is realized that it is necessary to collect empirical data to be able to test the relationship between the variables. This is essential as the theories themselves are not a final description of reality but an uncertain understanding that needs to be confirmed or falsified.

Consequently, the present thesis is based on the deductive research strategy and the assumptions are grounded in the cautious realist ontology and the epistemology of falsification.

### 4.1.3 Paradigm of positivism

When conducting research, it is mostly conducted based on certain theoretical and methodological traditions and ideas. These traditions and ideas are referred to as research paradigms, which are developed over time to influence certain fields of knowledge (Blaikie, 2010: p. 97).

From the above, it is clear that this thesis views knowledge and reality as something independent of the observer, as trial and error processes will determine the process of knowledge generation. From this ontological assumption, positivism is a suitable research paradigm, as it perceives reality as something that needs to be derived from experience (Blaikie, 2010: p. 97). Generally, positivism *"...rejects all theoretical or metaphysical notions that are not derived from experience."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 98). This is in line with the purpose of this thesis, as it tries to confirm hypotheses based on theory using empirical data. Thereby, concrete experience and data are the main factors making it possible to conclude on the relationships between motion pictures, mental simulation and destination image.

Related to the choice of research paradigm are the reflections on what roles values play when conducting research. Axiology is the philosophical study of value, which refers to *"The role that your own values play in all stages of the research process..."* (Saunders et al., 2009: p. 116). It is of great importance to acknowledge whether the values play an essential role in the research process to be able to achieve credible results (ibid.). As mentioned, according to positivism, the knowledge and reality have an independent existence. Thereby, knowledge is value-free as it is achieved by demonstrating that regularities are incidents of more general rules. This is to provide explanations for relationships between the researched variables. In contrast to other research paradigms, positivists believe that values should be excluded from scientific research as it is not possible to test their validity using experience (Blaikie, 2010: p. 98). Here, it is important to acknowledge the importance of a critical and cautious testing process which can scientifically determine whether to confirm or falsify what is being stated in the hypotheses.

Thus, from the chosen research strategy as well as the ontological and epistemological assumptions in this thesis, positivism is the preferred research paradigm. Values are excluded from the creation of knowledge as reality exists independently of the individual.

## 4.2 Theoretical foundation

The research strategies do not only differ in ontological and epistemological assumptions and their use of research paradigms. They also vary in how they use concepts, theories and hypotheses (Blaikie, 2010: p. 82ff.). This can be referred to as the theoretical foundation of the thesis.

### 4.2.1 Use of concepts and theories

First, different research strategies prefer different ways of using concepts. According to Blaikie, a concept is *"…an idea that is expressed in words or as a symbol."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 111). Furthermore, they *"...form the language by means of which it deals with its sudjectmatter."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 111).). The operationalizing tradition has been shown to be most evident for the deductive research strategy (Blaikie, 2010: p. 123). This tradition works to turn concepts into variables by defining them and identifying ways to measure them (Blaikie, 2010: p. 115). The concepts, which are turned into variables, thereby become the building blocks for the theory. In this process, it is important to use a precise and consistent language to define the concepts. The language of conceptualization is used by scientists to *"…communicate their theoretical ideas and research findings…"* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 116). Regarding this thesis, the language of conceptualization is being used mainly in the literature review to outline the already existing theory on respectively motion pictures' effect on destination image and mental simulation as a moderator in promotions. Additionally, the language of operationalization *"…is used to transform theoretical language into empirical concepts."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 116). This language is used in the thesis when describing the experimental setting for testing the proposed hypotheses using empirical data.

Research strategies also vary in the way they use theories. As mentioned, the deductive strategy starts by constructing a theory based on an identification of a subject that needs examination. The theory from which hypotheses can be stated is therefore essential in the deductive research strategy (Blaikie, 2010: p. 69). The literature review in the thesis reflects the theory leading to the hypotheses. The review is traditional in the way it explores issues,

develops ideas and identifies the potential gaps. It compares and contrasts the different concepts identified by other authors and pinpoints the variables which build up the hypotheses. In this process, mostly researchers' theory is being used as it is theory explaining *"…regularities in social life at a level that is directly relevant to research."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 129). However, a small amount of theoreticians' theory might also be referenced even though it is not derived from social research.

### 4.2.2 Use of hypotheses

Hypotheses are mostly relevant for the deductive research strategy where they have an essential role. The hypotheses link the theory with the subsequent empirical testing by proposing explanation to be able to perform the tests. It is important to acknowledge whether research uses theoretical or statistical hypotheses (Blaikie, 2010: p. 147). The hypotheses for this thesis are statistical, which means that they *"…are used to establish whether a relationship between two variables that have been measured in a probability sample could be expected to exist in the population from which the sample was drawn."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 147). In the thesis, the hypotheses are used to propose whether there is a relationship between motion pictures and destination image and whether mental simulation moderates this.

Consequently, the operationalizing tradition is used to deal with the concepts in the thesis to be able to transform them into variables. Furthermore, as theory is essential, the thesis contains a traditional literature review, which will lead to the statistical hypotheses for empirical testing.

## 4.3 Empirical foundation

After having reviewed the role of concepts and theories as well as having stated the hypotheses for the thesis, the next step is to decide on the data most suitable for the research. That is the empirical foundation of the thesis.

### 4.3.1 Data characteristics and collection process

Regarding data, several options need to be considered. The options concern the types, sources and timing as well as the collection of the data (Blaikie, 2010: p. 23ff.).

First, the type and form of the data need to be discussed. The data used for testing the hypotheses are primary data collected via an electronic questionnaire. Primary data can be recognized by the fact that they are entirely generated by the researcher who is responsible for the whole data design. According to Blaikie, the advantage with primary data is that *"…as researchers have control over the production and analysis they are in a position to judge their quality."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 161). Thus, since the data in the thesis are primary, there is also more control regarding the quality of the data.

Next, data can have different forms: numbers or words. Even though the data for the present thesis are expressed in numbers, it can be argued that they are originally words in the questionnaire. However, *"…in quantitative studies, data normally begin in words, are transformed into numbers, are subjected to various kinds of statistical manipulation, and are reported in both numbers and words…"* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 162). This description covers the process of the thesis. Thereby, the data in the thesis are mainly in the form of numbers and can be characterized as quantitative.

Furthermore, it is relevant to consider the settings that the data come from. This can be referred to as the data sources. The setting of the data in this thesis can be described as an artificial setting where individuals are placed in an experimental and simulated condition to be able to measure the effect of specific variables on their attitudes towards a promotion (Blaikie, 2010: p. 167). The interest is on the individual characteristics and the reported behavior.

Finally, the choice of timing is also important when discussing data. The timing for this thesis is cross-sectional as it tries to capture an aspect of social life at a defined time with no regard to differences in time (Blaikie, 2010: p. 201).

The above is a description of the characteristics of the data for this thesis. The following is an outline of how the data are collected.

Besides, the term quantitative being a type of data, the term may also describe a research method implying the techniques used for data collection. One of the most commonly used quantitative research methods is questionnaires (Blaikie, 2010: p. 205). According to Blaikie *"Questionnaires have to be prepared in such a way that respondents can complete them without any assistance other than built-in and/or separate written instructions."* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 205). This thesis builds on a questionnaire, which is self-administered, making it reasonable to argue that the research method for data collection is quantitative.

As such, it can be concluded that the data for the thesis are primary data, mainly in the form of numbers whereby it can be characterized as quantitative. The source of the data is artificial and the timing is cross-sectional. The method used for data collection is also quantitative in the form of a self-administered questionnaire.

### 4.3.2 Statistical analysis

In order to answer the research question, the next step is to analyze the collected data. The data analysis of this thesis will mainly be a statistical analysis, making it quantitative (Blaikie, 2010: p. 208). According to Blaikie, *"Techniques of quantitative analysis are well developed and very diverse".* (Blaikie, 2010: p. 208).

Regarding quantitative analysis, four categories can be identified (Blaikie, 2010: p. 209). The first category is the univariate descriptive method. This method will be used to describe the distributions of the sample and sum up the collected data.

Furthermore, inferential statistics is used to detect whether the potential relationships between variables in the sample can be expected, not only in the sample itself, but also in the population in general.

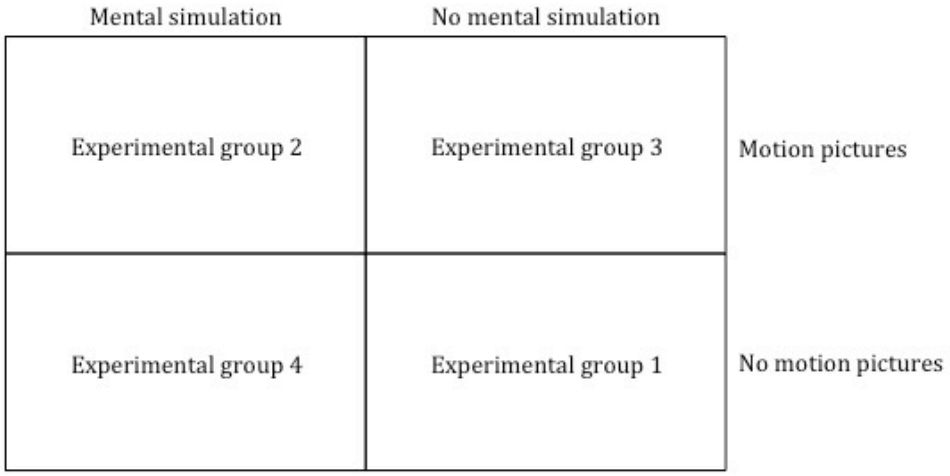
Finally, regression analysis is conducted to confirm or falsify whether the use of motion pictures in promotions has an effect on destination image. This can be characterized as a bivariate descriptive and an explanatory method, respectively. However, what is essential is that it works to identify the influence of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable. These methods are also used to analyze the moderating effect of mental simulation.

Consequently, the statistical analysis in the thesis is a mix of univariate and bivariate descriptive statistics as well as explanatory and inferential statistics.

# 5. Experiment

In order to examine how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect the image of a destination in promotions, a 2 x 2 between-subjects experimental design is used. Two levels of mental simulation, within the text of a print ad for staying at a seaside hotel by the North Sea, are manipulated (simulation encouraged versus simulation not encouraged). Further, the text of the ad plays on references to the television series 'Badehotellet' (references present versus references not present). For an illustration of the experimental design, see Figure 5.1. Data are collected via an electronic questionnaire and are subsequently analyzed and interpreted with analytic software.

Figure 5.1
*Experimental design*




A brief summary for the experiment has been outlined, however, the following sections give an extensive elaboration on the different parts of the experiment and the thoughts behind. First, it is argued why a questionnaire is chosen for collecting the necessary data, and some of the considerations behind the practical design of it are presented. Second, the sampling technique for collecting respondents is introduced along with a discussion of a proper sample size for the experiment. Third, the stimuli are described followed by an outline for the practical approach and a presentation of the questions of the questionnaire, including manipulation check, variables and covariates. Last, possible sources of error and problems with the chosen method are outlined.

## 5.1 Questionnaire

For collecting data regarding the experiment, an electronic questionnaire is chosen. This section argues why this method is preferred for data collection and some of the thoughts behind. Further, the design of the questionnaire is presented and discussed.

### 5.1.1 Choice of electronic questionnaire as data collection method

As mentioned in the methodology section, questionnaires are a very commonly used method within quantitative research, and they are also the chosen strategy for collecting data for this thesis. The use of questionnaires are chosen due to the fact that questionnaires are simple to administer, the obtained data are more consistent since the responses are limited to stated alternatives, and because coding, analysis and interpretation are relatively easy (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 266). At the same time, however, questionnaires also come with a number of drawbacks. First, respondents may be unable or unwilling to answer the stated questions, either because the respondent may not be aware of his or her motive for choosing e.g. a specific brand or because the questions seem too sensitive or personal. Second, closed questions, where respondents have to choose among predefined answers, may cause loss of validity for types of data as e.g. beliefs and feelings. Last is the problem of wording questions properly. This may constitute an entire chapter for itself, but in short it deals with defining the issues, the use of words, leading or biasing questions, implicit alternatives and assumptions, generalizations and the use of positive and negative statements (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 266ff.).

With the above in mind, data from questionnaires may be collected in several ways. These include telephone interviews, personal interviews, mail interviews and electronic interviews (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 276). For this thesis, an electronic questionnaire, where the survey is emailed to respondents, is used. Electronic questionnaires have the advantage that they are cheap since there is no cost to printing, stationery or mail delivery – neither for the researcher when the questionnaires are sent to respondents nor for the respondents when the replies must be returned. Further, electronic questionnaires are a relatively fast way to distribute, because respondents have immediate access to the questionnaire in the same way as the answers will be available to the researcher, as soon as the respondents have answered the questions online. Last, interviewer bias is removed since all respondents are asked the

same questions in the same way (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 274; Andersen, 2010: p. 182). Nevertheless, there are also a number of disadvantages of the choice of electronic questionnaires as the data collection method and the way the entire experiment is handled. These are described and discussed in section 5.8. However, the advantages seem to make up for the disadvantages, which in the end results in the choice of an electronic questionnaire.

As the combined effect of motion pictures and mental simulation has not previously been investigated, the questionnaire used for the experiment is developed specifically for this thesis. This fact results in a risk for lower validity and reliability compared to questionnaires used and improved by several researchers through time. However, the issue is tried coped with by using elements of different previously used questionnaires within the areas, combining them to a new questionnaire.

### 5.1.2 Questionnaire design

Overall, the questionnaire is divided into four parts. As such, the first part comprises the ad and the second part contains manipulation check-questions regarding the degree of transportation. The third part includes a number of variables indicating destination image and the fourth part ten covariates, which may or may not have an effect. All four parts are further elaborated in later sections of the thesis.

The concepts used in the model may at times be diffuse and therefore it can be difficult to find one specific question to identify the individual concepts in a proper way. Concepts which cannot be measured directly are called latent variables. In such cases, one often takes a detour, in that more questions, which have assumed high correlation with the investigated subject, are asked to cover a single concept (Andersen, 2010: p. 80). Such an approach is used for the present experiment as more than one question is used to cover the different components of image.

Beside the overall construct of the questionnaire, rating scales and categories must be considered as well. With the exception of a single question (age), all questions in the questionnaire's part 2-4 are stated as closed questions, thus making the answers easier to encode and apply for different statistics (Blaikie, 2010: p. 208). For questions in the questionnaire's part 2 and 3 as well as some questions in part 4, a Likert scale ranging from 1

to 7 is used. A Likert scale is a rating scale where respondents are asked to *"…indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement with each of a series of statements about the stimulus objects."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 348), most often ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. According to Malhotra & Birks, each scale typically has five response options, however, there is no single optimal number (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 348ff.). Taking a look into similar studies, Escalas (2004) uses a scale ranging from 1 to 100, Green & Brock (2000) a scale ranging from 0 to 60, Baloglu & McCleary (1999) a scale ranging from 1 to 5 and Russel & Pratt (1980) a scale ranging from 1 to 8. For this experiment, a number of seven response options is chosen because it allows greater differentiating without being too complex for respondents. As Likert scales by definition are closed questions, they are, as mentioned above, very useful within applied statistics. Further, they are easy to construct and administer, making them suitable for, among others, Internet surveys, since they are easy to understand for respondents. However, they have to read and reflect upon each statement, making the completion time longer (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 349f.). Using Likert scales, one must further decide whether each category must have a label, whether only some categories must have a label or whether it is only the extreme scale categories, which should be labeled. Since labeling each category may not improve the accuracy or reliability of the data (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 353), only extreme scale categories are labeled verbally.

Evidence indicates that respondents are affected by the directionality of questions asked, that is whether they are stated positively or negatively (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 387). Therefore, it is suggested that questionnaires use dual statements, so that some questions are positive and others negative to avoid pushing respondents in a certain direction (ibid.). However, only positive statements are asked in the questionnaire used for this experiment. This is the result of the following two arguments: First, the direction of the questions is streamlined to ease the process for respondents as well as ensure the most correct answers. It is not unlikely that respondents would catch the idea of the Likert scale and its extremes after a few questions and thereafter only read the questions, not the description of 1 and 7. Thus, if negative questions would have been a part of the questionnaire, respondents may have answered opposite of their true opinion. Second, the questions are adopted from other studies, and the direction of these questions are retained in their original form.

Last, when developing a questionnaire, forced versus non-forced choice should also be considered, that is whether or not a 'no opinion' category should be included. (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 535). The advantage of omitting this type of response category is that it forces the respondent to take a stand while facilitating the subsequent data work because the researchers are met with no responses full of "holes". In such cases, however, respondents with no opinion on the subject may mark a question randomly, often in the middle scale. This will distort measures of variance and central tendency (ibid.). Thus, developing a questionnaire, it should be considered whether or not respondents are able to answer the questions. This is considered possible for the present questionnaire, and thus 'no opinion' response categories are not included. A neutral middle scale is included with the awareness of the problems this may imply. The neutral middle scale is included since it is believed that respondents would not necessarily have either a positive or a negative opinion of the different statements. Technically, the questionnaire is constructed in a way which requires the respondents to answers all questions. This might irritate some respondents, and some may end the questionnaire halfway. Nevertheless, it will probably also result in more complete replies in the end, which is the initial idea behind forcing respondents to answer all questions.

The above discussion shows that many considerations have to be made when a questionnaire is to be developed: Is one question enough to cover a single concept or should more questions be used? Should questions be open or closed? How many response categories are necessary and should all or just some of them be labeled? Should questions be stated in the same direction or is a mix of positive and negative questions preferred, and should respondents be forced to answer all questions or not? To sum up, the questionnaire developed for the experiment only uses closed questions to ease the subsequent data work. Questions are asked using Likert scales ranging from 1 to 7, where only extremes are labeled. With a few exceptions due to the questions' original form, all questions are stated positively and respondents are forced to answer the entire questionnaire. This construct definitely has some drawbacks, however, these have been hold against the advantages, resulting in this final construct.

## 5.2 Respondents

For the present experiment, respondents are selected via snowballing. Snowballing is a non-probability sampling technique *"...in which an initial group of respondents is selected randomly."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 414). Afterwards, respondents are asked to identify other possible respondents, which again are asked to identify other possible respondents and so on. Thus, this process may be carried out in waves, leading to a snowballing effect (ibid.).

As any other sampling technique, snowballing comes with a number of advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, snowballing is found to be a relatively cheap and efficient sampling method since the work of recruiting lies with the initial group of respondents and not the researcher (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 414; Kendall et al., 2008). In addition, one of the major advantages of snowballing arises as the method is very useful when it comes to rare or hidden populations, let it be specific groups such as *"...widowed males under 35..."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 414) or when information is of a very sensitive character as for example sexualities (Browne, 2005). These groups may normally be very difficult to locate by chance, but since respondents are recruited by people in a similar situation, the likelihood of detecting proper respondents increases. However, in the case of the present thesis snowballing is solely chosen to obtain a sufficiently large sample. On the negative side, snowballing is accused of resulting in sampling bias. Sampling bias arises because *"...the composition of the sample is dependent upon the choice of seeds (initial recruits) and short recruitment chains (the recruits of seeds)."* (Kendall et al., 2008: p. 98). Thus, referrals will often share similar traits and characteristics with the person referring them (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 414), resulting in a non-representative sample for the true population. Depending on the aim of a given experiment, however, this may either be an advantage or a disadvantage. Even though it is not the initial intention, snowballing may show to be beneficial for the present experiment. As such the aim of this experiment is to compare four groups manipulated by different ads. The four groups may not be representative for the entire population, but snowballing may increase the possibility that the groups are significantly similar by demographics leading to a better motive for holding them against each other. Whether this is the case is discovered in the result section.

Compared to probability sampling, where determination of the sample result precision is possible due to the fact that respondents are selected by chance, non-probability sampling

does not allow for this precision (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 410f.). Because the true distribution of the population and the sample are not known beforehand, statistical determination of the sample size and its representativeness is not possible. However, several guidelines on the subject exist. According to Hair et al. (1992) a number between 200 and 400 respondents is normally accepted for multiple regression and path analysis, even though larger sample sizes are preferred. This declaration is further supported by Tabachnick & Fidell (1996), who give 300 respondents as a rule of thumb for factor analysis, and again by Comrey & Lee (1992), who give the following indication of sample sizes: *"50 as very poor; 100 as poor, 200 as fair, 300 as good, 500 as very good and 1000 as excellent."* (Van Voorhis & Morgan, 2007: p. 49). Further, it is argued that when the aim is to measure group differences, a number of 30 respondents should be distributed to each of the groups (Van Voorhis & Morgan, 2007). This should lead to about 80 % power, the minimum suggested power for an ordinary study (Cohen, 1988). Last, sample sizes from similar studies (topic or method) should also be taken into consideration (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 409). Thus, using a 2 x 2 between subjects design, Ecalas examines *"…the cognitive and affective mechanisms that mediate the effects of mental simulation on persuasion, based on transportation theory."* (Escalas, 2004: p. 38). For that she uses a total of 168 respondents. Likewise, Babin & Burns (1997) use 186 respondents for their 3 x 2 between subjects design studying *"…the mediating, or explanatory, role of evoked imagery in attitudinal responses."* (Babin & Burns, 1997: p. 34). Based on the construct of the present experiment, the aim of this thesis and the abovementioned guidelines, a minimum of 200 completed replies, distributed equally among the four ads, is chosen as the target sample size. As the chosen case for the experiment, 'Badehotellet', is a Danish television series, the questionnaire was only sent initially to Danes or Danish-speaking people.

## 5.3 Stimuli

As part of the experiment, respondents are exposed to one out of four stimulus ads before answering the survey. All stimulus ads consist of a short, framed text (8-11 lines). Colors are held in black and white, and no picture or brand name/brand logo is shown in order to ensure that respondents are not affected by anything but the content of the text. The text of the ad either contains references to the television series 'Badehotellet' (references present or not present) or encourages respondents to imagine themselves staying at a seaside hotel by the

North Sea (simulation encouraged or not encouraged). In all four ad versions, the same attributes describing a stay at a seaside hotel are mentioned. The respective ads can be found in Appendix A.1 (Danish) and Appendix A.2 (English), respectively.

## 5.4 Experimental procedure

The general purpose of the experiment is to examine how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect the image of a destination, and is based on responses collected by a self-administered survey emailed to the respondents. Respondents complete the survey by clicking on the link sent to them. In that way respondents can answer the survey when convenient (within the duration of the experiment). When clicking on the link, respondents are presented with a short study introduction. Here, they are not told the exact purpose of the experiment, but that the aim of the survey is to investigate the attractiveness of destinations in Denmark. Following the introduction, respondents are shown one of four different ad texts, manipulating mental simulation and motion pictures. As SurveyXact, the program used to design the survey, does not by itself allow random allocation of the four ads across respondents, the ads are assigned according to the respondents' birth dates. Birth dates are chosen to be the allocating factor as statistics show birth dates to be almost evenly distributed across one month compared to e.g. birth months across one year, which show greater fluctuations (Statistikbanken, 2015). As such respondents born between the 1st and the 7th in a month are assigned Ad 1, respondents born between the 8th and the 15th are assigned Ad 2, respondents born between the 16th and the 23rd are assigned Ad 3 and respondents born between the 24th and the 31st are assigned Ad 4. After reading the ad, respondents are asked to answer a series of scale questions. These questions include the experiment's manipulation checks, variables and potential covariates including demographic information. The entire experiment takes about five minutes to complete.

The experiment was conducted during the fall of 2015. In order to ensure enough respondents, the collection of data was originally intended to happen over two rounds, a method proposed by Dillman (1978). The survey was first emailed in the period between the 1st and 6th of September 2015, and was sent to an initial group of 52 people asking them to answer the questions and hereafter forward the email containing the link to the survey to friends, family and colleagues. Participating in the survey was voluntary and respondents

were not compensated in any way. About three weeks later a total of 164 surveys had been completed with 38, 46, 46 and 34 respondents, respectively, spread over the four ads. Additionally, 31 respondents had given 'some answers'. As the target of at least 50 completed replies in each group had not been reached, the second round was put in motion. This time the survey was emailed to a group of 34 people, again asking them to answer the questions and then forward the email. After another three weeks, a total of 215 surveys, spread over the four ads with 50, 60, 54 and 51 respondents, respectively, had been completed. As the target had now been reached, the survey was closed for further replies on the 7th of October. At that time, the survey had been open for replies for 37 days. Besides 215 complete answers, a total of 42 respondents had given 'some answers'. Of these, five respondents had answered all questions regarding mental simulation and destination image, and were thus considered sufficiently adequate to be retained and used in relevant analyses. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 and IBM SPSS AMOS.

## 5.5 Manipulation check

After having read the assigned ad, respondents are asked how transported they felt when reading the ad (*"While reading the ad, I could easily picture the events in it taking place"* and *"While reading the ad, I pictured myself being at a seaside hotel by the North Sea"*). Both questions are measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7, anchored by to a very low/very high degree, and are adopted by Green & Brock (2000). The questions are posted to check for the mental simulation manipulation.

## 5.6 Variables

As previously mentioned, place image consists of four components, the cognitive, the affective, the evaluative and the behavioral component, and these lay the foundation for the ensuing survey. First, respondents are asked to indicate how attractive they find the described type of vacation in the ad, on a 1 to 7 Likert scale, anchored by not at all/very attractive. This question is posted to get an overall idea about the attractiveness of a stay by the North Sea among respondents. Hence, it can be argued that this question may refer to the evaluative component. The ad texts encourage the respondents to imagine a future event, not to base their evaluation on previous experiences. As the evaluative component measures attractiveness using perceived trip quality and respondents' satisfaction level, discussed in

theory section, it is to some extent not possible to measure this component in this thesis. Consequently, a question regarding overall attractiveness is the only possible indicator of the evaluative component, which results in an overlap with the measure of overall image, cf. the previously stated definition of image. Thus, for this experiment, the question regarding the attractiveness is used to give an indication of respondents' overall destination image.

Next, the remaining image components are measured. In order to measure the cognitive component, a selection of the scale items developed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) are used. The respondents are asked to indicate how accurately the following words characterize their view of a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea, on a 1 to 7 Likert scale, anchored by extremely inaccurate/extremely accurate: beautiful scenery, interesting cultural/historical attractions, unspoiled environment, friendly local people, appealing local food and great beaches. These scale items are chosen based on their relevance in reference to a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea and within each of the three factors: quality of experience, attractions and value/environment. Third, the affective component is measured using the eight unipolar scales identified by Russel & Pratt (1980): arousing, sleepy, pleasant, unpleasant, exciting, gloomy, relaxing and distressing. Again, respondents are asked to indicate how accurately each word describes their view of a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea, on a 1 to 7 Likert scale, anchored by extremely inaccurate/extremely accurate. Actually, the eight unipolar scales fall on four bipolar dimensions with each pair of scales *"…measuring opposite ends of the same continuum: arousing is opposite sleepy, exciting is opposite gloomy, pleasant is opposite unpleasant, and distressing is opposite relaxing."* (Russel & Pratt, 1980: 317), but are kept as eight scales in order to be enable comparison with the other questions. Last, also the behavioral component is measured. This is done asking three separate questions adapted from Escalas (2004), all on a 1 to 7 Likert scale. The first question asks respondents how likely it is that they would consider seeking more information about a potential stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea, anchored by not very likely/very likely. The second question asks to what extent they see themselves taking a shorter or longer stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea if price and travel time is ignored, anchored by to a very low extent/to a very high extent. Finally, the third question asks whether the respondent, based on the ad, would recommend the described type of vacation to others. This last question is again answered on a 1 to 7 Likert scale, anchored by not very likely/very likely.

## 5.7 Covariates

Finally, the survey contains a number of questions concerning potential covariates. Some of these include attitude towards the ad, how many times the respondent has been on vacation by the North Sea within the last five years and to what extent the described type of vacation fits the respondent's identity (adopted from Graeff, 1996). Furthermore, familiarity with the television series 'Badehotellet' is measured as well as how fond of the series the respondent is (this question only appears if the respondent has answered 2 or higher on the 1 to 7 Likert scale, regarding familiarity). Last, demographic information (age, gender, abode, education level and number of children under the age of 18 living at home) is collected. The covariates are included to ascertain whether potential differences in attitudes among the four groups can be explained by other factors than the different manipulations. Demographic questions are placed in the last part of the survey, cf. Malhotra & Birks, who argue that *"…issues like age, gender and income can be seen as sensitive issues."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 388), and thus may create concern with the respondents about the true purpose of the survey.

The complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.1 (Danish) and Appendix B.2 (English), respectively.

## 5.8 Sources of error and problems with the chosen method

As previously mentioned, the choice of an electronic questionnaire comes with a number of disadvantages. These are discussed below together with other challenges of the experimental design.

According to Malhotra & Birks the disadvantages of electronic questionnaires, in the form of Internet or web surveys, relate to the following three issues: sampling frames, access to the web and technical problems (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 275). In the case of sampling frames, the problem lays, according to the authors, with the currency and accuracy of email addresses. Nonetheless, respondents of the present experiment are collected based on personal network, and the issue of incorrect email addresses seems trivial. Further, the issue of sampling frames also relates to the problem of self-completion as researches have no control over who takes part in the survey and it may result in problems with representativeness. The issue of a non-representative sample has been discussed above in connection with snowballing, and thus it will be acknowledged, but not further discussed in this section. The next disadvantage that

Malhotra & Birks discuss is that of access to the web. They argue that the adoption of the Internet is a growing phenomenon, but also stress that many types of respondents do not have access to the Web. This, however, is not considered an issue for the present experiment. Last, electronic questionnaires may endure from technical problems in that the questionnaire may or may not work as intended. Technical problems may arise more or less out of the blue. To minimize this risk, the questionnaire was tested several times before sending it to the initial group of respondents.

The respondents for the experiment were found using snowballing as the sampling method and the distribution of the link for collecting respondents were based on personal network. Thus, the respondents are limited to primary acquaintances and the individuals, which have been forwarded the email from the primary acquaintances.

The previous two paragraphs have outlined some problems regarding the data collection method in general. However, sources of error may also arise from the design of the questionnaire itself, not only from the distribution. These issues are considered in the following. First, the questionnaire is designed by using previously stated questions within similar research studies. These are all in English, but since this thesis only addresses attitudes among potential Danish tourist in Denmark, the questions have to be translated into Danish. This may give some comprehensive differences compared to the original version. E.g. investigating the affective component, the word 'arousing' is translated into the Danish word 'pirrende', which might have a sexual undertone to some people. Thus, this issue should be in mind when analyzing the data. Second, it must be taken into account that not all respondents understand or use the Likert scales in the same way. The definition of the value 5 on a scale from 1 to 7 may differ from respondent to respondent. Therefore, it should be considered that the answers are the respondents' subjective evaluation. This will, however, always be the case within questionnaires like the one used for the present thesis. A third issue to consider is that respondents may realize from the beginning that they are manipulated, as they are told they have to choose their birth date to be assigned an ad. This may result in respondents seeing through the real purpose of the study and thus answering differently than they would have done otherwise. However, a spot check afterwards showed that only few respondents have had this thought. Asking for peoples' birth date may be seen as a sensitive question, and an explanation for asking this question is decided to overcome this issue. Respondents'

knowledge that they are manipulated is not considered a huge problem, but should be taken into account.

Last, also the issue of anonymity should be touched. In surveys on e.g. satisfaction on the job, people may be skeptical even though full anonymity has been promised. Therefore, they might answer more positively than actual reality, resulting in lack of validity. However, this is not believed to be the case for this study, since it is stressed in the beginning of the questionnaire that the answers are only used for scientific reasons and not used commercially. Further, the questions are not of a very sensitive character as in the case of job satisfaction.

In this section, possible sources of error and problems with the chosen method have been outlined. As it has been argued though the section, these issues do not necessarily cause huge problems, but should be kept in mind when analyzing the collected data, knowing they may have affected the result to some extent.

# 6. Data analysis

Before either accepting or rejecting the stated hypotheses it is important to present and validate the collected data in order to ensure accept of the later found results. This section leads off with a presentation of the collected data and follows with a comparison of the four experimental groups based on demographics. Hereafter, the validity and reliability of the model construct are assessed by means of factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, Average Variance Extracted and correlations. Last, the image model is tested using regression analysis.

All data are assumed normally distributed, cf. the central limit theorem, which states that *"...as samples get large (usually defined as greater than 30), the sampling distribution has a normal distribution..."* (Field, 2013: p. 54).

## 6.1 Presentation of data

In order to obtain the best overview of the collected data, descriptive statistics are presented for each of the four experimental groups, that is Experimental group 1 has no mental simulation and no motion picture in the ad, Experimental group 2 has both mental simulation and motion picture in the ad, Experimental group 3 has no mental simulation but motion picture in the ad and last Experimental group 4 has mental simulation but no motion picture in the ad. Table 6.1 depicts demographic statistics for each experimental group. This is done to get an overall picture of the four groups.

Regarding age, Table 6.1 shows that the greatest share of respondents is located in the 20-29 age bracket. This is the case across all four experimental groups and may be due to the fact that the survey was sent to an initial group based on personal network with many in their 20s. The second largest share of respondents is found in the age groups of 50-59 years, older than 69 years and 40-49 years, respectively, and thus differs across the groups. All groups, however, have their smallest share of respondents in the age group younger than 20 years[2]. Ultimately, the average age is almost equal in all groups with the exception of Experimental group 4, which shows a relatively lower average than the other three groups. This may be explained by a relatively large share of young people under the age of 29 as well as by the fact that less than one third is over the age of 49. Nevertheless, it may still be argued that the four

[2] In Experimental group 1, the share of respondents under the age of 20 and between 30-39 is equally sized.

averages are almost equal. Considering gender, the dispersion between men and women is clear across all four groups in the favor of women. Why this disparity exists cannot immediately be explained other than with the fact that women normally are more willing to participate in surveys than men (Breivik et al., 2006). Remaining is region of living, education level and number of children under the age of 18 years living at home. Table 6.1 shows that the majority of respondents are resident in either the Capital Region of Denmark or the Central Denmark Region. Like in the case of age, this may be explained by the choice of personal network for distribution. Only a few respondents are resident in the North Denmark Region, the setting of 'Badehotellet'. Concerning education, most respondents have a medium higher education or a long higher education. Only five respondents have an education level no higher than primary school. This goes well in hand with the fact that only few respondents have not yet turned 20. Last, the table shows a tendency for most respondents not to have any children under the age of 18 years living at home. This is in line with the age distribution, where the majority are young respondents, less likely to have children, or elderly respondents, less likely to have children under the age of 18.

The section above has outlined the collected data, trying to give a broad picture of the sample. A complete overview of the descriptive statistics is found in Table 6.1. Whereas demographics initially seem very similar across several of the experimental groups, differences still exist. In order to ensure whether or not these differences are significant, statistic tests should be conducted. Such tests are presented in the next section.

Table 6.1

*Descriptive statistics. Presentation of data based on experimental groups*

| | Experimental group 1 | | Experimental group 2 | | Experimental group 3 | | Experimental group 4 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Age (years) | | | | | | | | |
| <20 | 3 | 6.0 | 0 | .0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.0 |
| 20-29 | 15 | 30.0 | 18 | 30.0 | 17 | 31.5 | 19 | 37.3 |
| 30-39 | 3 | 6.0 | 8 | 13.3 | 8 | 14.8 | 7 | 13.7 |
| 40-49 | 5 | 10.0 | 10 | 16.7 | 5 | 9.3 | 10 | 19.6 |
| 50-59 | 12 | 24.0 | 13 | 21.7 | 8 | 14.8 | 5 | 9.8 |
| 60-69 | 5 | 10.0 | 6 | 10.0 | 7 | 13.0 | 4 | 7.8 |
| >69 | 7 | 14.0 | 5 | 8.3 | 9 | 16.7 | 5 | 9.8 |
| | Experimental group 1 | | Experimental group 2 | | Experimental group 3 | | Experimental group 4 | |
| Age (years) | | | | | | | | |
| Average | | 46.3 | | 45.4 | | 46.4 | | 41.8 |
| Minimum | | 15 | | 21 | | 21 | | 18 |
| Maximum | | 83 | | 87 | | 79 | | 81 |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 16 | 32.0 | 21 | 35.0 | 23 | 42.6 | 23 | 45.1 |
| Female | 34 | 68.0 | 39 | 65.0 | 31 | 57.4 | 28 | 54.9 |
| Region | | | | | | | | |
| Capital | 18 | 36.0 | 24 | 40.0 | 17 | 31.5 | 30 | 58.8 |
| Zealand | 7 | 14.0 | 6 | 10.0 | 7 | 13.0 | 3 | 5.9 |
| Southern Denmark | 1 | 2.0 | 1 | 1.7 | 5 | 9.3 | 2 | 3.9 |
| Central Denmark | 22 | 44.0 | 28 | 46.7 | 24 | 44.4 | 16 | 31.4 |
| North Denmark | 2 | 4.0 | 1 | 1.7 | 1 | 1.9 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Education | | | | | | | | |
| Primary school | 2 | 4.0 | 1 | 1.7 | 1 | 1.9 | 1 | 2.0 |
| Skilled worker | 3 | 6.0 | 2 | 3.3 | 4 | 7.4 | 4 | 7.8 |
| Gymnasium | 4 | 8.0 | 2 | 3.3 | 7 | 13.0 | 5 | 9.8 |
| Short higher educ. | 7 | 14.0 | 13 | 21.7 | 7 | 13.0 | 5 | 9.8 |
| Medium higher educ. | 15 | 30.0 | 19 | 31.7 | 20 | 37.0 | 15 | 29.4 |
| Long higher educ. | 19 | 38.0 | 23 | 38.3 | 15 | 27.8 | 21 | 41.2 |
| Children (living at home) | | | | | | | | |
| None < 18 years | 40 | 80.0 | 42 | 70.0 | 40 | 74.0 | 37 | 72.5 |
| 1-2 children < 18 years | 8 | 16.0 | 17 | 28.3 | 11 | 20.4 | 13 | 25.5 |
| 3-4 children < 18 years | 2 | 4.0 | 1 | 1.7 | 2 | 3.7 | 1 | 2.0 |
| 5 or more < 18 years | 0 | .0 | 0 | .0 | 1 | 1.9 | 0 | .0 |

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 % due to rounding

## 6.2 Comparison of experimental groups

As the aim of this thesis is to investigate whether there is a difference in perceived destination image across the sample depending on the presence of mental simulation in an ad text, it is important to establish whether this possible difference may instead be due to measurable distinctions between the examined groups.

In Table 6.2 and 6.3, a comparison is made between the four experimental groups. The four groups are compared based on age, gender, region of living, education level and number of children under the age of 18 living at home. Contrary to the data presentation above, age is in this case not classified into intervals, and thus it is a continuous variable. As a continuous variable, comparison between the four groups is conducted using ANOVA, which compares the ratio of systematic variance to unsystematic variance in experiments (Field, 2013: p. 430). The significance level is found to be .546, indicating that there is no significant difference between the four groups according to age. Results of the ANOVA are presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2
*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Comparing groups - Age*

| | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between groups | 715.360 | 3 | 238.453 | .712 | .546 |
| Within groups | 70,707.412 | 211 | 335.106 | | |
| Total | 71,422.772 | 214 | | | |

The remaining variables are all categorical, and thus comparison is conducted using Chi-square tests. Table 6.3 shows that three of the variables (region, education and children) violate the assumption of 'minimum expected cell frequency', which should be 5 or greater (Pallant, 2010: 219). In these situations, the likelihood ratio should be considered instead of the Pearson Chi-square. Only the variable of gender observes the assumption. Thus, the significance levels to be considered are .472, .179, .779 and .723, respectively. As with the case of age, none of these results are significant. This means that the proportion of men and women and the dispersion of respondents' region of living, education level and number of children are not significantly different across the four groups.

Table 6.3
*Chi-square. Comparing groups – Gender, region, education and number of children*

| | Value | df | p (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | |
| Pearson Chi-square | 2.519* | 3 | .472 |
| Likelihood ratio | 2.526 | 3 | .471 |
| Region | | | |
| Pearson Chi-square | 16.118** | 12 | .186 |
| Likelihood ratio | 16.276 | 12 | .179 |
| Education | | | |
| Pearson Chi-square | 10.296*** | 15 | .801 |
| Likelihood ratio | 10.617 | 15 | .779 |
| Children | | | |
| Pearson Chi-square | 6.312**** | 9 | .708 |
| Likelihood ratio | 6.164 | 9 | .723 |

* 0 cells (0.0 %) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 19.30
** 8 cells (40.0 %) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93
*** 11 cells (45,8 %) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.16
**** 8 cells (50.0 %) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .23

The tests above are all shown to be insignificant, and thus it can be concluded that no differences exist across the four experimental groups. Even though differences appear in Table 6.1, they are not found to be significant. This conclusion may discard the concern of other measurable distinctions having affected the possible difference in perceived destination image between the examined experimental groups. This provides a good breeding ground for further analysis. Of course other factors may have an influence on the outcome, but since it is never possible to allow for all possible influencers, age, gender, region of living, education level and number of children are selected, as they are common covariates in research studies (Frone et al., 1996; Gupta et al., 2011). Thus, for the present experiment they are assumed to be the only factors, which may affect the results.

## 6.3 Validity and reliability of the model constructs

In order to ensure accept of the later found results and the final conclusion of this experiment, high validity and reliability of the questions and constructs, which the model builds on, are important. Whereas reliability concerns *"The extent to which a measurement reproduces consistent results if the process of measurement were to be repeated"* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 159), validity refers to *"The extent to which a measurement represents characteristics that exists in the phenomenon under investigation"* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 159). In other words, a measurement scale is considered valid if the differences in the observed scale scores

correspond accurately to the true differences among objects being measured and not exist due to systematic or random error (ibid.). If data are valid, it is also reliable, however, the opposite is not automatically true. If data are reliable, it may or may not be valid and thus *"Reliability is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for validity"* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 359).

The reliability of the individual questions within the three components is initially assessed by their respective factor loadings. Next, convergent and discriminant validity of the components are measured and interpreted looking at Cronbach's alpha, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and the square root of AVE, respectively. Also, a correlation matrix including the latent variables is used to conclude on the model construct.

As mentioned above, the reliability of the individual questions within the three components is assessed by their respective factor loadings; that are simple correlations between the latent variable and the underlying questions (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 648). These factor loadings are calculated using AMOS, an add-on module for IBM SPSS used for covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). CB-SEM seeks to minimize the difference between the observed and the estimated covariance matrix (Afthanorhan, 2013). Alternatively, the program called SmartPLS could have been used. As the name implies, SmartPLS uses partial least square as the estimating technique. PLS-SEM tries to maximize the variance explained in the endogenous constructs (the dependent variables) or alternatively minimize the error (ibid.). Further, the method requires fewer assumptions about the data distribution compared to CB-SEM and allows for a small number of observations (ibid.; Hulland, 1999). Thus, PLS-SEM is commonly used. Nevertheless, AMOS is the preferred program for this experiment, since the application of CB-SEM is suggested appropriate *"If the research objective is theory testing and confirmation…"* (Hair et al., 2011: p. 140). This is argued the main objective for the present thesis. Further, it is suggested that a sample size over 200 observations is large enough for CB-SEM to be operative.

According to Afthanorhan (2013), factor loadings below .50 for new developed scales and .60 for already established scales, respectively, should be deleted. However, Simms et al. (2002) indicate that even though they do not define the limit explicitly, loadings down to .40 are

moderate[3]. This is further supported by Hulland (1999), who argues that factor loadings below .70 are not uncommon in practice, and that in general loadings greater than .40 should be retained. Hulland's article handles PLS-SEM, but his margins are considered generally applicable to apply to CB-SEM as well. A measurement model comprising the latent variables of the cognitive, the affective and the behavioral components is run. Here, especially the affective component shows low factor loadings. The questions of how accurately the words 'arousing' and 'sleepy' describe respondents' view of a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea only score .16 and .37, respectively, and are thus below the limit suggested by Simms et al. (2002) and by Hulland (1999). As it may be remembered, the word 'arousing' was questioned previously in this thesis as the Danish translation to 'pirrende' might be misleading. It is therefore not surprising that exactly this word has turned out to have a low factor loading. All factor loadings of the affective component from the first run are reported in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4
*Reliability and validity analysis. Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha and AVE – Affective component*

| | Factor loadings* | Cronbach's alpha** | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Affective component | | .76 | .33 |
| Arousing | .16 | | |
| Sleepy | .37 | | |
| Pleasant | .83 | | |
| Unpleasant | .64 | | |
| Exciting | .47 | | |
| Gloomy | .63 | | |
| Relaxing | .78 | | |
| Distressing | .43 | | |

* Standardized factor loadings
** Cronbach's alphas based on standardized items

Furthermore, the questions asking respondents about how 'exciting' and 'distressing' they find a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea score .47 and .43, respectively. These factor loadings are below the limit suggested by Afthanorhan (2013), but greater than the one suggested by Simms et al. (2002) and by Hulland (1999). In order not to remove too many questions from the original scale, factor loadings greater than .40 are decided maintained for further analysis. After items are deleted, a new measurement model should be run. Table 6.5 reports factor loadings for this new model. The table shows that all loadings are now

[3] Simms et al. use EQS; an estimating technique similar to AMOS in that it too is covariance-based.

moderate to high, ranging from .42 to .86. Especially the loadings of the behavioral component are very high, implying that *"…more than 50 percent of the variance in the observed variable (i.e., the square of the loading) is due to the construct."* (Hulland, 1999: p. 198). The conclusion regarding reliability is therefore that reliability is achieved, but in several cases only to a moderate extent.

Table 6.5
*Reliability and validity analysis. Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha and AVE – Cognitive component, affective component adjusted and behavioral component*

| | Factor loadings* | Cronbach's alpha** | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cognitive component | | .76 | .35 |
| Beautiful scenery | .59 | | |
| Interesting attractions | .48 | | |
| Unspoiled environment | .62 | | |
| Friendly local people | .65 | | |
| Appealing local food | .58 | | |
| Great beaches | .60 | | |
| Affective component adj. | | .80 | .41 |
| Pleasant | .85 | | |
| Unpleasant | .63 | | |
| Exciting | .44 | | |
| Gloomy | .61 | | |
| Relaxing | .79 | | |
| Distressing | .42 | | |
| Behavioral component | | .87 | .70 |
| Seeking more information | .86 | | |
| Consider visiting the place | .86 | | |
| Recommendation to others | .79 | | |

* Standardized factor loadings
** Cronbach's alphas based on standardized items

Besides testing the reliability of the individual questions within the components, it is also important to evaluate the constructs of the latent variables. Convergent validity, also known as composite reliability, is *"A measure of construct validity that measures the extent to which the scale correlates positively with other measures of the same construct."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 359) and can be assessed from Cronbach's alpha and AVE (Afthanorhan, 2013; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hulland, 1999). For the present experiment, Cronbach's alphas of the three constructs are found using IBM SPSS, whereas AVEs are calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{AVE} = \frac{\sum \lambda_i^2}{\sum(\lambda_i^2 + \varepsilon_i)},$$

where $\lambda_i$ is the standardized loadings and $\varepsilon_i$ the measurement errors defined as $1 - \lambda_i^2$ (Afthanorhan, 2013).

In general, an alpha greater than .60 is considered an acceptable measurement and an alpha greater than .70 a good measurement (Jensen & Knudsen, 2009: 226). According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), AVE should be higher than .50 for the construct to be acceptable. Therefore, if AVE is less than .50 *"...the variance due to measurement error is larger than the variance captured by the construct [...], and the validity of the individual indicators [...], as well as the construct [...], is questionable."* (Fornell & Larcker, 1981: p. 46). Like the factor loadings, Cronbach's alphas and AVEs are reported in Table 6.5. The table shows that all three alphas are higher than .70, which indicates that the questions are good representatives for the respective components (Jensen & Knudsen, 2009: 226). However, when it comes to the three AVEs, the situation is somewhat different. Here, only the AVE of the behavioral component exceeds the suggested limit of .50. The conclusion on convergent validity is therefore not clear-cut. Even though the Cronbach's alphas fulfill the requirements, the validity for the present measurement model is less accepted due to low AVEs. Only the behavioral component shows strong evidence for convergent validity.

The methodological supplement to convergent validity is discriminant validity (Hulland, 1999), another type of construct validity that *"...assesses the extent to which a measure does not correlate with other constructs from which it is supposed to differ."* (Malhotra & Birks, 2007: p. 359). Fornell & Larcker (1981) suggest the use of AVE to assess discriminant validity. For discriminant validity to be obtained, AVE must be *"...greater than the variance shared between the construct and other constructs in the model (i.e., the squared correlation between two constructs)."* (Hulland, 1999: p. 200). One way to depict this is with a correlation matrix containing the correlations between the different components in the lower left off-diagonal elements of the matrix and the square root of the respective AVEs along the diagonal. If the square root of AVE is higher than all correlations in the corresponding columns and rows, discriminant validity is said to exist (Hulland, 1999). Table 6.6 shows the correlations between the three components in the upper left half of the matrix with their respective AVEs

in the diagonal (in bold). In all three cases, AVE is higher than the values in its column and row, indicating that discriminant validity is achieved.

Table 6.6
*Correlation matrix*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Overall image | - | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Cognitive component | .376 | **.589** | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Affective component adj. | .497* | .487* | **.644** | | | | | | | |
| 4. Behavioral component | .677* | .454* | .516* | **.837** | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Like the ad | .561* | .484* | .463* | .573* | - | | | | | |
| 6. Identity fit | .649* | .379* | .473* | .697* | .497* | - | | | | |
| 7. Familiarity | .312* | .195* | .146** | .356* | .306* | .288* | - | | | |
| 8. Like Badehotellet | .386* | .272* | .231* | .357* | .355* | .310* | .751* | - | | |
| 9. Age (in years) | .061 | .107 | .065 | .215* | .023 | .127 | .404* | .364* | - | |
| 10. Gender (1=female) | .061 | .014 | .018 | .074 | .113 | .018 | .041 | .078 | -.169** | - |
| Mean | 4.37 | 4.91 | 4.33 | 3.77 | 4.65 | 3.78 | 4.17 | 4.47 | 45.03 | - |
| Standard deviation | 1.58 | .97 | .59 | 1.52 | 1.40 | 1.64 | 2.32 | 1.82 | 18.27 | - |
| N | 220 | 220 | 220 | 220 | 218 | 218 | 217 | 180 | 215 | 215 |

Note*:* Square root of AVE in the diagonal (in bold)
* Correlation is significant at the 1 % level (2-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the 5 % level (2-tailed)

Besides being used for pointers of discriminant validity, correlations also indicate the strength and directions of the model's constructs. Thus, Table 6.6 shows the simple correlations between all possible pairs of variables, latent as well as selected covariates, included in the further analysis. With the exception of some cases related to age and gender, all correlations are shown to be significant, most of them on a significance level of 5 %. Further, the table shows a positive relationship between all variables (the correlation between age and gender excepted).

Looking at the correlations between the three components and overall image, all correlations show a moderate to strong relationship ranging from .454 to .677 with the exception of the correlation between the cognitive component and overall image, where the correlation is only .376. Other strong correlations are found between identity fit and overall image and the behavioral component, respectively. Also, a strong correlation between familiarity and whether respondents like 'Badehotellet' is found.

The aim of this section was to examine validity and reliability of the questions and model constructs in order to ensure accept of the later found results and the conclusion. The

investigation shows somewhat mixed results. Thus, reliability is found to be achieved, however, in several cases only to a moderate extent. Regarding validity, discriminant validity is present, however, the conclusion on convergent validity is not clear-cut. Alphas are sufficiently high, whereas only the AVE of the behavioral component reaches the suggested minimum value. In conclusion, reliability and validity are evaluated to be acceptable in order to continue the further investigation of the stated hypotheses.

## 6.4 Test of the image model

In the previous sections, the collected data have been presented and compared among the four different experimental groups. Further, validity and reliability of the individual questions within each component have been tested for. However, before moving on to testing the stated hypotheses, the previously suggested relationship between destination image and the three components must be tested as well.

To test this relationship, a multiple regression is run using overall image as the dependent variable and the cognitive, affective and behavioral components as independent variables. This is done to test whether a significant relationship between overall image and the three components exists, as the previous theory suggests. Table 6.7 shows the result of the multiple regression.

Table 6.7
*Regression analysis. Test of the image model*

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. error | Beta | t | p |
| [a] Constant | -.264 | .602 | | -.438 | .662 |
| Cognitive component | .040 | .094 | .025 | .426 | .671 |
| Affective component adj. | .514 | .160 | .193 | 3.208 | .002 |
| Behavioral component | .586 | .061 | .566 | 9.602 | .000 |

[a] Dependent variable: Overall image

From the table it appears that only the affective and the behavioral components are significant on a 1 % significance level and thus contribute to the prediction of overall destination image. The cognitive component is not found to be significant. In order to compare the contribution of the affective and the behavioral components, respectively, the standardized coefficients are used. The standardized coefficients are chosen as they are not dependent on the units of measurement of the variables (Field, 2013: p. 340). Table 6.7

reveals that with a coefficient of .566, the behavioral component makes the strongest unique contribution in *"…explaining the dependent variable, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for."* (Pallant, 2010: p. 161). The coefficient for the affective component, .193, implies a somewhat lower contribution. Even though the magnitude of a correlation between two variables cannot directly forecast whether a variable is significant, it may give an indication whether this is the case. It is therefore not surprising that the cognitive component is found insignificant considering its relatively low correlation with overall image (see Table 6.6).

At first, the model might not seem optimal in measuring destination image, since the cognitive component does not statistically contribute to overall destination image as the theory states. However, due to previous theory, the model is kept in its original form, and all three components are treated in the following section.

Besides evaluating the independent variables, the model itself should also be evaluated. This can be done by looking at $R^2$. $R^2$ tells *"…how much of the variance in the dependent variable […] is explained by the model."* (Pallant, 2010: p. 160). For the model above, $R^2$ is found to be .489. Expressed in percentage, the present model explains 48.9 % of the variance in overall image. According to Pallant (2010), this is quite a respectable result, especially if compared to other studies (ibid.).

# 7. Results

After having presented and validated the data collected for this thesis, the results of the specific tests regarding the hypotheses are examined. First, this section includes the results of the manipulation check, which provides a conclusion on whether the ads from the experiment are successful in manipulating the participants. Next, the tests for hypothesis 1a-d and hypothesis 2a-d, respectively, are provided, and finally, additional perspectives on the hypotheses are discussed.

## 7.1 Evaluation of the manipulation check

Experimental research is done to detect possible relationships between an independent variable and a dependent variable. In order to test a hypothesis where manipulations are present in a specific experiment it is important to address whether the manipulations work as intended (Perdue & Summers, 1986). As mentioned earlier, the experiment for this thesis consists of a 2 x 2 between-subjects experimental design with four experimental groups making it possible to test the two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1a-d tests the relationship between motion pictures in promotions as the independent variable and destination image as the dependent variable. Here, the manipulation consists of ad texts having references to 'Badehotellet' and not having references to 'Badehotellet', respectively. Due to the very obvious and dominant manipulation, no manipulation check was obtained in the experiment. More importantly, hypothesis 2a-d tests whether the presence of mental simulation will result in a stronger relationship between the variables mentioned in hypothesis 1a-d. Here, the manipulation is encouragement of mental simulation versus no encouragement of mental simulation in the ad texts. In the context of this, a manipulation check seems very important. This is to check whether the manipulation has the desired effect, as this is essential in being able to conclude that the specific presence of mental simulation is the cause of a possibly stronger relationship between the variables in hypothesis 1a-d (Perdue & Summers, 1986). Therefore, two manipulation check-questions are implemented in the experiment to test how transported the respondents feel when reading the ad.

As mentioned previously, the manipulation check-questions are the following: *"While reading the ad, I could easily picture the events in it taking place"* and *"While reading the ad, I pictured myself being at a seaside hotel by the North Sea"*. The two questions are measured on a 1-7 Likert scale and are referred to as 'Manipulation 1' and 'Manipulation 2', respectively, in Table 7.1.

The manipulation check-questions are tested using ANOVA. The two experimental groups with mental simulation encouragement (Experimental group 2 and Experimental group 4) are compared against the two experimental groups without mental simulation encouragement (Experimental group 1 and Experimental group 3). The results of the test are showed in Table 7.1.

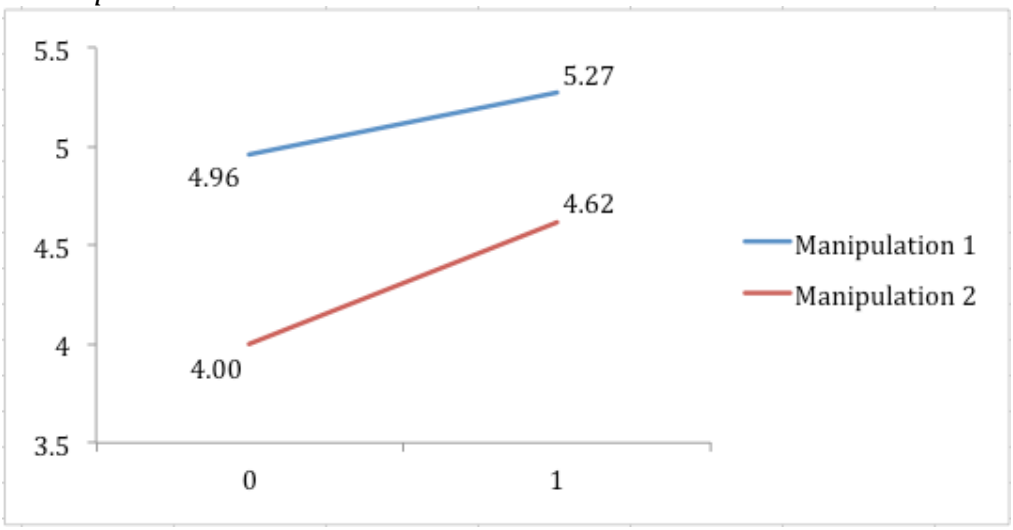
Table 7.1
*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Manipulation check*

| | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Manipulation 1 | | | | | |
| Between groups | 5.267 | 1 | 5.267 | 2.042 | .154 |
| Within groups | 562.419 | 218 | 2.580 | | |
| Total | 567.686 | 219 | | | |
| Manipulation 2 | | | | | |
| Between groups | 21.306 | 1 | 21.306 | 5.964 | .015 |
| Within groups | 778.781 | 218 | 3.572 | | |
| Total | 800.086 | 219 | | | |

Regarding 'Manipulation 1' the significance is .154, meaning that there is no significant difference between the groups presented with mental simulation and those not presented with mental simulation. However, the significance for 'Manipulation 2' is .015. This results in the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the groups depending on the presence of mental simulation in the ads. Yet, it is not enough to detect a significant difference between the groups. In this case, it is important to examine whether the groups with mental simulation encouragement have a higher mean score compared to the groups without mental simulation encouragement. Figure 7.1 shows a means plot with the dummy values on the x-axis and the scores for the manipulation check-questions on the y-axis. The dummy value 1 has the highest mean score in the means plot for both 'Manipulation 1' and 'Manipulation 2'. However, 'Manipulation 1' was not significant, meaning that only 'Manipulation 2' can be

concluded to show a significantly higher degree of transportation for the groups where mental simulation is encouraged.

Figure 7.1
*Means plot*




Note: The x-axis shows the values for the dummy for mental simulation; 0 = mental simulation is not present, 1 = mental simulation is present. The y-axis shows the mean scores.

Even though only one of the manipulation check-questions shows a significant difference between the groups with mental simulation encouragement compared to the groups without mental simulation encouragement, it is still concluded that the manipulation regarding mental simulation is predominantly successful. It is believed that 'Manipulation 2' better reflects whether the respondents feel transported by the ad texts, as they are specifically asked whether they pictured themselves at a seaside hotel by the North Sea when reading the ad. In 'Manipulation 1' the respondents are asked whether they could picture the events in the ad taking place, and it is assumed that the respondents are capable of this regardless of which of the four ad texts they are exposed to. Furthermore, an indicator of this is that the mean scores for 'Manipulation 1' are generally higher than the ones for 'Manipulation 2' (see Figure 7.1). Based on this, it is concluded that the manipulation regarding mental simulation is successful, making it possible to continue in the process of testing of the hypotheses. However, the issue of 'Manipulation 1' will be discussed later more thoroughly (see section 9).

## 7.2 Test of hypotheses

The hypotheses are tested using regression analysis based on the t-statistic (Field, 2013: p. 294ff.). Here, the outcome values of interest are the p-values and the coefficients. In this thesis, the standardized coefficients are used to estimate the degree as well as the direction of the relationship between the variables. It is possible to accept the respective hypothesis if the relationship is significant and the coefficient shows the direction to be similar to the direction stated in the respective hypothesis. The results are outlined in the sections below.

### 7.2.1 Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis for this thesis is:

*H1: The use of motion pictures in the promotion of a destination will result in a positive effect on the image of the destination (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component).*

Figure 7.2
*Hypothesis 1a-d*


Hypothesis 1a-d is illustrated in Figure 7.2 and will be tested using simple regression (Field, 2013: p. 298). Only one independent variable is present, being the presence of the motion picture in the ad text, which is why simple regression is used. Table 7.2 shows the results of the test.

Table 7.2
*Regression analysis. Testing of hypothesis 1a-1d*

| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | Beta | t | p |
| [a] | Constant | 4.613 | .152 | | 30.435 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.473 | .211 | -.150 | -2.246 | .026 |
| [b] | Constant | 4.917 | .095 | | 51.996 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.015 | .131 | -.008 | -.111 | .911 |
| [c] | Constant | 4.417 | .057 | | 77.392 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.160 | .079 | -.135 | -2.015 | .045 |
| [d] | Constant | 4.025 | .146 | | 27.521 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.493 | .203 | -.162 | -2.426 | .016 |

Note: The variable 'Motion picture' is a dummy; 0 = motion picture is not present, 1 = motion picture is present

[a] Dependent variable: Overall image

[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component

[c] Dependent variable: Affective component

[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

The first part of hypothesis 1 is H1a, which states the positive effect of motion pictures as the independent variable and overall destination image as the dependent variable. The test is found to be significant at a 5 % significance level. However, as shown in Table 7.2, the standardized coefficient (-.150) reveals that there is a negative effect of the motion picture on overall destination image. This contradicts the stated hypothesis of a positive relationship and hereby H1a must be rejected. For this relationship $R^2$ is found to be .023, which indicates that the motion picture has a very low impact on overall destination image.

Second, H1b states the same positive effect, but with the cognitive component as the dependent variable. This test is found to be insignificant at a 5 % significance level and therefore H1b is rejected too. Furthermore, $R^2$ is found to be .000 indicating a non-existing impact of the motion picture on the cognitive component.

Third, H1c states a similar effect with the affective component as the dependent variable. The test is found to be significant at a 5 % significance level. However, likewise H1a, Table 7.2 reveals a negative effect of the motion picture (-.135) and therefore H1c is also rejected. Here, $R^2$ is found to be .018, which also indicates a very low impact of the motion picture on the affective component.

Finally, H1d too states the positive effect of motion pictures on the behavioral component as

the dependent variable. Again, the test is found to be significant at a 5 % significance level, but again the results in Table 7.2 show a negative standardized coefficient (-.162). Thus, H1d is likewise rejected. $R^2$ for this relationship is found to be .026, similarly indicating that the motion picture has a very low impact on the behavioral component.

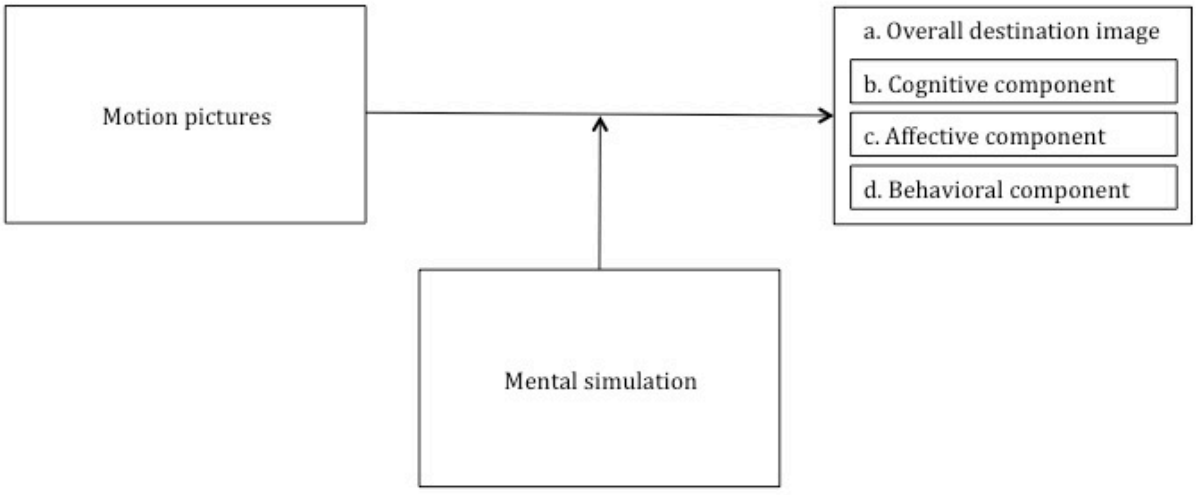
In conclusion, the motion picture has a significant effect on overall destination image as well as two out of three components. However, the significant effects on overall, affective and behavioral destination image are all negative, which contradicts the stated hypothesis. Thus in summary, hypothesis 1a-d must be rejected.

### 7.2.2 Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis for this thesis is:

*H2: In case of mental simulation the positive effect of using motion pictures on the destination image (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component) will be stronger than in case of not using mental simulation.*

Figure 7.3
*Hypothesis 2a-d*




Even though hypothesis 1a-d is rejected, it is necessary to test hypothesis 2a-d to complete the research proposed in the beginning of the thesis. Hypothesis 2a-d is illustrated in Figure 7.3 and in order to test for the proposed moderation effect, a tool developed by Hayes (2013) has been used. The tool is called PROCESS and works in SPSS to estimate mediation, moderation and models combining the two. The output of the PROCESS tool contains

coefficients, p-values and calculations for the direct, indirect and total effects of the model, which is tested for (ibid.: p. 100). Several methods have been developed to estimate indirect effects, including the well-known Normal Theory Approach (ibid.: p. 102). However, one essential downfall regarding this method is the assumption it makes about the shape of the sampling of the distribution. It assumes the distribution to be normal (ibid.: p. 105). Here, PROCESS uses bootstrapping (1000 bootstrap samples) where the indirect effect is calculated without making any assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution (ibid.: p. 106). Consequently, the moderation effect of mental simulation is tested using Model 1 in the PROCESS tool. The test results are shown in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3
*Moderation analysis. Testing of hypothesis 2a-2d*

| | | Dependent variable (a-d) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | p |
| [a] | Constant | 4.481 | .217 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.277 | .304 | .363 |
| | Mental simulation | .260 | .304 | .393 |
| | MP x MS* | -.380 | .423 | .369 |
| [b] | Constant | 4.853 | .135 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | .129 | .190 | .497 |
| | Mental simulation | .126 | .190 | .508 |
| | MP x MS* | -.277 | .263 | .295 |
| [c] | Constant | 4.411 | .082 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.166 | .115 | .150 |
| | Mental simulation | .013 | .115 | .913 |
| | MP x MS* | .011 | .159 | .946 |
| [d] | Constant | 3.981 | .210 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.407 | .294 | .168 |
| | Mental simulation | .087 | .294 | .767 |
| | MP x MS* | -.167 | .408 | .683 |

Note: The variables 'Motion picture' and 'Mental simulation' are dummies; 0 = motion picture and mental simulation, respectively, are not present, 1 = motion picture and mental simulation, respectively, are present
* The variable 'MP x MS' is a multiplication of the dummies for 'Motion picture' and 'Mental simulation'
[a] Dependent variable: Overall image
[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component
[c] Dependent variable: Affective component
[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

Table 7.3 tests the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation in an ad text on destination image. It will tell whether there is a positive moderation effect of mental

simulation on the effect of the motion picture on destination image. As with H1a, the dependent variable of H2a is overall destination image. According to Table 7.3, the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation in the ad text is insignificant at a 5 % significance level. Thereby, H2a must be rejected. For this relationship $R^2$ is found to be .027, which indicates that the motion picture and mental simulation have a very low impact on overall destination image.

Next, H2b proposes the same positive moderation effect, but with the cognitive component as the dependent variable. As shown in Table 7.3, the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation is also insignificant regarding the cognitive component when using a 5 % significance level. Consequently, H2b is also rejected. Moreover, $R^2$ is found to be .005 indicating a very low impact of the motion picture and mental simulation on the cognitive component.

Third, H2c states a positive moderation effect with the affective component as the dependent variable. Here, as shown in Table 7.3, the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation is likewise insignificant when using a 5 % significance level. Thereby, H2c is rejected. Here, $R^2$ is found to be .019, which also indicates a very low impact of the motion picture and mental simulation on the affective component.

Finally, H2d proposes the positive moderation effect with the behavioral component as the dependent variable. Again, Table 7.3 reveals that the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation is insignificant at a 5 % significance level. Consequently, H2d is also rejected. $R^2$ for this relationship is found to be .027, similarly indicating that the motion picture and mental simulation have a low impact on the behavioral component.

Hence, in all four tests, the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation is shown to be insignificant. Therefore, hypothesis 2a-d must be rejected. Nevertheless, even if the tests had shown to be significant, a negative effect of motion pictures on destination image has still been concluded regarding hypothesis 1a-d. Hypothesis 2a-d assumes a positive effect of motion pictures on destination image. Therefore, the test results for hypothesis 1a-d still contradict the direction of hypothesis 2a-d.

## 7.3 Possible explanations for the rejection of the hypotheses

Based on the conclusion that both of the stated hypotheses are rejected, the next sections seek to outline some of the possible explanations for this. First, a mediator is examined to explain the missing relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Next, it is considered whether the effect of mental simulation can be proven as moderated mediation.

As with moderation in the test for hypothesis 2a-d, the PROCESS tool is used below in order to test for mediation and moderated mediation. From this, it is possible to come up with possible explanations for the rejection of the hypotheses. The results are outlined in the sections below.

### 7.3.1 Mediation

As mentioned, the data from the experiment reflect a significantly negative effect of the motion picture on overall, affective and behavioral destination image as well as an insignificant effect of the motion picture on cognitive destination image. A possible explanation why it is not possible to detect a significantly positive effect is that it is mediated by the degree to which the respondents like the ad they are shown in the experiment. This means that only for those who like the ad the motion picture will have a positive effect on the dependent variables (see Figure 7.4). The degree to which the respondents like the ad is referred to as the variable 'Like the ad'.

Figure 7.4
*Mediation*


Consequently, the mediation effect of 'Like the ad' is tested using Model 4 in the PROCESS tool in SPSS. Table 7.4 shows the results of the test.

Table 7.4
*Mediation analysis*

| | | Like the ad | | | Dependent variable (a-d) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | p | B | Std. error | p |
| [a] | Constant | 4.962 | .134 | .000 | 1,482 | .348 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.602 | .186 | .001 | -.078 | .182 | .669 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .628 | .065 | .000 |
| [b] | Constant | 4.962 | .134 | .000 | 3.201 | .225 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.602 | .186 | .001 | .180 | .118 | .129 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .349 | .042 | .000 |
| [c] | Constant | 4.962 | .134 | .000 | 3.454 | .140 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.602 | .186 | .001 | -.041 | .073 | .582 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .194 | .026 | .000 |
| [d] | Constant | 4.962 | .134 | .000 | .939 | .332 | .005 |
| | Motion Picture | -.602 | .186 | .001 | -.091 | .173 | .601 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .616 | .602 | .000 |

Note: The variable 'Motion picture' is a dummy; 0 = motion picture is not present, 1 = motion picture is present
[a] Dependent variable: Overall image
[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component
[c] Dependent variable: Affective component
[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

The left part of Table 7.4 tests the relationship between the motion picture and 'Like the ad'. From the coefficient it can be seen that the respondents who have the motion picture in the ad texts score lower in 'Like the ad' (-.602) than the respondents who do not have the motion picture in the ad text. Moreover, this is significant at a 1 % significance level, which is important to be able to suggest a mediation effect of 'Like the ad'. However, it should be mentioned that $R^2$ is found to be .047, which indicates that the motion picture has a very low impact on 'Like the ad'.

The right part of Table 7.4 tests the relationship between 'Like the ad' and overall, cognitive, affective and behavioral destination image, while controlling for the motion picture. First, the coefficient concerning overall destination image reveals that two people who both have the motion picture in the ad text, but who differ by one unit regarding 'Like the ad', differ, on average, .628 in overall destination image. The result is significant at a 1 % significance level. Furthermore, the coefficient is positive, which indicates that the respondents who score highest in 'Like the ad' also score highest in overall destination image. The respective

coefficients for the cognitive, affective and behavioral components are .349, .194 and .616, all significant at a 1 % significance level. Likewise, it should be mentioned that the $R^2$'s for the four relationships are .316, .242, .215 and .330, indicating a low impact of 'Like the ad' on overall, cognitive, affective and behavioral destination image, respectively, while controlling for the motion picture.

The next step is to assess the results for the direct, indirect and total effects. Table 7.5 and 7.6 show the different effects.

Table 7.5
*Indirect effects. Mediation analysis – 'Like the ad'*

| | Effect | Boot Std. error | Boot LLCI | Boot ULCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| [a] Indirect effect | -.378* | .120 | -.650 | -.174 |
| [b] Indirect effect | -.210* | .066 | -.371 | -.105 |
| [c] Indirect effect | -.117* | .043 | -.235 | -.052 |
| [d] Indirect effect | -.371* | .115 | -.659 | -.177 |

* Effect is significant at the 5 % level
[a] Dependent variable: Overall image
[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component
[c] Dependent variable: Affective component
[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

Table 7.6
*Direct and total effects. Mediation analysis – 'Like the ad'*

| | Effect | Std. error | t | p | LLCI | ULCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| [a] Direct effect | -.078 | .182 | -.429 | .669 | -.437 | .281 |
| Total effect | -.456 | .212 | -2.148 | .033 | -.874 | -.038 |
| [b] Direct effect | .180 | .118 | 1.526 | .129 | -.052 | .411 |
| Total effect | -.031 | .132 | -.233 | .816 | -.290 | .229 |
| [c] Direct effect | -.041 | .073 | -.551 | .582 | -.185 | .104 |
| Total effect | -.157 | .080 | -1.962 | .051 | -.315 | .001 |
| [d] Direct effect | -.091 | .173 | -.524 | .601 | -.433 | .251 |
| Total effect | -.461 | .204 | -2.263 | .025 | -.863 | -.060 |

[a] Dependent variable: Overall image
[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component
[c] Dependent variable: Affective component
[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

First, the indirect effect reveals the difference in image scores of the respondents who have the motion picture in the ad text opposed to those who do not have the motion picture, as a consequence of 'Like the ad' (Hayes, 2013: p. 97). Regarding overall destination image, opposed to the respondents who do not have the motion picture in the ad text, the respondents who have the motion picture in the ad text score lower (-.378) as a consequence of not liking the ad. Since zero is not a part of the 95 % bootstrap confidence interval between -.650 and -.174, it can be concluded that the indirect effect is significantly different from zero (ibid.: p. 121). For the cognitive, affective and behavioral components, the respondents with the motion picture in the ad text also score lower as a consequence of not liking the ad. All of these indirect effects are also significant as zero is not in the 95 % bootstrap confidence interval.

Next, the direct effect expresses how much the respondents differ in their image score if 'Like the ad' is hold constant, but they differ by whether or not they have the motion picture in the ad text (Hayes, 2013: p. 97). Overall destination image is lower (-.078) for the respondents who have the motion picture in their ad text compared to those who do not if the degree to which they like the ad is hold constant. This result is insignificant when using a 5 % significance level meaning that the effect between the motion picture and overall destination image is not significant if 'Like the ad' is hold constant. The direct effects regarding the cognitive, affective and behavioral components are insignificant as well, which confirms that 'Like the ad' is a mediator of the negative relationship between the independent and dependent variable in hypothesis 1a-d.

Finally, the total effect is the sum of the indirect and direct effects (Hayes, 2013: p. 98). Concerning overall destination image, the respondents with the motion picture in the ad text score lower (-.465) compared to those who do not have the motion picture in the ad text. This result is significant at a 5 % significance level. The same is the case for the total effect for the behavioral component (-.461) when the motion picture is present. In contrast, the cognitive and affective components are insignificant.

To be able to conclude that mediation is present, Preacher & Hayes (2004) mention three relationships that need to be significant; The total effect needs to be significant, the independent variable needs to significantly predict the mediator and the mediator needs to

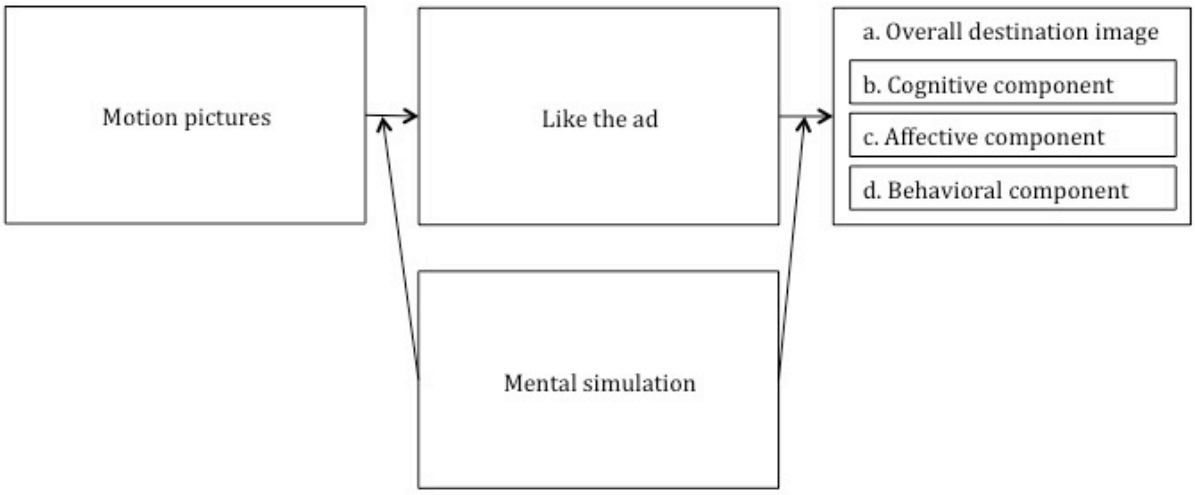
significantly predict the dependent variable while controlling for the independent variable (ibid.). All of these requirements are fulfilled regarding overall and behavioral destination image when considering the degree to which the respondents like the ad text as a mediator. Thereby, it can be concluded that 'Like the ad' mediates the negative effect of the motion picture on overall as well as behavioral destination image in the experiment.

Hence, 'Like the ad' is a mediator of the negative effect of the motion picture on overall as well as behavioral destination image in the experiment in such a way that for those who like the ad the negative effect of the motion picture is neutralized. This provides a partial explanation for the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d. However, it cannot explain it entirely. As mentioned regarding the direct effect, when holding 'Like the ad' constant, the scores for overall and behavioral destination image become insignificant, not significant in a positive direction. 'Like the ad' thereby explains the significantly negative effect of the motion picture on overall and behavioral destination image, but it does not explain why a significantly positive effect cannot be found. Consequently, it is only a partial explanation for the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d.

### 7.3.2 Moderated mediation

Based on the conclusion that 'Like the ad' is a mediator of the negative effect of the motion picture on overall as well as behavioral destination image, it is now possible to test whether mental simulation works as a moderator when considering the mediating effect of 'Like the ad' (see Figure 7.5). According to Hayes, moderated mediation is present *"If the indirect effect of X on Y through M depends on a particular moderator."* (Hayes, 2013: p. 402) where X is an independent variable, Y is a dependent variable and M is a mediator. Consequently, moderated mediation needs to be tested for.

Figure 7.5
*Moderated mediation*




Here, Model 59 in the PROCESS tool is used to test for moderated mediation with 'Like the ad' as the mediator and mental simulation as the moderator. Table 7.7 shows the results of the test.

The left part of Table 7.7 tests the relationship between the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation in an ad text on 'Like the ad'. From the coefficient it can be seen that the respondents who have both the motion picture and mental simulation in the ad text score lower (-.415) in 'Like the ad' than the respondents who do not have both the motion picture and mental simulation in the ad text. However, this is insignificant when using a 5 % significance level. Significance of this relationship is required to be able to accept the idea that mental simulation works through moderated mediation. Therefore, it is also rejected that mental simulation moderates the effect between the motion picture and destination image while controlling for the mediator 'Like the ad'. For this relationship, $R^2$ is found to be .062, which indicates that the motion picture and mental simulation have a very low impact on 'Like the ad'.

Table 7.7
*Moderated mediation analysis*

| | | Like the ad | | | Dependent variable (a-d) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | p | B | Std. error | p |
| [a] | Constant | 4.712 | .189 | .000 | 1,110 | .458 | .016 |
| | Motion Picture | -.398 | .265 | .136 | .007 | .258 | .979 |
| | Mental simulation | .500 | .267 | .063 | .833 | .708 | .241 |
| | MP x MS* | -.415 | .370 | .263 | -.184 | .132 | .165 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .715 | .089 | .000 |
| | LTA x MS** | - | - | - | -.204 | .367 | .579 |
| [b] | Constant | 4.712 | .189 | .000 | 3.210 | .297 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.398 | .265 | .136 | .267 | .167 | .111 |
| | Mental simulation | .500 | .267 | .063 | -.037 | .459 | .937 |
| | MP x MS* | -.415 | .370 | .263 | .004 | .086 | .960 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .349 | .058 | .000 |
| | LTA x MS** | - | - | - | -.163 | .238 | .493 |
| [c] | Constant | 4.712 | .189 | .000 | 3.486 | .186 | .000 |
| | Motion Picture | -.398 | .265 | .136 | -.088 | .104 | .401 |
| | Mental simulation | .500 | .267 | .063 | -.091 | .287 | .751 |
| | MP x MS* | -.415 | .370 | .263 | .000 | .054 | 1.000 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .196 | .036 | .000 |
| | LTA x MS** | - | - | - | .098 | .148 | .511 |
| [d] | Constant | 4.712 | .189 | .000 | .628 | .435 | .151 |
| | Motion Picture | -.398 | .265 | .136 | -.124 | .245 | .612 |
| | Mental simulation | .500 | .267 | .063 | .652 | .672 | .333 |
| | MP x MS* | -.415 | .370 | .263 | -.189 | .126 | .135 |
| | Like the ad | - | - | - | .712 | .085 | .000 |
| | LTA x MS** | - | - | - | .037 | .348 | .916 |

Note: The variables 'Motion picture' and 'Mental simulation' are dummies; 0 = motion picture and mental simulation, respectively, are not present, 1 = motion picture and mental simulation, respectively, are present
* The variable 'MP x MS' is a multiplication of the dummies for 'Motion picture' and 'Mental simulation'
** The variable 'LTA x MS' is a multiplication of the variable 'Like the ad' and the dummy for 'Mental simulation'
[a] Dependent variable: Overall image
[b] Dependent variable: Cognitive component
[c] Dependent variable: Affective component
[d] Dependent variable: Behavioral component

Again, this conclusion is not surprising. First, 'Like the ad' is not fully successful in mediating the negative insignificant and the negative significant effect of the motion picture on cognitive and affective destination image. Next, when holding 'Like the ad' constant it only neutralizes the negative effect of the motion picture on overall and behavioral destination image. 'Like the

ad' is not successful in transforming it into a positive effect. Thus, it is not remarkable that mental simulation does not work through moderated mediation.

Based on the above, the following conclusions can be made about the results. First, the manipulation regarding mental simulation works as intended in the experiment. Next, Hypothesis 1a-d is rejected since the tests for H1a, H1c and H1d show a significantly negative relationship, while H1b shows the relationship to be insignificant. Moreover, hypothesis 2a-d is also rejected. A partial explanation for this is outlined. The degree to which the respondents like the ad text in the experiment mediates the negative relationship between the motion picture and overall as well as behavioral destination image. However, it only neutralizes the negative effect and is not successful in transforming it into a positive effect. Finally, it is tested whether mental simulation works through moderated mediation. Nevertheless, this is also rejected, and mental simulation cannot be proven to be a moderator, even when controlling for 'Like the ad' as the mediator. Further explanations and limitations will be discussed in the following sections of the thesis.

# 8. Discussion

After presenting the results of the research outlined for the thesis, the next sections contain a discussion of why the collected data have led to these specific results. First, the existing theory is held against the results to specify the difference. Next, one section evaluates the image model, whereas another explains the limited effect of the remaining covariates. Finally, a section examines an actual viewer profile for 'Badehotellet'.

## 8.1 Existing theory versus results

The existing theory outlined earlier in this thesis is the foundation on which the research question and the hypotheses are based. It indicates the direction for the research as existing theory has already focused on how motion pictures can impact the image of a tourist destination as well as mental simulation's effect in promotions. The overall research question states how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect the image of a destination when promoting it. Consequently, it now makes sense to discuss the findings in the thesis, more specifically the results of the hypotheses, and sum up on whether it is consistent with the findings of the existing theory.

### 8.1.1 Motion picture effect

The research question proposes the relationship between motion pictures in the promotion of destinations and the image of the destination. This relationship is examined in the test for hypothesis 1a-d, which states that the use of motion pictures will result in a positive effect on the destination image, consisting of overall image, the cognitive component, the affective component and the behavioral component.

Here, existing theory indicates that motion pictures can be effective in the process of creating a destination image. Motion pictures have the ability to pull individuals to certain destinations based on their own desire to travel. Motion pictures work through entertainment where they increase knowledge and familiarity with visitor destinations. Hereby, visitors develop a higher level of confidence with destinations as awareness is increased and anxiety is decreased. Furthermore, research shows how the display of a destination in a motion picture affects the number of visitors. Based on the above arguments, it seems reasonable to state that the use of motion pictures will result in a positive effect on destination image.

The test for hypothesis 1a-d shows a significant effect of the motion picture on overall destination image as well as the affective and behavioral component. However, the significant effects are all negative and not positive as stated in the hypothesis. Furthermore, the effect on the cognitive component is insignificant. It is thereby rejected that the use of motion pictures in the promotion of a destination will result in a positive effect on the image of the destination (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component). Regarding the results for hypothesis 1a-d, it is also tested whether 'Like the ad' is a mediator of the effect of motion pictures on destination image. Here, the test shows that 'Like the ad' mediates overall as well as behavioral destination image in the experiment. However, the negative effect of the motion picture is only neutralized for those who like the ad. Therefore, it cannot explain the negative effect completely. The direct effects between the motion picture and overall as well as behavioral destination image are insignificant, not significant in a positive direction. Thus, the mediation effect of 'Like the ad' is only a partial explanation for the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d. Consequently, since no positive effect of motion pictures on destination image can be proven, the existing theory and the results regarding hypothesis 1a-d are not consistent.

### 8.1.2 Moderation effect of mental simulation

Next, the research question also suggests that the use of mental simulation moderates the relationship between motion pictures in the promotion of destinations and the image of the destination. This effect is assessed in the test for hypothesis 2a-d, which states that in the case of mental simulation the positive effect of using motion pictures on the destination image will be stronger than in the case of not using mental simulation. Again destination image consists of overall image, the cognitive component, the affective component and the behavioral component.

Regarding this, existing research indicates that mental simulation can be effective in promotions. Mental simulation as a linguistic tool constructs hypothetical scenarios and usually transports the individual into a narrative. The simulation increases involvement for the consumer as it makes the depicted scenarios seem more real. It creates visual attention, and the simulation provides experience value as the hypothetical scenarios lead to a perception of product trial. Furthermore, the consumers are convinced through imagery

processing, which increases satisfaction. When individuals are transported into a narrative through mental simulation it results in more holistic consumer judgments, and the evaluation process becomes less analytical. The degree of contextual detail has been shown to reinforce the transportation of the individual, whereas it has not been established unanimously whether self-referencing is a necessity. Mental simulation can give consumers a sense of product trial making it easier for them to comprehend the product, especially if it is new or unconventional. It can create visions for the individual, which will increase the chance that preferences will be developed for the specific product. Consequently, based on the above, it is stated that mental simulation will have a positive moderation effect on the positive effect of the use of motion pictures on destination image.

The test for hypothesis 2a-d shows an insignificant joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation. This is the case regarding overall image as well as the three components. Hence, it is rejected that in case of mental simulation the positive effect of using motion pictures on the destination image (i.e., (a) the overall image, (b) the cognitive component, (c) the affective component, (d) the behavioral component) will be stronger than in case of not using mental stimulation. These results are not surprising as the test results for hypothesis 1a-d contradict the direction of hypothesis 2a-d. Furthermore, mental simulation is tested as a moderator while considering the mediating effect of 'Like the ad'. However, the relationship between the joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation and 'Like the ad' is insignificant. Since this relationship is required to accept the idea of moderated mediation it is rejected that mental simulation moderates the effect between the motion picture and destination image while controlling for the mediator 'Like the ad'. Again, the results are not surprising as 'Like the ad' is only a partial explanation for the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d. Consequently, since no positive moderation effect of mental simulation on the effect of motion pictures on destination image can be identified, the existing theory and the results regarding hypothesis 2a-d are not consistent.

Therefore, the results of the thesis do not match the existing theory on the subject. The next sections will discuss in more detail why this is the case.

## 8.2 Evaluation of the image model

After having summed up how the existing theory does not match the results in the thesis, this section will evaluate the different components in the image model. First, the impact of the individual components will be reviewed and next, other possible influencing factors will be considered. Hereby, it will be assessed whether the image model used in the thesis is effective in measuring the attitudes of the respondents.

### 8.2.1 Strength of the three components

From the results it can be concluded that out of the three components forming overall destination image the cognitive component seems to be the hardest one to measure. Regarding hypothesis 1a-d, the result for the cognitive component is insignificant whereas the results for overall image and the two remaining components are significant. In the test regarding the mediation effect of 'Like the ad' the result for the cognitive component is also insignificant. However, the result for the affective components is likewise insignificant in the mediation test and thereby, only the results for overall destination image and the behavioral component are significant.

As mentioned in the theory section, Baloglu & McCleary (1999) define a model where various personal and stimulus factors affect the cognitive and the affective components, which form the overall image of a destination. However, in the conclusion for the article it is stated: *"Significantly, overall image is more likely influenced by affect than perceptual/cognitive evaluations and affect. In other words, affect is more likely to serve as an intervening variable between perceptual/cognitive evaluations and overall image."* (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999: p. 23). They stick to the argument that various factors have an influence on the two components, but argue that the affective component might serve more as an intervening variable between the cognitive component and overall destination image, in that beliefs and knowledge of a destination lead to feelings towards this destination, which again lead to the overall destination image. If the results for the test of the image model are considered (see Table 6.7), the affective and behavioral components are significant, whereas the cognitive is not. This corresponds well with the argument by Baloglu & McCleary (1999) proposing that the cognitive component is more effective through the affective component.

However, this argument does not explain why motion pictures cannot be shown to have a significant effect on the cognitive component. It is still concluded that the type of information source, e.g. a motion picture, is a factor influencing cognitive image. Yet, the measurement scale used for the cognitive component in this thesis is a selection of scale items developed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999). The scale items used by Baloglu & McCleary are generated from a literature review and contain a selection of items from several other studies. In comparison, the scales used to measure the affective component are the ones identified by Russel & Pratt (1980), which is also used by Baloglu & McCleary (1999). This indicates that the choice of scale items for the cognitive component is much more subjective and thus, this might result in the component becoming more difficult to measure. Furthermore, studies point to the fact that it is important to test different response formats to determine the most appropriate way to collect attitude-based data (Driscoll et al., 1994). It is argued that a scale format might not be the best way to measure attributes regarding destinations, which might also be an explanation why the cognitive component does not show significant results in the thesis. Additionally, Woodside & Lysonski (1989) address the cognitive component as part of the overall consumer perceptions about a destination. The knowledge and beliefs about a destination are merely a part of combined destination awareness, whereas they introduce the affective associations as an element for itself. Again, this points to the argument that cognitive image might be difficult to measure separately.

Finally, the research by Kim & Richardson (2003) deals with the specific impact of motion pictures on destination image. Here, the conclusion is that motion pictures do affect the cognitive and affective images of a destination. However, not all dimensions of the affective components show to be significant. This contradicts some of the above arguments as it outlines that it is possible to measure the components adequately and furthermore, the affective component seems most difficult to measure. As mentioned, the test for the mediation effect of 'Like the ad' proved the cognitive as well as the affective component to be insignificant. This too supports the argument that the affective component can be difficult to measure. Furthermore, the reliability analysis of the individual questions within the three components shows that some of the factor loadings for the cognitive and affective components are only moderate. This may indicate that it might not be adequate measurements for the respective components. This is important to remember as it adds to the

argument that it might be difficult to detect differences in image using the image model presented in the present thesis.

### 8.2.2 Other factors influencing destination image

It is possible to argue that destination image might have more influencing factors than the three components used in this thesis. As expressed in the data analysis section, the $R^2$ for the test of the image model is found to be .489, which means that the model explains 48.9 % of the variance in overall image. Even though this is stated to be an acceptable result (Pallant, 2010), it is still not a high level for $R^2$. It indicates that the three components are not the only factors affecting overall destination image, meaning that other factors are relevant to consider as influencers. The three components might only be a part of the total equation for overall destination image.

When considering the results of the tests for the hypotheses, the levels for $R^2$ are very low as well. This is the case for the tests with and without the mediation effect of 'Like the ad' and the moderation effect of mental simulation, respectively, as well as for all the components and overall destination image. The low levels of $R^2$ indicate that the motion picture does not have a very strong impact on destination image, neither the overall destination image nor any of the components.

Consequently, the impact of motion pictures on destination image does not seem to be very strong based on the results when using the image model presented in the thesis. Furthermore, the moderate level of $R^2$ suggests that more factors influence overall destination image. Woodside & Lysonski (1989) explain how personal variables such as age, income and value system as well as product variables such as pricing and advertising can directly affect the image of a destination. To some extent, arguments like this can clarify the moderate $R^2$ in the different tests as independent variables in these cases only have a small effect on the dependent variables. Age and other possible covariates are discussed in more detail below.

## 8.3 Limited effect of covariates

In addition to the variables used to test the hypotheses, several other covariates have been implemented in the questionnaire in order to test for possible effects of these on the relationships stated in the hypotheses. Some of the covariates are excluded from the analysis,

as they are not considered relevant due to non-equal representation across the defined categories within each covariate. As a consequence, some of the categories only contain a very low number of cases, and some of the experimental groups do not contain cases from all categories. The covariates which are excluded include how many times the respondents have been to the North Sea, region of living, education and number of children under the age of 18. The rest of the covariates, implemented in the questionnaire, are included in the correlation matrix. Since none of the hypotheses are accepted, it is relevant to consider the covariates and their possible effects as either mediators or moderators of the relationships between the variables in the hypotheses. However, hypothesis 2a-d assumes hypothesis 1a-d to be true, which is why the initial focus will be to explain the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d. Here, the only covariate which shows to have a significant mediation effect is 'Like the ad', which is explained in the results section. Therefore, the rest of the covariates, including identity fit, familiarity, 'Like Badehotellet', age and gender, do not show significant effects on the relationship stated in hypothesis 1a-d. However, these covariates are argued relevant for the research done in the theses, and therefore the following sections describe them briefly to better understand their potential relevance for the subject.

### 8.3.1 Identity fit

The first of the mentioned covariates is identity fit, which is covered in the questionnaire by the question: *"To what extent does the described type of vacation in the ad fits your personality?"*. For mediation to be present, the independent variable needs to significantly affect the mediator. In the research for the present thesis it is not logical to propose the display of motion pictures in an ad to have an effect on identity fit. Therefore, the focus is to test for identity fit's possible moderation effect, which shows no significant effect on the relationship between the motion picture and destination image. Consequently, identity fit cannot explain the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d.

In a study by Sirgy & Danes (1982) it is argued that if a product's image matches the image of an individual, a consumer will be motivated to engage with the product concerned. When applying this to the context of tourist destinations, the concept of self-congruity can be said to involve *"…the match/mismatch between the destination image and a tourist's self-image…"* (Sirgy & Su, 2000, p. 340). Sirgy & Su (2000) argue that the self-concept has four different

dimensions resulting in four corresponding types of self-congruities, being the actual, ideal, social and ideal social self-congruity. Actual self-congruity satisfies the need for self-consistency, ideal self-congruity satisfies the need for self-esteem, social self-congruity satisfies the need for social self-image and ideal social self-congruity satisfies the need for social approval. From this it can be argued that identity fit with a destination can be rooted in one or more of the four dimensions. If self-congruity exists, motivations to visit a destination will be present (ibid.).

Additionally, Beerli et al. state: *"The congruity of self-concept with product or brand mental representation refers to the match between the two images and plays an important role in consumer behavior since it constitutes a basic mechanism on which individuals base their brand preferences."* (Beerli et al., 2007: p. 573). From this it is clear that brand preferences are based on the match with an individual's own self-image. The conclusion on the study is that self-congruity is an important variable in the choice of a tourist destination. However, it is acknowledged that a high degree of previous experience with a destination will decrease the power of self-congruity whereas high involvement with leisure travel will increase its power.

From the above outline of some of the existing research regarding identity fit, it would be reasonable to suggest that the variable has the potential to be a moderator of the relationship between the motion picture and destination image. The correlation matrix reveals that identity fit has a strong correlation with especially overall image and the behavioral component. However, the tests for moderation show an insignificantly joint effect of the motion picture and identity fit on overall destination image as well as the three components. Thus, identity fit does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between the motion picture and destination image.

### 8.3.2 Familiarity and 'Like Badehotellet'

The next pair of covariates is familiarity and 'Like Badehotellet'. These are covered in the questionnaire by the questions *"How familiar are you with TV2's drama series Badehotellet?"* and *"To what extent do you like TV2's drama series Badehotellet?"*. As mentioned in the previous section, mediation requires a significant effect of the independent variable on the mediator. Regarding familiarity and 'Like Badehotellet' it is not logical to suggest that the display of the motion picture in an ad will affect the two covariates. Therefore, only

moderation tests are made, showing no significant effect of familiarity and 'Like Badehotellet' on the relationship between the motion picture and destination image. Here, it should be mentioned that the effect of familiarity shows to be significant regarding the cognitive component. However, since the cognitive component generally shows weak results regarding the testing of the hypotheses, the significant effect of familiarity is not considered an important finding for the thesis. Therefore, neither familiarity nor 'Like Badehotellet' can explain the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d.

As described in the theory section, successful motion pictures have the potential to become recurring events, as they can be resent in television and be converted into DVD's etc. (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). Riley & Van Doren further state: *"Continued involvement with specific films at periodic intervals can only serve to reinforce attraction spectacles which will result in continued tourist destination interest."* (Riley & Van Doren, 1992: p. 269). This is an indication that continued involvement which enhances the familiarity with the motion picture will increase the interest in the destination and thereby the destination image.

Furthermore, various film-specific factors can be shown to affect the amount of tourism that is derived from motion pictures (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b). One of these factors is the success of the motion picture where the following example is mentioned: *"For films outside the USA, the success does afford tremendous opportunities for countries or regions to attract the lucrative USA market as well as other overseas nationals."* (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006b: p. 257). Hereby, it can be deduced that the success of a motion picture is an influencer of how well the destination attracts tourists. Here, it can be inferred that the success of the motion picture will, to some extent, indicate the degree to which people like it. Thereby, an argument is that the degree to which people like a motion picture can affect destination image.

Hereby, existing research can indicate that familiarity as well as the degree to which people like a motion picture can be potential moderators of motion pictures' effect on destination image. Looking at the correlation matrix, it can be seen that the correlations are low between familiarity as well as 'Like Badehotellet' and overall destination image as well as the three components. Additionally, the tests for moderation showed no significant joint effects of neither the motion picture and familiarity nor the motion picture and 'Like Badehotellet' on

overall destination image or the three components. This is apart from the inconsequential finding regarding familiarity and the cognitive component.

### 8.3.3 Age and gender

The last pair of covariates included in the correlation matrix are age and gender. The respondents are asked to indicate these in the questionnaire. As with the other covariates, mediation tests are not made since it is not logical to suggest that the display of the motion picture in an ad will affect age and gender. Consequently, the focus is on moderation, which shows no significant effects of age and gender on the relationship between the motion picture and destination image. Thus, age and gender cannot explain the rejection of hypothesis 1a-d.

It is described in the theory section how social characteristics such as age and gender can indirectly affect the relationship between motion pictures and destination image. As an example, Fischoff et al. describe the following about gender differences: *"These differences play according to gender stereotypes, with men more likely to prefer movies that are action oriented while women prefer relationship, especially romantic relationship, movies."* (Fischoff et al., 1998: p. 22). Here, it is explained how the preferences change according to individuals' age (Fischoff et al., 1998). Furthermore, the conclusion on the study by McCarty & Shrum is that *"Age and gender were the demographics most often found to be related to television viewing…"* (McCarty & Shrum, 1993: p. 91). If gender and age are determinants of the type of television and motion pictures individuals choose, it seems reasonable to suggest that individuals will develop different destination images dependent on their preferences.

From the above, it is clear that several studies point to the fact that age and gender can be possible moderators of the relationship between motion pictures and destination image. The correlation matrix reveals that age and gender have very low correlations with overall destination image as well as the three components. Furthermore, almost all of the correlations are insignificant. As overall destination image and the three components are the dependent variables, insignificance and a low correlation between those and the covariates indicate a small change for them to be significant moderators. The relationship between destination image and age is mentioned by Baloglu & McCleary, which state: *"Although such variables as age, education, income, gender, occupation, and marital status have all been suggested as*

*influencing perceptions and images, age and education appear to be major determinants of image."* (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999: p. 875).

Regardless of the existing theory, none of the tests for moderation show significant effects. Neither the motion picture and age nor the motion picture and gender are proven to have a joint effect on destination image or the three components. Therefore, age and gender are not moderators of the effect of motion pictures on destination image.

## 8.4 Actual viewer profile for 'Badehotellet'

From the above, it is clear that many of the covariates which are implemented in the questionnaire for this thesis show to be insignificant. Specifically regarding the demographic covariates it is relevant to consider an actual viewer profile for 'Badehotellet' in order to conclude whether the respondents in the thesis experiment are similar to the actual audience for the drama series. This might be able to explain the insignificance of some of the covariates. An evaluation from TV2 has been collected containing a conclusion on the success of the second season as well as a description of the viewer profile regarding specific demographic variables (TV2, 2015). This includes viewer numbers, ratings and comparisons with DR Drama as well as differences in age, gender, lifestyle segment and region of living of the viewers (ibid.). The following sections compare the demographic characteristics of the actual viewers with the demographic characteristics for the respondents in the thesis experiment. From this it can be concluded whether there are essential differences between the two and whether this can explain why the demographic covariates show not to be significant when testing the data.

### 8.4.1 Age and gender of viewers

The first conclusion in the evaluation from TV2 states that the second season of 'Badehotellet' had high and stabile viewer numbers throughout the season. The final episode had over 1.4 million viewers and on an overall basis, they almost made the target of 1.4 million viewers on average for all episodes of the season (TV2, 2015: p. 2). Regarding age, the target group is the viewers between 20 and 60 years. Of the individuals in that age group who watched TV in the time period where 'Badehotellet' was sent 50 % chose to watch the TV series (TV2, 2015: p. 3).

Looking at the actual viewer profile for the second season of 'Badehotellet' it is clear that it is mostly the elderly viewers who watch the TV series. 24 % of the viewers are between 61 and 70 years old and 19 % are 71 years or older (TV2, 2015: p. 8). However, the age brackets of 41-50 and 51-60 years contain 17 and 19 % of the viewers, respectively, which are also major proportions. Yet, the individuals in the age brackets under 40 years only represent 21 % of the total viewers, altogether (ibid.). Comparing this with the respondents in the experiment for the thesis, some differences are present regarding the age distribution. Within all four experimental groups, the greatest share of respondents is located in the 20-29 age bracket (Table 6.1). Only 7 % of the viewers are found in this age bracket. However, the second largest share of respondents is found in the age groups of 50-59 years, older than 69 years and 40-49 years, respectively, differing across the experimental groups. The first two age groups are the ones having some of the highest shares of the viewers. Still, since a considerable amount of the respondents is located in an age bracket where a relatively small portion of the viewers is found, it can be a factor which influences the ability of age to work as a covariate showing significant effects in the experiment.

Regarding gender, the viewer profile for the second season of 'Badehotellet' is mostly female. 58 % are female while only 42 % are male (TV2, 2015: p. 7). Compared to other fiction TV series from TV2, the amount of females is actually lower, which indicates that females generally watch these types of TV series more frequently. Considering the respondents in the experiment of the thesis, the share of females in the experimental groups is a little higher in Group 1 and 2 and a little lower in Group 3 and 4, compared to the actual share of viewers. However, generally the dispersion between men and women is very similar to the viewer profile. Thus, since no difference is present, this cannot be an influencing factor regarding the covariate of gender and its ability to result in significant effects in the experiment.

Consequently, when comparing the respondents in the experiment with the actual viewers of 'Badehotellet', the differences regarding age can be argued to influence the ability of the age-covariate to show significant effects in the experiment. However, no noteworthy differences regarding gender are discovered.

### 8.4.2 Viewers' region of living

Age and gender are the only demographic covariates which have been implemented in the data analysis for this thesis. Yet, this section will consider one of the covariates, which is excluded due to a low number of respondents and non-equal representation across the defined categories. The mentioned covariate is region of living. This is done to determine whether a potential difference in region of living, when comparing the respondents from the experiment with the actual viewer profile, can explain the missing effect of the covariate. Thereby, it can clarify whether a more equal representation of respondents across the categories within region of living could potentially result in significant effects of the covariate in the experiment.

The viewer profile for the second season of 'Badehotellet' reveals that the largest percentage (27 %) of the viewers is resident in the Region of Southern Denmark (TV2, 2015: p. 10). 24 % are resident in the Capital Region of Denmark, 22 % in the Central Denmark Region, 15 % in the Region Zealand, whereas only 11 % are resident in the North Denmark Region. When comparing this with the respondents for the experiment in the thesis, especially the share of respondents in the Region of Southern Denmark does not correspond with the viewer profile. Apart from the North Denmark Region, the smallest share of respondents is found in the Region of Southern Denmark. It should be noted that the majority of respondents are resident in either the Capital Region of Denmark or the Central Denmark Region, which are also the regions having the second and third largest shares of the viewers. However, a relatively small amount of respondents are resident in the region where the largest percentage of the viewers is resident. This indicates that the implementation of the covariate with a more equal distribution of respondents across the regions could potentially affect the covariate's ability to show significant effects in the experiment.

Furthermore, the viewer profile divides the viewers into segments using the Minerva Model, a model developed by the Danish research institute 'Nielsen' (Bonnén et al. 2009: p. 48). The viewers of the second season of 'Badehotellet' mostly belong to the violet segment (TV2, 2015: p. 9). This segment is characterized by being highly individualistic, bound by traditions with a slightly lower level of education than the rest of the population (Bonnén et al., 2009: p. 55). 30 % of the viewers are from this segment, whereas only 14 % are from the green segment, which contains the modern, highly educated, idealistic individuals (ibid.). Next,

'Badehotellet' is compared to the TV series 'Arvingerne', which is produced by DR. Here it is clear that 'Arvingerne' has more viewers in the green segment as well as in the Capital Region of Denmark, whereas 'Badehotellet' has more viewers in the violet segment as well as in the Region of Southern Denmark (TV2, 2015: p. 11). This indicates that the Capital Region of Denmark may have more residents in the green segment while the Region of Southern Denmark has more residents in the violet segment. Thus, it can further support the idea that the low share of respondents from the Region of Southern Denmark could affect the ability to show significant effects when potentially using region of living as a covariate.

The evaluation concludes that the second season of 'Badehotellet' has not been entirely as successful as the first season. However, the season still places itself in the Top 10 over best-rated Danish TV series ever. This suggests that the lack of success cannot be blamed why a significant positive effect of the motion picture cannot be shown in the test for hypothesis 1a-d. Hereby, it must be concluded that some inconsistencies in the dispersion of the respondents and viewers across some of the covariates might be the reason why significant effects cannot be found.

Consequently, the above sections have provided a discussion of why there is an inconsistency between the existing theory and the results of the thesis. First, the evaluation of the image model leads to the conclusion that the moderate $R^2$ in the different tests, to some extent, can be explained by the fact that the independent variables in these cases only represent a smaller part of the dependent variables. Next, existing theory indicates that several of the covariates implemented in the data analysis can affect destination image. However, 'Like the ad' is the only covariate resulting in a significant effect regarding the tests. Finally, based on the actual viewer profile for 'Badehotellet', it is concluded that some of the demographic differences between the respondents in the experiment and the actual viewers might be the reason why significant effects cannot be found. The following section will include the limitation of the thesis trying to further explain why the hypotheses for the theses had to be rejected.

# 9. Limitations

The present thesis is not without limitations. Some of these were presented and discussed in the experiment section and comprehend among others distribution and questionnaire design. However, further limitations should be mentioned as well. First, this section presents the limitation regarding the manipulation check. Second, the estimating technique is discussed and last, limitations of the collected data are processed.

As previously mentioned, two manipulation check-questions are implemented in the experiment to test how transported the respondents feel when reading the ad. Yet, only 'Manipulation 2' (*"While reading the ad, I pictured myself being at a seaside hotel by the North Sea")* is found significant, whereas 'Manipulation 1' (*"While reading the ad, I could easily picture the events in it taking place"*) is not found significant. As explained in section 7.1, it is assumed that respondents are capable of picturing the events no matter which of the four ad texts they are exposed to. As a consequence, 'Manipulation 1' is not found significantly different among the groups exposed to mental simulation and the groups not exposed to mental simulation. Another reason may be that respondents are not diligent enough when it comes to participating in experiments and answering questionnaires. According to Oppenheimer et al. (2009), some respondents may *"…skim instructions, missing key elements of the task or manipulation, or respond in a haphazard fashion that defies outlier analysis."* (Oppenheimer et al., 2009: p. 867). This increases noise and reduces the experimental power. Normally, such respondents are hard to detect and account for, however, Oppenheimer et al. have developed a tool to spot respondents not reading the instructions. The tool is called the Instructional Manipulation Check (IMC) and works by embedding a question *"…within the experimental materials that is similar to the other questions in length and response format (e.g. Likert scale, check boxes, etc.)…"* (Oppenheimer, 2009: p. 867), but which unlike the other questions asks respondents *"…to ignore the standard response format and instead provide a confirmation that they have read the instruction."* (Oppenheimer, 2009: p. 867). An example can be found in Fig. 1 in Oppenheimer et al. (2009). The present experiment is limited by only one manipulation check-question being significant, making the manipulation less certain. Even though it was earlier argued that the manipulation regarding mental simulation is predominantly successful, since 'Manipulation 2' is believed to better reflect whether the respondents feel transported by the ad texts, a more thorough manipulation check should be

implemented in the future. Such a manipulation check could be to implement more questions in line with the already existing two questions (for further suggestions see Green & Brock, 2000) or by implementing the IMC.

The choice of estimating technique brings some limitations as well. For starters, normality of the collected data are assumed, cf. the central limit theorem, and AMOS is chosen as the preferred program for estimating this data. However, different normality tests have been run, several indicating the data not to be normally distributed. Therefore, SmartPLS could have been used with advantage. SmartPLS does not assume data to be normally distributed and further, all in all it has far less requirements than AMOS (Afthanorhan, 2013). Under normal data conditions, the results of AMOS and SmartPLS would be highly similar, with AMOS providing slightly more precise estimates of the model (Hair et al., 2011). In the present case, however, the factor loadings are found somewhat higher, using SmartPLS instead of AMOS. As an example, factor loadings of 'arousing', 'sleepy' and 'distressing' are .25, .50 and .48 using SmartPLS compared to the corresponding factor loadings of .16, .37 and .43 stated in Table 6.4, where AMOS is used. In the data analysis section it was argued how AMOS is the preferred program for this experiment due to the fact that the application of covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) is suggested appropriate when the research objective is theory testing and confirmation. Nevertheless, the choice of AMOS might be a limitation to the experiment, since it has resulted in lower factor loadings and thus elimination of questions, which would not have been removed from the data had SmartPLS been used.

Finally, the experiment is limited by a number of factors related to the collected data. These include: the number of cases the results build on, the time period wherein the data are collected, the sample and the sample size. The results of the present experiment are based solely on one case, 'Badehotellet'. Only one case is chosen to simplify the design of the experiment and ensuring enough respondents in each experimental group. Nevertheless, this decreases the generalizability of the results, since the conclusions cannot necessarily be projected on other cases. This limits the scope of the investigation. Further, the data were collected during a period between the 1st of September 2015 and the 7th of October 2015, and answers and attitudes are therefore limited to be representative for only this time interval. The period is chosen more or less randomly to fit the time line of the thesis and thus not in connection with the season premiere of the TV series or any other set date. Third, the final

sample also limits the experiment. As discussed in the previous section, demographic differences between the final sample for this experiment and the actual viewer profile exist. These differences might, at least partially, explain why no significant effects of the demographic covariates are found. The last factor that limits the experiment is the sample size. Even though a sample size of 200 respondents has previously been suggested sufficient, the sample is still too small to split and use for analysis, when it comes to certain variables. Therefore, the data set provides information on respondents' number of children under the age of 18 years living at home, respondents' education level, where they live etc., though, these covariates are not included in a scientific way. This does not mean that they are not relevant for further analysis, but are outside the scope for the present thesis.

To sum, a number of factors being the manipulation check, the estimating technique and how the experiment is formed and handled, limit the experiment in each their way and thus affect the findings of the experiment. Therefore, it is important to keep these in mind when drawing the final conclusion and thus be aware of the pitfalls for the results of the experiment.

# 10. Conclusion

The present thesis is based on the tendency for motion pictures portraying a certain destination to have a positive effect on the image of the respective destination. Several studies have established this tendency, and the thesis addresses how to further increase the positive effect. Here, the role of mental simulation is researched since it is established as a tool, which can strengthen persuasion in a promotion situation. Consequently, the research question deals with how the use of mental simulation moderates how motion pictures affect the image of a destination when promoting it.

A thorough review of the theoretical background leads to the two hypotheses on which the experiment for the thesis is built. The first hypothesis focuses on the effect of motion pictures on destination image whereas the second hypothesis focuses on the moderating role of mental simulation. In both hypotheses destination image is understood as overall image and the cognitive, affective and behavioral component, respectively. The experiment in the thesis is based on the case of TV2's drama series 'Badehotellet'.

The results of the experiment reveal a significant negative effect of the motion picture on overall image as well as the affective and behavioral components, while showing an insignificant effect on the cognitive component. This leads to the rejection of the first hypothesis. Furthermore, no joint effect of the motion picture and mental simulation on destination image can be shown, resulting in the rejection of the second hypothesis. This is not surprising as it assumes a positive effect of motion pictures on destination image, which is rejected regarding the first hypothesis. However, a mediating effect of whether the respondents like the ad is shown between the motion picture and destination image. Yet, it only works as a partial explanation for the rejection of the hypothesis as it only neutralizes the negative effect regarding overall image and the behavioral component. Finally, the idea of mental simulation to work through moderated mediation is rejected.

Finally, the inconsistency between the existing theory and the results of the experiment in the thesis is discussed. The image model is reviewed, the covariates in the experiment are evaluated and an actual viewer profile for 'Badehotellet' is considered. This leads to the assumption that factors, such as the manipulation check, the estimating technique and the way the experiment is conducted, affect and limit the findings of the thesis.

# 11. Implications

This last section outlines and discusses the theoretical and practical implications for the preceding investigation of mental stimulation's moderation on motion pictures' effect on destination image. The present thesis rejects its hypotheses and thus, the focus in the theoretical part is primarily on recommendations for further research, whereas the practical part to a higher extent has its main focus on what the results indicate regarding the use of motion pictures and mental simulation when promoting destinations.

## 11.1 Theoretical implications

As mentioned in the experiment section, the survey this experiment builds on is developed based on questions adapted from already established and tested surveys. Thus, in order to expose the cognitive component of destination image, six scale items proposed by Baloglu & McCleary (1999) are used. However, these scale items do not constitute the entire scale, which originally consist of 14 items. The six scale items used in this experiment are carefully selected, but still it should be questioned whether it has affected the results of the experiment that only some items of the scale are used. Further, as mentioned in section 8.2.1, it can be argued that Baloglu & McCleary's scale is more subjective since it contains items from several other studies. This fact may have affected the results as well. Likewise, Russel & Pratt's (1980) scale for identifying the affective component is used with some modifications. In the present case, all eight scale items are used, however, they are handled a bit differently. In the originally study, Russel & Pratt turn the eight unipolar scales into four bipolar scales by *"…treating items from one unipolar scale as positively keyed and items from its bipolar opposite scale as negatively keyed items of a single scale."* (Russel & Pratt, 1980: p. 318). The affective component is then conceptualized as a bipolar space in two dimensions defined by eight variables falling in circular order around the perimeter. Therefore, in order to ensure stronger results in the future, it is suggested to expand the research to include the complete scales in their original form. However, including all scale items will make the survey longer, and thus the researchers should be aware of the downfalls this may result in. A long survey may result in the fact that respondents do not finish the survey or may not answer parts of it. Thus, important data may be lost. It is a balance of pros and cons.

According to Echtner & Ritchie (1991), the definition of destination image is not clear-cut across studies. This thesis builds on the definition of destination image suggested by Avraham & Ketter stating that *"…image is the simplification of numerous associations and pieces of information related to a place and the cognitive product of the attempt to process large amounts of information."* (Avraham & Ketter, 2008: p. 20). This results in the conceptualization of destination image consisting of the four components: the cognitive, the affective, the evaluative and the behavioral (Boulding, 1956). In most other studies, image is likewise theorized in terms of the cognitive component, whereas the behavioral component in many definitions is missing (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Tasci et al., 2007). Since the definition of destination image is not clear-cut, future researchers on the subject of this thesis are suggested to reconsider the definition of destination image and the suggested method in order to investigate whether another definition or conceptualization may result in significant results. However, since the behavioral component is found to be the strongest construct in this experiment, it is suggested that this component should still be part of future studies in one way or the other. Also, as discussed in section 8.2.2, it must be considered whether other factors, apart from the components, may as well influence destinations image.

A third theoretical implication which needs to be mentioned relates to the manipulation used in the experiment. In this experiment, manipulation is limited to only consist of text and thus no pictures. The subject of text versus pictures was slightly touched in the theory section. However, as stated back then this subject is an entire study in itself. It is suggested that future studies take the time to investigate how best to manipulate respondents to image themselves in given settings. This will expose whether text, pictures or maybe a combination of the two result in the best manipulation of the respondents, when simultaneously controlling for motion pictures. Also, the effect of audio and moving pictures in contrast to printed ads should be examined. Depending on the scope of the investigation, researchers could at the same time examine the use of different platforms. E.g. a printed ad solely manipulating using text as in this experiment contra moving commercials in cinemas or on websites where the music of 'Badehotellet' plays in the background.

Last but not least, it is recommended that future studies on the subject include more than one case in order to get a more nuanced picture. There may be several reasons for this experiment not being able to neither establish a positive connection between motion pictures and

destination image nor a moderating effect of this relationship. Even though 'Like Badehotellet' is not proven significant as a moderator in this thesis, likeability of 'Badehotellet' is not unlikely to have affected the results to some extent. Therefore, other motion pictures should be implemented in future studies to be able to research it further. In connection with this, it should be established which factors are important to get respondents to like the ad. Nonetheless, the use of more cases will increase the generalizability of the results. Further, it is recommended to include field experiments that are investigating the reactions on real world ads containing both motion pictures and mental simulation. This can advantageously be done in conjunction with different tourist agencies around the country.

The above paragraphs have outlined the theoretical implications of this thesis and given suggestions for further research on the subject of mental simulation's moderating effect on motion pictures' effect on destination image. The experiment in this thesis rejected all stated hypotheses, but hopefully the above-mentioned suggestions will change this in future studies. Below the practical implications of this thesis are presented.

## 11.2 Practical implications

It was not possible to prove the link between motion pictures, mental simulation and destination image in the present experiment. Had it been possible, respondents would have scored higher on destination image when 'Badehotellet' was present and even higher if mental simulation was also present. Had this been the case, this thesis could have been a building block in marketing research on how to promote destinations forward-looking. In that case, this thesis would have encouraged tourist agencies and the like to implement not only motion pictures in their advertising, but to a high extent also appealed to the use of getting potential tourists to image themselves being on the location.

However, if recommendations on how to promote destinations are to be based on this experiment, tourist agencies should avoid the use of motion pictures in their ads, since motion pictures have a decidedly negative effect on destination image. Likewise, a positive effect of the use of mental simulation does not seem to appear, and getting individuals to image themselves in the settings are thus not recommended in order to improve destination image. Nothing in the employed theory, however, suggests that the moderating effect of mental simulation on motion pictures should not exist, and further, motion pictures' effect on

destination image has been established in several other studies. Therefore, nothing indicates that the stated relationship cannot be proven in a future study as long as a few elements are changed or improved in the experiment. As mentioned in the section of theoretical implications, an examination on when mental simulation works best (text, pictures, audio or a combination) should be conducted. To that, factors influencing the likeability of ads should also be determined.

In future, it may be important to segment people and make the advertisements more targeted. In the present experiment, respondents are selected based on personal network without making allowance for differences in motion picture and vacation preferences, nor were respondents selected based on demographics. Like this, people from certain segments might be easier to affect or differences may be found in how these segments are best manipulated. The last practical implication thus concerns the survey's covariates. Multiple regressions with combinations of the different covariates on destination image have been run. Only ad likeability and to what extent the described type of vacation fits the personality of the respondents appear to have a significant effect using a 5 % significance level[4]. That is, contrary to findings in previous studies, this experiment finds that age, education, gender etc. do not affect destination image. Neither does how many times the respondents have visited the North Sea previously, how well they know 'Badehotellet' nor what they think about the series. This conclusion contradicts the earlier suggestions of segmentation, at least the segmentation based on these variables. As stated in section 9, this thesis is limited by its sample size. Thus, had the sample been larger, the probability for the aforementioned covariates to be significant would have been higher. Based on this fact and on previous research, it is suggested to maintain these variables in future studies.

[4] The result applies for overall image as well as all three components. However, age and the number of children under the age of 18 years living at home are also found significant for the behavioral component.

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# Appendix A.1: The ads – Danish version

### Ad 1: No mental simulation, no motion pictures

Tag på badehotel ved Vesterhavet. Stedet har masser af sol og havet en perfekt temperatur fra morgenstunden, hvilket giver rig mulighed for at starte dagen med en dukkert. Omgivelserne indbyder til en god mængde afslapning. Tag på udflugt til nærliggende byer, læs en god bog eller bliv opdateret med nyhedsinput fra dagens avis. Tre gange om dagen serveres et lækkert måltid, og om aftenen kan solnedgangen nydes med en kop kaffe eller et glas cognac til tonerne fra stedets dygtige pianist.

### Ad 2: Mental simulation, motion pictures

Forestil dig, at du er på badehotel ved Vesterhavet midt i scenerne fra TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet. Du nyder solen og havet, som har den perfekte temperatur til en svømmetur fra morgenstunden, hvis du ligesom seriens kvinder foretrækker at starte din dag med en dukkert. Omgivelserne byder på afslapning efter dine ønsker. Tag på udflugt til nærliggende byer, læs en god bog eller gør ligesom seriens forretningsfolk og hold dig opdateret med nyhedsinput fra dagens avis. Tre gange om dagen får du serveret et lækkert måltid, og om aftenen kan du nyde solnedgangen med en kop kaffe eller et glas cognac. Forestil dig dette til tonerne af, hvad der minder om Edward Weyse's evner på et klaver.

**Ad 3: No mental simulation, motion pictures**

Tag på badehotel ved Vesterhavet midt i scenerne fra TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet. Stedet har masser af sol og havet en perfekt temperatur fra morgenstunden, hvilket giver rig mulighed for at starte dagen med en dukkert, ligesom seriens kvinder. Omgivelserne indbyder til en god mængde afslapning. Tag på udflugt til nærliggende byer, læs en god bog eller gør ligesom seriens forretningsfolk og bliv opdateret med nyhedsinput fra dagens avis. Tre gange om dagen serveres et lækkert måltid, og om aftenen kan solnedgangen nydes med en kop kaffe eller et glas cognac til tonerne af, hvad der minder om Edward Weyse's evner på et klaver.

**Ad 4: Mental simulation, no motion pictures**

Forestil dig, at du er på badehotel ved Vesterhavet. Du nyder solen og havet, som har den perfekte temperatur til en svømmetur fra morgenstunden. Omgivelserne byder på afslapning efter dine ønsker. Tag på udflugt til nærliggende byer, læs en god bog eller hold dig opdateret med nyhedsinput fra dagens avis. Tre gange om dagen får du serveret et lækkert måltid, og om aftenen kan du nyde solnedgangen med en kop kaffe eller et glas cognac. Forestil dig dette til tonerne fra stedets dygtige pianist.

## Appendix A.2: The ads – English version

### Ad 1: No mental simulation, no motion pictures

Visit a seaside hotel by the North Sea. The site offers plenty of sun, and the sea has a good temperature from the morning, providing a good opportunity to start the day with a swim. The surroundings provide ample opportunity for relaxation. Explore nearby cities, read a good book or get updated from today's newspaper. Three times a day a delicious meal is served, and in the evening the sunset can be enjoyed with a cup of coffee or a glass of cognac to the tunes of the talented pianist.

### Ad 2: Mental simulation, motion pictures

Imagine that you are staying at a seaside hotel by the North Sea in the middle of the scenes from TV2's drama series Badehotellet. You are enjoying the sun and the sea, which has the perfect temperature for a swim from the morning, if you, like the women of the series, prefer to start your day with a dip. The surroundings offer relaxation after your wishes. Explore nearby cities, read a good book or do like the businessmen of the series and stay updated from today's newspaper. Three times a day you are being served a delicious meal, and in the evening you can enjoy the sunset with a cup of coffee or a glass of cognac. Imagine this to the tunes of what is reminiscent of Edward Weise's skills at a piano.

**Ad 3: No mental simulation, motion pictures**

Visit a seaside hotel by the North Sea in the middle of the scenes from TV2's drama series Badehotellet. The site offers plenty of sun, and the sea has a good temperature from the morning, providing a good opportunity to start the day with a swim, just like the women of the series. The surroundings provide ample opportunity for relaxation. Explore nearby cities, read a good book or get updated from today's newspaper, like the businessmen of the series. Three times a day a delicious meal is served, and in the evening the sunset can be enjoyed with a cup of coffee or a glass of cognac to the tunes of what is reminiscent of Edward Weise's skills at a piano.

**Ad 4: Mental simulation, no motion pictures**

Imagine that you are staying at a seaside hotel by the North Sea. You are enjoying the sun and the sea, which has the perfect temperature for a swim from the morning. The surroundings offer relaxation after your wishes. Explore nearby cities, read a good book or get updated from today's newspaper. Three times a day you are being served a delicious meal, and in the evening you can enjoy the sunset with a cup of coffee or a glass of cognac. Imagine this to the tunes of the talented pianist.

# Appendix B.1: The questionnaire – Danish version

**Velkommen!**

Som en del af vores kandidatafhandling undersøger vi, hvor attraktivt potentielle turister finder danske turistdestinationer.

Spørgeskemaet tager omkring 5 minutter at besvare, og din besvarelse vil være anonym. Undersøgelsen er udelukkende videnskabelig, og dine data vil ikke blive brugt kommercielt. Hvis du har nogen spørgsmål til indholdet, er du meget velkommen til at kontakte os: sem.speciale@gmail.com.

Du bedes besvare spørgsmålene efter din bedste overbevisning.

**Tak for dit samarbejde - vi sætter stor pris på din hjælp.**

Camilla Andersen og Christina Schneider

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**Q1: Du tildeles nu en tekst ud fra på hvilket tidspunkt på måneden, du er født. Vælg venligst den kategori du hører til:**

(1) ❑ Jeg har fødselsdag mellem den 1. og 7. i måneden

(2) ❑ Jeg har fødselsdag mellem den 8. og 15. i måneden

(3) ❑ Jeg har fødselsdag mellem den 16. og 23. i måneden

(4) ❑ Jeg har fødselsdag mellem den 24. og 31. i måneden

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**Q2: Du bedes læse nedenstående annonce. Tryk næste, når du er færdig.**

*One of the four ads is shown based on the respondent's birthdate (see Appendix A.1)*

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**Q3: Angiv venligst i hvilken grad du er enig med følgende udsagn:**
1 angiver, at du i meget *lav* grad er enig med udsagnet
7 angiver, at du i meget *høj* grad er enig med udsagnet

| | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mens jeg læste annoncen kunne jeg nemt forestille mig de beskrevne begivenheder finde sted | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Mens jeg læste annoncen forestillede jeg mig selv være på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q4: Hvor attraktiv finder du den beskrevne ferieform fra annoncen?**
1 angiver, at du overhovedet *ikke* finder den beskrevne ferieform attraktiv
7 angiver, at du *finder* den beskrevne ferieform meget attraktiv

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q5: Nedenfor ses en liste med egenskaber, der kan bruges til at karakterisere destinationer. Angiv venligst hvor præcist hver egenskab karakteriserer din opfattelse af et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet:**
1 angiver, at egenskaben ifølge dig karakteriserer et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet meget *upræcist*
7 angiver, at egenskaben ifølge dig karakteriserer et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet meget *præcist*

| | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flot landskab | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Interessante kulturelle/historiske seværdigheder | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Uspolerede omgivelser | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Venlig lokalbefolkning | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Indbydende lokalretter | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Gode strande | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q6: Nedenfor ses en liste med ord, der kan bruges til at beskrive destinationer. Angiv venligst hvor præcist hvert ord beskriver din opfattelse af et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet:**
1 angiver, at ordet ifølge dig beskriver et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet meget *upræcist*
7 angiver, at ordet ifølge dig beskriver et ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet meget *præcist*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pirrende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Søvndyssende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Behageligt | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Ubehageligt | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Spændende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Nedtrykkende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Afslappende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Udmattende | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q7: Efter at have set annoncen hvor sandsynligt er det da, at du vil søge mere information om et potentielt ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet?**
1 angiver, at det overhovedet *ikke* er sandsynligt, at du vil søge mere information om et potentielt ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet
7 angiver, at det *er* meget sandsynligt, at du vil søge mere information om et potentielt ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q8: Ignorer pris og rejsetid. I hvilken grad ser du dig selv tage på et kortere eller længere ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet?**
1 angiver, at du i meget *lav* grad ser dig selv tage på et kortere eller længere ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet
7 angiver, at du i meget *høj* grad ser dig selv tage på et kortere eller længere ophold på et badehotel ved Vesterhavet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q9: På baggrund af annoncen vil du da anbefale den beskrevne ferieform til andre?**
1 angiver, at du helt bestemt *ikke* vil anbefale den beskrevne ferieform til andre
7 angiver, at du helt bestemt *vil* anbefale den beskrevne ferieform til andre

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q10: Hvad er din generelle holdning til annoncen, som du så i begyndelsen?**
1 angiver, at din generelle holdning til annoncen er meget *negativ*
7 angiver, at din generelle holdning til annoncen er meget *positiv*

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q11: Hvor mange gange har du været på ferie ved Vesterhavet inden for de seneste 5 år?**

(1) ❑ 0 gange

(2) ❑ 1-2 gange

(3) ❑ 3-4 gange

(4) ❑ 5 gange eller flere

**Q12: I hvilken grad passer den beskrevne ferieform i annoncen til din personlighed?**
1 angiver, at den beskrevne ferieform passer til din personlighed i meget *lav* grad
7 angiver, at den beskrevne ferieform passer til din personlighed i meget *høj* grad

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q13.1: Hvor bekendt er du med TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet?**
1 angiver, at du overhovedet *ikke* er bekendt med TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet
7 angiver, at du *er* meget bekendt med TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q13.2: I hvilken grad synes du om TV2's drameserie Badehotellet?**
1 angiver, at du i meget *lav* grad synes om TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet
7 angiver, at du i meget *høj* grad synes om TV2's dramaserie Badehotellet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

*The above question is only asked if the respondent has answered 2 or higher in Q13.1*

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**Q14: Angiv din alder:**

_____

**Q15: Angiv dit køn:**

(1) ❑ Mand

(2) ❑ Kvinde

**Q16: Hvor i landet er du bosat?**

(1) ❑ Region Hovedstaden

(2) ❑ Region Sjælland

(3) ❑ Region Syddanmark

(4) ❑ Region Midtjylland

(5) ❑ Region Nordjylland

**Q17: Hvad er dit højest gennemførte uddannelsesniveau?**

(1) ❑ Folkeskolen

(2) ❑ Faglært (håndværker, SOSU eller tilsvarende)

(3) ❑ Gymnasial uddannelse (STX, HHX, HTX, HF eller tilsvarende)

(4) ❑ Kort videregående uddannelse (mindre end 3 års studie)

(5) ❑ Mellemlang videregående uddannelse (3-4 års studie)

(6) ❑ Længere videregående uddannelse (mere end 4 års studie)

**Q18: Hvor mange hjemmeboende børn under 18 år har du?**

(1) ❑ Ingen hjemmeboende børn under 18 år

(2) ❑ 1-2 hjemmeboende børn under 18 år

(3) ❑ 3-4 hjemmeboende børn under 18 år

(4) ❑ 5 eller flere hjemmeboende børn under 18 år

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Tak for din deltagelse. Tryk "Afslut" for at færdiggøre spørgeskemaet.

## Appendix B.2: The questionnaire – English version

**Welcome!**

As part of our master's thesis we are investigating how attractive potential tourists finds Danish tourist destinations.

The questionnaire takes about 5 minutes to complete and your answers will be anonymous. It is only for scientific reason and your data are not used commercially. If you have any questions about the content please contact us: sem.speciale@gmail.com.

Please answer the question to the best of your belief.

**Thank you very much for your cooperation – we appreciate your participation.**

Camilla Andersen and Christina Schneider

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**Q1: You will now be assigned to one of four ads based on what time of the month you were born. Please select one of the following categories:**

(1) ❑ My birthday is between the 1st and 7th

(2) ❑ My birthday is between the 8th and 15th

(3) ❑ My birthday is between the 16th and 23rd

(4) ❑ My birthday is between the 24th and 31st

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**Q2: Please read the ad below. Press next, when you are done.**

*One of the four ads is shown based on the respondent's birthdate (see Appendix A.2)*

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**Q3: Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement?**
1 indicates that you agree with the statement to a very *low* extent
7 indicates that you agree with the statement to a very *high* extent

| | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| While reading the ad, I could easily picture the events in it taking place. | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| While reading the ad, I pictured myself being at a seaside hotel by the North Sea. | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q4: How attractive do you find the type of vacation described in the ad?**
1 indicates that you do *not* find the type of vacation described in the ad attractive
7 indicates that you *do* find the type of vacation described in the ad very attractive

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q5: Below is a list of attributes that can be used to characterize destinations. Please indicate how accurately each attribute characterizes your view of a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea**
1 indicates that the attribute according to you characterizes a stay at seaside hotel by the North Sea very *inaccurately*
7 indicates that the attribute according to you characterizes a stay at seaside hotel by the North Sea very *accurately*

| | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beautiful scenery | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Interesting cultural/historical attractions | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Unspoiled environment | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friendly local people | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Appealing local food | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Great beaches | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q6: Below is a list of words that can be used to describe destinations. Please indicate how accurately each word describes your view of a stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea:**
1 indicates that the word according to you characterizes a stay at seaside hotel by the North Sea very *inaccurately*
7 indicates that the attribute according to you characterizes a stay at seaside hotel by the North Sea very *accurately*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arousing | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Sleepy | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Pleasant | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Unpleasant | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Exciting | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Gloomy | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Relaxing | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |
| Distressing | (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q7: After seeing the ad, how likely is it that you would consider seeking more information about a potential stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea?**
1 indicates that it is *not* likely at all that you would consider seeking more information about a potential stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea
7 indicates that it *is* very likely that you would consider seeking more information about a potential stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q8: Ignore price and travel time. To what extent do you see yourself taking a short or longer stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea?**
1 indicates that you to a very *low* extent see yourself taking a short or longer stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea
7 indicates that you to a very *high* extent see yourself taking a short or longer stay at a seaside hotel by the North Sea

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q9: Based on the ad, would you recommend the described type of vacation to others?**
1 indicates that you would definitely *not* recommend the described type of vacation to others
7 indicates that you *would* definitely recommend the described type of vacation to others

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q10: What is your general attitude towards the ad you saw in the beginning?**
1 indicates that your general attitude to the ad is very *negative*
7 indicates that your general attitude to the ad is very *positive*

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

**Q11: How many times have you been on vacation by the North Sea within the last 5 years?**

(1) ❑ 0 times

(2) ❑ 1-2 times

(3) ❑ 3-4 times

(4) ❑ 5 times or more

**Q12: To what extent does the described type of vacation in the ad fits your personality?**
1 indicates that the described type of vacation fits your personality to a very *low* extent
7 indicates that the described type of vacation fits your personality to a very *high* extent

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q13.1: How familiar are you with TV2's drama series Badehotellet?**
1 indicates that you are *not* all familiar with TV2's drama series Badehotellet
7 indicates that you *are* very familiar with TV2's drama series Badehotellet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

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**Q13.2: To what extent do you like TV2's drama series Badehotellet?**
1 indicates that you to a very *low* extent like TV2's drama series Badehotellet
7 indicates that you to a very *high* extent like TV2's drama series Badehotellet

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) ❑ | (2) ❑ | (3) ❑ | (4) ❑ | (5) ❑ | (6) ❑ | (7) ❑ |

*The above question is only asked if the respondent has answered 2 or higher in Q13.1*

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**Q14: Age:**

_____

**Q15: Gender:**

(1) ❑ Male

(2) ❑ Female

**Q16: Where in the country do you live?**

(1) ❑ Capital Region of Denmark

(2) ❑ Region Zealand

(3) ❑ Region of Southern Denmark

(4) ❑ Central Denmark Region

(5) ❑ North Denmark Region

**Q17: What is your highest achieved education?**

(1) ❑ Primary school

(2) ❑ Skilled worker (craftsman, healthcare assistants or similar)

(3) ❑ Gymnasium (STX, HHX, HTX, HF or similar)

(4) ❑ Short higher education (less then 3 years)

(5) ❑ Medium higher education (3-4 years)

(6) ❑ Long higher education (more than 4 years)

**Q18: How many children under the age of 18 years living at home do you have?**

(1) ❑ None children under the age of 18 years living at home

(2) ❑ 1-2 children under the age of 18 years living at home

(3) ❑ 3-4 children under the age of 18 years living at home

(4) ❑ 5 or more children under the age of 18 years living at home

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Thank you for your participation. Please press "Finish" to complete the questionnaire.