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MASTER'S THESIS

Conceptualization of Tourism Affinity

A study on Danish tourists and

Spain as a travel destination

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Abstract

Purpose: This Master's thesis develops, for the first time, the construct of Tourism Affinity, a positive out-group bias to a certain foreign country, and explores how it shapes tourist behavior, in the context of Danish tourists and Spain as a travel destination. This study empirically tests tourists' willingness to travel to Spain, actual trips taken to Spain and other behavioral outcomes in relation to Spain, as an affinity country.

Methodology: This study follows a mix method, consisting of a qualitative pre-study and a quantitative study. The qualitative data was gathered from 7 interviews, and the quantitative data was collected through an online questionnaire, in which 175 individuals participated. Consequently, the collected questionnaire data was used to test the hypothesis developed by the researchers in the theoretical framework, through a regression analysis.

Findings: The five key categories forming destination imagery in the model developed for this study, were adopted from existent literature and adapted to the tourism field for the purpose of this study. In addition, this study empirically tests how Tourism Affinity shapes tourists' behavior, and evinces the positive relationship between Tourism Affinity and willingness to travel and actual trips taken to the affinity country, and the positive effect it has on word of mouth, susceptibility to negative information, user generated content on social media, gift-giving consumption and engagement with local aspects of the affinity country.

Implications: The contributions to the literature and practical significance of the findings, with some examples, are presented in a theoretical and practical implications section.

Key words: Tourism Affinity, tourist behavior, evolutionary psychology, fundamental motives, affiliation, intergroup biases.

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List of abbreviations

AT	Actual Trips
CIP	Country Induced Predispositions
COO	Country of Origin
DA	Destination Affect
DCM	Destination Content Model
DI	Destination Image
DY	Destination Imagery
SNI	Susceptibility to Negative Information
TA	Tourism Affinity
TE	Tourism Ethnocentrism
TXO	Tourism Xenophobia
TXI	Tourism Xenophilia
UGC	User Generated Content
WOM	Word of Mouth
WTV	Willingness to Visit

Table 1

List of variables

AIRBNB	Staying at AIRBNB
AT	Actual Trips
CROWD	Perception of crowdedness
DY	Destination Imagery
GG	Gift-giving
GROUP	Group activities with locals
FF	Staying with family and friends
FOOD	Trying local food
LOCALS	Engage with locals
SNI	Susceptibility to Negative Information
TA	Tourism Affinity
UGC	User Generated Content
WOM	Word of Mouth
WTV	Willingness to Visit

Table 2

"A team is not a group of people who work together. A team is a group of people who trust each other."

Simon Sinek

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1. Introduction

The tourism sector is an important economic activity, with a noteworthy weight in the overall economy. The total contribution of travel and tourism to the global economy in 2019 was 9,25 trillion US dollars (Jaaskelainen, 2020), being the economic sector that grew more in 2018 (Reed, 2019).

The Internet and globalization have made things easier for travelling. After the 50s, not only has travelling become a normal activity for the population, but also new ways of consuming and making tourism have arisen (Darbellay & Stock, 2012). Nowadays, tourists are one click away from designing their own holiday plan (Beaver, 2012).

With new technologies and the Internet, the tourist generating region is losing weight in the equation as travel agencies do not have the importance they once did. On the contrary, destination branding and other efforts countries make to attract tourists, along with the support of the Internet and social media, are getting more and more relevant (Asseraf & Shoham, 2017). Notwithstanding, the two leading travel companies, the Expedia Group and Booking Holdings, reported 99 billion and 92.7 billion U.S. dollars sales revenue, respectively, in 2018 (Jaaskelainen, 2020).

The importance of this sector makes it vulnerable, as it can be seen with the current COVID-19 crisis (Jaaskelainen, 2020), and sensitive to international events and relationships between countries (Alvarez & Campo, 2019). In addition, the

importance of this sector is the reason why researchers, managers and policymakers have a great interest on this specific sector (Jaaskelainen, 2020).

Consumers are not always rational individuals, and they sometimes let their feelings decide their decision-making, over other positive objective aspects of a destination, like quality or price (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a). Another cue consumers consider when buying products or services, is the country of origin (COO) (Josiassen et al., 2008). By the same token, tourists hold emotions towards countries, and these emotions affect their decision-making when choosing what destination to go (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a). If managers understand these emotions correctly and take the necessary actions, the negative effect of biases can be moderated or eliminated, while the stimulation of positive biases, can lead to great advantages. In particular, tourism managers should consider these biases in their market research studies and strategies, as they are potent tools to understand destination decision-making and how they shape tourists' behaviors.

Furthermore, according to Heimtun (2007), tourism offers the possibility of bonding with others and a sense of social integration in quotidian activities, away from and at home. This view contrasts with the assumption proposed by some authors, of tourism as a way of scape from routines, making individuals seduced, by the fact that it gives meaning to their lives, without the obligation to commit to the places they visit or the people they meet (Heimtun, 2007). In line with Heimtun (2007), this study makes use of an evolutionary approach and the ultimate motive of affiliation, to explain how Tourism Affinity (TA) works and shapes individuals', in their role of tourists, behavior.

Globalization, the Internet and the global mobility of the population becoming more and more normal over time, has resulted into increased travelling, and the creation of bonds with other individuals and places, even if the individuals have never physically been in a place. These existent bonds, between tourists and certain countries, is the object of this study, TA, a positive bias towards a certain foreign country. While other affinity constructs and other biases towards countries in tourism have been researched, TA has not been developed until now.

The researchers define TA as *"a positive out-group bias represented by feelings of liking, admiration and attachment, towards a specific foreign country, based on tourists' personal interests and past experiences, which influences tourists' intention to travel and shapes other tourist behaviors".*

The objective of this study is to explore the relationship between affinity and the tourism industry, in order to delimitate the TA construct and how it affects individuals' behavior, in their role of tourists. For this purpose, the researchers choose Denmark as the home country and Spain as the target country. Furthermore, Destination Imagery (DY) is included in the model developed for this study, in order to explore the cognitive associations that relate to TA, and with the final aim to offer a whole picture of this phenomenon. Specifically, the research questions this study will address are:

1) How does Destination Imagery relate to Tourism Affinity?

2) How does Tourism Affinity influence tourists' willingness to travel and actual trips to the affinity country?

3) How does Tourism Affinity shape other tourist behaviors?

Regarding the structure of this thesis, firstly, a review of previous theories and their main findings are disclosed in a literature review, in section 2. Section 3 constitutes the theoretical framework of this thesis, that develops the model and the hypotheses that address the research questions specified above. The next section, section 4, explains the methodology design followed by this thesis. The results of the study are explained in section 5, where an explanation of acceptance or rejection of each hypothesis is provided, followed by the discussion of this thesis' results, in section 6, where theoretical and practical implications are presented. The limitations of this study and suggestions for future research are explained in section 7. This thesis finalizes with a conclusion, that conforms section 8.

2. Literature review

In order to define, measure and gain a full understanding of the TA construct, it is essential to get an overview of the theories to which it is conceptually anchored and related. This section starts by explaining what intergroup biases are, and how they work and influence individuals' behavior. Moreover, these biases are illustrated by the attraction-repulsion matrix introduced by Josiassen (2011), and they are explained further, in the consumer behavior field. This is followed by a review of the different affinity constructs developed in Academia, in order to exhibit the common traits they share among them and with TA. Because the object of this thesis is to study TA, a review of tourism as a discipline, introduces the biases previously explained, into the tourism field. Furthermore, a review of individuals' motivations through evolutionary psychology, with a special focus on the motive of affiliation, is exposed. Finally, an explanation on how mental representations function, and the relationships between its elements, is presented.

2.1. Intergroup biases

Affinity's theoretical roots can be linked to **Social Identity Theory** (Tajfel, 1982), which focuses on the study of intergroup behavior and makes a differentiation between: in-groups; "*those groups with which an individual identifies*", and out-groups; "*those groups with which the individual does not have a sense of belonging and which are considered as antithetical to the in-groups*" (Durvasula et al., 1997).

Furthermore, Allport (1945) was one of the precursors to later research on intergroup biases and discrimination. He stated that, by definition, in-groups imply

out-groups, as in-group formation requires differentiation of the ones falling "inside" or "outside" one's boundaries. Moreover, he acknowledged in-groups are "psychologically primary," meaning familiarity, attachment, and preference for in-groups precede the development of attitudes toward out-groups. Furthermore, he posited preferential positivity for in-groups does not necessarily imply negativity or hostility toward out-groups, but instead, is compatible with a range of attitudes, including disinterest, disdain, or antipathy.

Based on this assumption, in-group favoritism and out-group negativity can be considered distinct constructs, hence they do not relate reciprocally. On this line, intergroup biases can independently manifest as either favoritism for the in-group, or, derogation of an out-group, and as long as intergroup distinctiveness is preserved, out-groups can be perceived as indifferent, sympathetic, or even admired (Brewer, 1999; Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, et al., 2019).

Since then, many scholars have expanded the field of intergroup research. When studying how people develop attachment and feelings toward groups, Druckman (1994), stressed some individuals feel more attached and sympathetic to some out-groups than to others. Based on this positive attachment, it is possible for individuals to even consider other nations into their in-group (Oberecker et al., 2008).

In view of this, there is a window of opportunity to examine what happens whenever members of different groups share the same beliefs, or oppositely, when members of the same group disagree regarding their convictions.

Chen and Kenrick (2002) developed a model, by establishing two different views regarding the influence of similarity and dissimilarity in individuals' attraction to or repulsion for groups. On the one hand, similarity encourages group attraction. On the other hand, dissimilarity promotes group repulsion.

2.2. Consumer intergroup biases

Drawing on the two dimensions exposed by Chen and Kenrick (2002) and on further research from social sciences, Josiassen (2011), provided an integrative country biases matrix (figure 1) that enabled a further understanding on the overall topic, into consumer behavior. Along the extents of attraction/repulsion and domestic/foreign country, four constructs were distinguished: consumer ethnocentrism, consumer disidentification, consumer affinity and consumer animosity.

The consumer Attraction-Repulsion Matrix

	Attraction	Repulsion
Domestic Country	Consumer Ethnocentrism	Consumer Disidentification
Foreign Country	Consumer Affinity	Animosity

Reference: Josiassen (2011)

Figure 1

Consumer ethnocentrism is the positive intergroup bias of perceiving the in-group as virtuous and superior over other out-groups, which are seen as contemptible and inferior. This turns the construct into a manifestation of discriminatory attitudes and behaviors, which are generally based on group boundaries defined by observable characteristics (Sumner, 1906; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Hammond & Axelrod, 2006).

The concept of consumer ethnocentrism was introduced by Shimp and Sharma (1987), referring to it as "*the beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness and indeed morality, of purchasing foreign-made products*" (Shimp & Sharma, 1987, p. 280). Consumer ethnocentrism provides an understanding of what

consumption behaviors are acceptable or not to the in-group, and confers upon individuals, a sense of identity and feelings of belongingness. Furthermore, the construct centers on the competition between domestic and foreign products and considers the effect of imports on the domestic economies (Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

Beyond the discriminatory nature of ethnocentrism, ethnocentric behavior can be defined as in-group favoritism of the home nation or its members over other nations (Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, et al., 2019). This approach is relevant, as it helps towards the differentiation between in-group favoritism, namely ethnocentrism, and out-group hostility, namely xenophobia (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a).

Additionally, **consumer disidentification** roots from the general sociological concept of national disidentification, which represents individuals' responsive and antagonistic positions towards the country where they live (Josiassen, 2011).

In this way, consumer disidentification represents "*consumers' active rejection of and distancing from the perceived typical domestic consumer*" (Josiassen, 2011, p. 125). According to this view, consumers harboring disidentification, tend to categorize themselves as different from the majority group. Consumer disidentification differs from the consumer ethnocentrism construct, as it implies a disconnection between individuals and various aspects of the national category (Josiassen, 2011).

Consumer disidentification highly relates to the consumer adaptation literature, as it is necessary to understand how individuals adapt to life in other countries. Two main concepts stemming from this literature are acculturation (Laroche et al., 2007) and ethnic identification (C. Kim et al., 2001). Both focus on attachment, maintenance and other aspects of positive nature, hence, closely relating with consumer affinity. While ethnic identification relates to the degree to which traits from the original country or culture are maintained, acculturation contemplates different degrees of identification with the dominant culture (Josiassen, 2011). Moreover, acculturation is associated to specific outcomes, such as linguistic, mass media, and social interaction. Acculturated individuals are attached to and identify with a certain foreign culture. This makes them learn the cultures' traits, including aspects such as speaking the language, socializing with locals, and considering the culture rich and precious (C. Kim et al., 2001).

The third bias comprised in the attraction-repulsion matrix is **consumer affinity.** Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006) were the first scholars who presented affinity as a segmentation basis, but they did not provide a formal definition of the consumer affinity construct, nor did they empirically test their model. They considered consumer affinity as an affectively based and favorable attitude toward a foreign country, conceived as the polar opposite of consumer animosity (Klein et al., 1998). This view was then contrasted by academics who were skeptical of this perspective, as further research revealed affinity and animosity were not bi-polar endpoints on a unidimensional scale, but distinct constructs (Asseraf & Shoham, 2016; Nes et al., 2014; Oberecker et al., 2008).

Oberecker et al. (2008) elaborated upon the concept, enunciating for the first time a definition of the consumer affinity construct: *"A feeling of liking, sympathy, and*

even attachment toward a specific foreign country that has become an in-group as a results of the consumer's direct personal experience and/or normative exposure and that positively affects the consumer's decision making associated with products and services originating from the affinity country" (Oberecker et al., 2008, p. 26). Accordingly, they posited the sources upon which consumer affinity was based, could be classified into macro and micro drivers. The four macro drivers proposed, namely: lifestyle, culture, scenery, politics and economics, could reveal what individuals liked about the affinity target. The three micro drivers proposed, namely: stay abroad, travel and, family contact and personal contact, could express how individuals developed that affinity, based upon on personal experience (Oberecker et al., 2008).

Even though Oberecker et al. (2008) provided a formal definition of consumer affinity, they did not exactly define the conceptual nature of affinity, as they used interchangeably terms, such as "feelings" and "emotions" which do not have the same meaning. Neither did they consider the dimension level of the construct in an explicit way or determine an operational definition for the affinity variable, albeit, being essential, in order to embed the consumer affinity construct within a nomological network and examine its behavioral consequences.

In an effort to close these gaps, Oberecker and Diamantopoulos (2011) developed a higher-order construct, comprising, two first-order dimensions, sympathy and attachment, for capturing affinity feelings. The sympathy dimension comprises emotions capturing lower positive affect, while the attachment dimension comprises, emotions that capture the high positive affect. As both dimensions reflect a specific facet of the same construct, the authors put forward that affinity

should be considered as a higher-order independent construct, instead of just a set of related dimensions (Oberecker & Diamantopoulos, 2011).

Building on cognitive appraisal theories of emotion, Nes et al. (2014) extended the understanding of general affinity by developing four dimensions driving the construct. These were: culture and landscape, people, music and entertainment, and politics of the affinity target country.

In an effort to revalidate the underlying sources of consumer affinity, Asseraf and Shoham (2017) replicated and tested the findings from Oberecker et al. (2008), and the results from their study showed two more potential drivers should be considered: cultural similarity and collective memory.

Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b), developed a more sophisticated affinity measure, capable of capturing a greater array of positive emotions and feelings. This comprises three first-order dimensions: liking, attachment and admiration. Emotions related to the liking dimension reflect a state of fondness and sympathy, thus being closest to the conceptualization of the existing affinity construct. Feelings related to the attachment dimension reflect an emotional bond, connecting consumers with the country. Emotions related to the admiration category refer to respect and attributed competence (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b). This latter approach helps to gain a comprehensive understanding of the emotional landscape that consumers harbor towards specific countries, as affinity is measured as an affective scale, rather than from a cognitive point of view.

Finally, the **animosity** bias was described as "*remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political or economic events*" (Klein et al., 1998, p. 90) and represents a negative attitude towards a specific foreign country. The original construct was indicated by two first-order dimensions: war animosity and economic animosity (Klein et al., 1998). In this sense, the animosity construct was formulated as a means of understanding and clarifying cross-country phenomena. However, the concept has also served to widely examine consumer behavior, especially related to the COO effect (Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2007).

2.3. Affinity constructs in Academia

Moreover, apart from consumer affinity, affinity has been developed by researchers in at least four more contexts:

Cultural affinity is defined as the liking and other positive connotations someone has for a certain foreign culture (Swift, 1999). According to Fourie and Santana-Gallego (2013), cultural affinity is the predilection tourists have, for visiting countries with a shared cultural identity over countries they do not. In addition, this phenomenon is historically linked to migration, and it explains tourism patterns, as tourists tend to travel more to countries with similar cultures. Thus, cultural affinity is an important determinant when explaining tourist destination decision-making. The cultural dimensions where tourists experience this cultural affinity are: familiar language, style of architecture, food or music and ethnicity (Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2013).

Cultural closeness (or distance) is someone's perception about the level of similarity (or difference) their culture and another foreign culture has (Swift, 1999). According to this author, the more similar a foreign culture and someone's culture is (or the individual feels it is), the more affinity this individual will have for this foreign culture. In this sense, cultural closeness is a contributory factor to cultural affinity (Swift, 1999).

Among other benefits, cultural affinity will help, not only to the smooth running of relationships during negotiations, but to the willingness, to start the business relationship by participants. In addition, the business interaction will be easier and more effective when the participants feel culturally close to each other (Swift, 1999).

Although cultural affinity is an important starting point or base to define TA, it does not fully explain it. TA is partially explained by cultural affinity, but other dimensions driving TA should be considered. In addition, cultural dissimilarities can sometimes explain tourists' decision-making and drive positive outcomes out of it (Asseraf & Shoham, 2017).

According to Macchiette and Roy (1992), **affinity marketing** is a strategy used to offer special incentives to association members, in return for their endorsement. By using group affiliation, this technique generates strong and credible promotional programs, specifically tailored to the individual within a group context (Macchiette & Roy, 1992).

Obtaining potential customers attention and persuading them about commercial campaigns, are challenging tasks vendors encounter. When these campaigns are

designed, by generating trust and credibility, they are more successful and effective. Despite this construct being barely linked with the TA construct, both are based on the ultimate motive of affiliation (Mead et al., 2008).

Intercultural affinity is a component of the intercultural communication model presented by Kupka et al. (2007), where affinity is depicted as an emotional inclination towards an individual's home culture and possibly other foreign cultures as well. A subsequent study by Kupka et al. (2008) draws on the affinity component, in order to assess the use of intercultural communication methods, to support expatriated partners.

The concept of **international affinity** is discussed when analyzing its possible influence in the probability of disputes between states (Maoz et al., 2006). In an attempt to integrate different concepts of affinity (e.g., Bowles & Gintis, 2004; Swift, 1999), two extents are distinguished: direct and structural. Direct affinity represents the degree to which individuals are related to each other, based on direct relations, mutual perceptions or common traits. Alternatively, structural affinity represents the degree to which, individuals are similar to each other, as regards their attitudes toward their common traits, or their interpersonal relations, within the system (Maoz et al., 2006).

What is common to the affinity constructs reviewed above is, regardless of the subject, all are based on the liking, sympathy and attachment to something or someone. They are all based in explaining these feelings through past, present or future social relations. Affinity marketing relies on the trust someone has to another person in order to sell something, through a more efficient campaign, while cultural

affinity explains tourism patterns associated with history and migration. In line with this, intercultural communication affinity explains the emotions developed towards cultures and its implications in communication conducts. Finally, international affinity examines how different sorts of affinity affect the chance of conflict between states.

As shown above, the study of affinity has been widely explored in marketing and consumer research. However, little has been researched in the tourism sector.

2.4. Tourism

Considering this project's aim is to develop a new construct, TA, it sounds fair to research and provide a **holistic definition of tourism**, as this research has previously done with affinity, reviewing the literature of all the affinity constructs, already studied in Academia.

This definition is not only going to help define the scope of our research, but will help to clarify all the terminology associated to this construct.

Numerous organizations and authors have attempted to define tourism. However, due to its complex and changing nature, tourism, as a discipline, field, industry or sector has struggled to have a unanimous definition, and still does today.

One of the most accepted definitions of tourism is, one agreed at the International Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics held in Ottawa, Canada, in June 1991, and ratified by the United Nations Statistical Commission meeting, held in New York

in 1993, which was then revised by the Commission of the European Communities, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations, and World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Beaver, 2012). According to these entities, "*Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business, and other purposes* not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited" (OECD Statistics Directorate).

The resources used, products and services consumed, and the entities that provide all of them, conform to the economic side of the tourism industry (Beaver, 2012). The Australian Department of Tourism and Recreation published transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and related services as the activities belonging to the tourism industry in 1975. Leiper (1979), agrees with these activities proposed by the Australian Department of Tourism and Recreation, but specifically indicates the human element needs to be added to the economic approach of tourism, as he considers it key, as well as spatial and temporal elements (Leiper, 1979).

Furthermore, when Leiper (1979) develops the industrial component of tourism, he defines it as all the organizations which help in providing all the products and services tourists need or want, and differentiates between tourism marketing, carriers, accommodation, attractions, miscellaneous services and regulation as the sectors involved, in order to provide resources to tourists, in forms of experiences, services and facilities. The tourism marketing sector facilitates the communication between the tourist and the destination region, as well as with the other sectors conforming to the tourism industry. Carriers is the sector that manages the transportation, while accommodation and other services, for example, food are included in the tourist accommodation sector. Tourist attractions take care of all

the cultural events, theme parks and other attractions designed for tourists. The regulation sector is formed by governmental and educational institutions, and finally, the miscellaneous tourist service includes everything not mentioned before, and can be exemplified as travel insurance or restaurants specialized in tourists. The geographical or spatial elements can be classified into: the tourist generating region, transit region and tourist destination region (Leiper, 1979). Before 1950, the tourism sector was very exclusive, due to economic and political reasons. These barriers were overcome after the 50s, and together, with the globalization and the Internet, new ways of consuming and making tourism arose (Darbellay & Stock, 2012). The traditional market was led by travel agencies, while today the tourist is one click away from designing their own holiday plan (Beaver, 2012). With new technologies and the Internet, the tourist generating region is losing weight in the equation, as travel agencies do not have the importance they did before. On the contrary, destination branding and other efforts countries make to attract tourists, with the support of the Internet and social media, are becoming more and more relevant (Asseraf & Shoham, 2017).

Tourism nowadays is an interdisciplinary, theoretical framework and not a mere discipline. Tourism is a very complex phenomenon resulting from the interaction of different disciplines (geography, sociology, anthropology, economics and political science) and dimensions of society (political, social, economic, spatial, temporal, and cultural). In this sense, for example, the study of allocation of financial resources and its effect upon a certain society, within tourism, will belong to the economic discipline, and it will be different, but it could interact with the study of how an increase of tourism could affect local societies, that would be a sociological topic per se (Darbellay & Stock, 2012).

2.5. Intergroup biases in tourism

From the attraction-repulsion matrix (Josiassen, 2011) explained before and illustrated in figure 1, different researchers have adapted and developed different constructs into the tourism field, as it follows. However, TA remains unexplored.

Tourism Ethnocentrism (TE) is defined as "*an individual's prescriptive beliefs and felt moral obligation to support the domestic tourism economy*" (Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, et al., 2019, p. 427). It is different from the concept of destination image (DI), as TE is a positive bias, related to supporting the COO tourism industry It goes beyond objective quality criteria, while DI "*captures tourists' beliefs about the quality and features of a destination*" (Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, et al., 2019, p. 428). TE has its basis in the reasoning behind favoring and helping the ones belonging to the in-group (Kock, Josiassen, Assaf, et al., 2019).

As mentioned before, TE is a positive bias towards the COO and it is not linked to negative attitudes towards foreign countries. Instead, the negative bias against foreign countries is called xenophobia. **Tourism Xenophobia** (TXO), has been already studied and it is defined as "*a tourist's perceptual discomfort and anxiety associated with strangers encountered at foreign destinations*" (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a, p. 156).

The research of TXO has a social and evolutionary approach, and particularly, its bases are the motives of avoiding physical harm and diseases, and the study of negative out-group bias. Although it is true xenophobia is a barrier to foreign

travelling, xenophobic tourists still travel, but in a particular way, analyzed in this study (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a).

Furthermore, xenophilia can be defined as the natural attraction to everything that is perceived as foreign and has been linked to a wide range of human beliefs, attitudes and behaviors (Nørfelt et al., 2019). According to Stürmer et al. (2013), curiosity and hospitality toward foreigners, are manifestations of this phenomenon, and so do benevolent cross-cultural exploration. **Tourism xenophilia** (TXI) is defined as "*individuals' attraction toward the perceived foreignness of destinations*" (Nørfelt, et al., 2019, p. 3).

Under a Social Identity Theory perspective (Brewer, 1999; Tajfel, 1982), xenophilia can be understood as a positive out-group bias. Under a tourism perspective, Cohen (1972), pointed out the condition of being "different" is precisely what originates individuals' interest in things, sights, customs and cultures, different from their own.

By adopting a perspective centered on evolutionary psychology, TXI can be perceived as the symptom of exploration. This rests on the concept of exploring the unknown or unfamiliar as the fundamental motive linked to the construct, which is explained by the survival mechanisms utilized by our prehistoric ancestors in order to survive (Kock et al., 2018).

In order to impart knowledge about **animosity** in the tourism field, a study conducted by Sanchez et al. (2018) researched diverse types of animosity in

various countries and its effects upon the intention to visit a given destination. Consequently, they recognized six kinds of animosity that arise, according to different scenarios and intensities: economic, social, political, religious, historical and military. However, the authors did not provide the defining conceptual characteristics of a tourism animosity construct.

Following the previous work, Alvarez and Campo (2019) conducted further research, in order to extend the consumer animosity construct to circumstances beyond bilateral conflicts between countries. Animosity was conceptualized as the aforementioned six categories and the authors incorporated a cognitive, an effective and an overall evaluation component in their model. The research determined three main dimensions driving animosity, that comprised: economic or military threat animosity, social animosity and political or conflict animosity.

2.6. Evolutionary psychology

For the researchers to define and understand what drives TA, it is necessary to get to the origin of tourists' behavior, and to explore the motives affecting individuals' behavior.

Proximal motives explain why consumers consume or why tourists travel, according to their feelings and thoughts in the present. In order to give a more complete picture of consumer's preferences and behavior, it is necessary to analyze ultimate motives as well (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

The behavior consumers have nowadays is connected to the challenges our ancestors faced and the decisions they made. **Evolutionary psychology** studies this connection and explains the ultimate motives of humans' decision-making processes (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). Evolutionary psychology has barely been used to explain tourist's behavior (J. Kim & Seo, 2019). By using the evolutionary approach in this study, the researchers want to contribute to closing this gap in the literature.

The process of facing a challenge and the solution associated, is what makes individuals' brains evolve. Although it is true behavior is not solely genetically determined, genes set policy on how our ancestors made decisions (Crouch, 2013). In addition, culture and gene co-evolve, and that is why there are differences in the propensity for travel and the preferred style of tourism from country to country (Crouch, 2013). Each fundamental motive is associated with a different mindset system to solve a certain challenge and, depending on the evolutionary challenge a person is intending to solve, the preference and decision-making process, and in the end, the final behavior, will be different (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). Thus, the evolutionary approach relies on ultimate functionality, or in other words, on a fundamental motives framework and the motivational system associated to solve each of them, and is domain specificity, meaning that each fundamental motive evokes a set of domain-specific cognitive and behavioral responses (J. Kim & Seo, 2019).

According to the evolutionary approach, the seven fundamental motives are evading physical harm, avoiding disease, making friends, attaining status, acquiring a mate, keeping a mate, and caring for family (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

In this sense, there are different contexts where evolutionary psychology can help give new and interesting explanations, being tourism one of them. Five fundamental motives are especially important and suitable to the tourism context, and they are: evading harm, exploration, affiliation, status and mating (Kock et al., 2018).

One motive that shapes tourist behavior is **affiliation** (Kock et al., 2018). In order to increase chances of survival and reproduction, humans have always lived in groups. Tourism is a particularly suitable environment for triggering the motive of affiliation, as, it is often experienced in the company of others (Kock et al., 2018). Accordingly, many offers from tourism suppliers focus on tourists' need for affiliation. Specifically, tourists normally travel to make new or maintain old relationships (family or friend trips), to make new acquaintances (individual backpacking, solo travelling) or to experience a sense of community (group travel) (Kock et al., 2018).

Today, having friends and not having feelings of loneliness, are very important, and therefore, most people invest heavily in them. The affiliation motive is stimulated by having, making or losing friends; in summary, by being part of a group or by feeling lonely (Kock et al., 2018). Thus, when this motive is positively activated, people are more generous, altruistic, extrovert and willing to pay more for products that can connect and can be enjoyed with others (Kock et al., 2018). It makes people adjust their consumption, in ways that could increase their chance of belonging; in this sense, people influenced by the affiliation motive, spend more on conspicuous consumption (symbols of status or group membership), on products to fit-in (Mead et al., 2008) and on gift-giving (Crouch, 2013). Gift-giving is also related to the motive of status, as it shows individuals have the resources

to leave home, to spend part of their resources in gift-giving and the skills to return home safely (Crouch, 2013). Furthermore, affiliation makes consumers more susceptible to word of mouth (WOM) information and makes them seek reviews for other's opinions (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

Although an evolutionary perspective suggests affiliation motives are likely to be a particularly strong driver of human behavior, little work has examined the influence of affiliation goals on consumption (Mead et al., 2008). This encouraged the researchers to research further the motive of affiliation within tourists, when studying TA.

2.7. Mental representations

Country induced predispositions (CIPs) are the attitudes consumers have, when exposed to the COO cue. They are based on **mental representations,** and affect consumers' behavioral intentions (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

After decades of authors focused only on the cognitive part (or DI) of tourist's mental representations, the destination content model (DCM), introduced by Kock et al. (2016), not only distinguishes between an affective and a cognitive part, but also explains the link between them.

In this sense, the DCM gives a clear definition of two cognitive constructs, DY and DI, and one affective construct, destination affect (DA) (Kock et al., 2016). The DCM is represented in figure 2 below.

The destination content model (DCM)
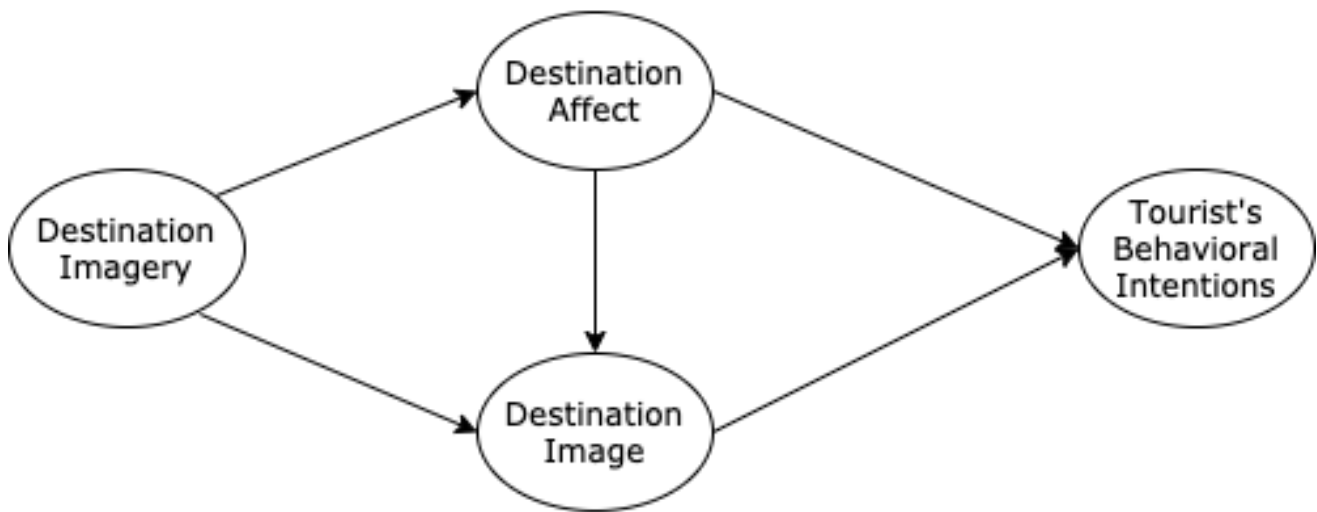
Kock et al. (2016)

Figure 2

An "*individual's overall evaluative representation of a destination*" is what Kock et al. (2016, p. 31) define as DI. The other cognitive construct included in this DCM, is DY, defined as "*an individual's diverse cognitive and affective associations relating to a destination*" (Kock et al., 2016, p. 32). DY are all the attributes (beliefs, impressions or schemas) an individual mentally links to a destination. In other words, while both components are cognitive, DI is the single-dimensional evaluative construct of the DCM, and DY is the multi-dimensional, descriptive one (Kock et al., 2016).

Before defining the affective component of the model, it is worth pointing out, despite DY includes affective descriptors, the construct is cognitive in nature (Kock et al., 2016). Affective associations come together with cognitive beliefs about the

destination, but DY does not reflect experiential affective states or affective responses of the individual toward the destination, as the affective construct does (Kock et al., 2016).

Finally, the affective construct included in the model, is the DA, and it is defined as "*an individual's overall affect attributed to a destination*" (Kock et al., 2016, p. 33). It is a single-dimensional evaluative construct. It is considered a positive or negative core affect and it is causal for a destination visit, rather than a consequence of visiting the destination (Kock et al., 2016). This construct has its basis upon individuals using their feelings to drive their predispositions towards a destination (Kock et al., 2016), as consumers (and tourists) are not always rational and they sometimes let their feelings decide their decision-making over other positive objective qualities of a destination .

The main implications deduced from Kock et al., (2016) is that both DI and DA positive relate to tourists' decision-making (WTV and WOM), that DY drives both DI and DA, and that DA drives DI. In figure 3 below, these results are illustrated.

Path model results from DCM
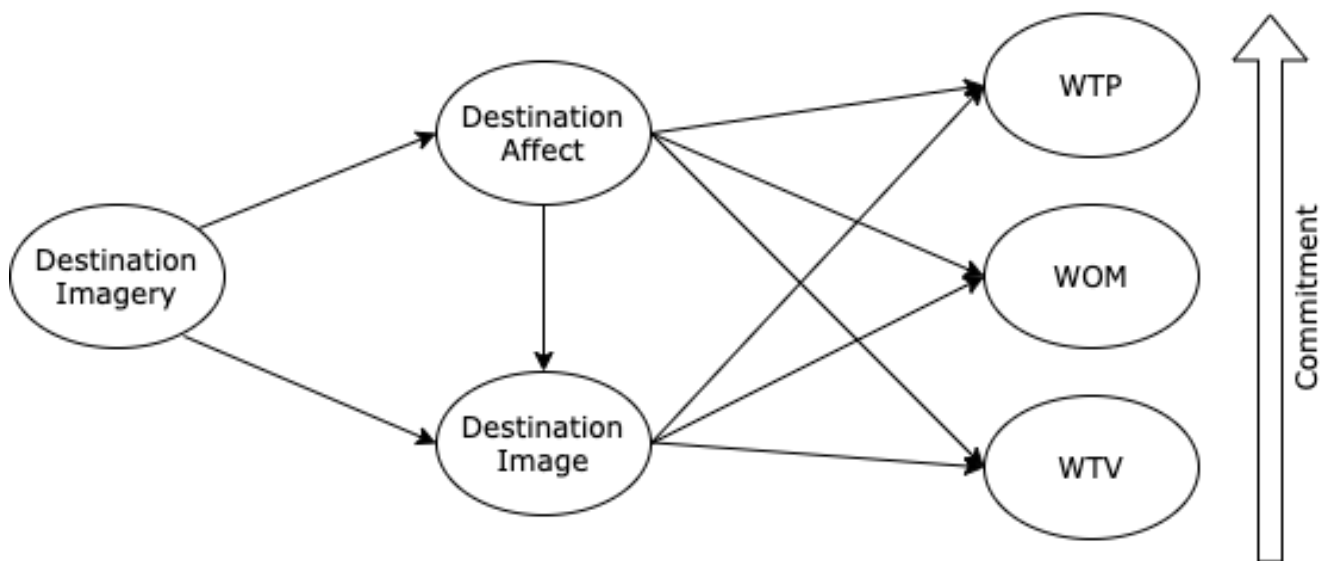
Kock et al. (2016)

Figure 3

The CIP Model introduced by Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b), includes a distinction between a cognitive and an emotional part in consumer's mental representations, when examining how consumers behave, when they are triggered by the COO cue. The CIP Model combines the imagery-image sub model, that refers to the performance-related country cognitions, with performance-unrelated country emotions (figure 4).

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Country-Induced Predispositions (CIPs) Model
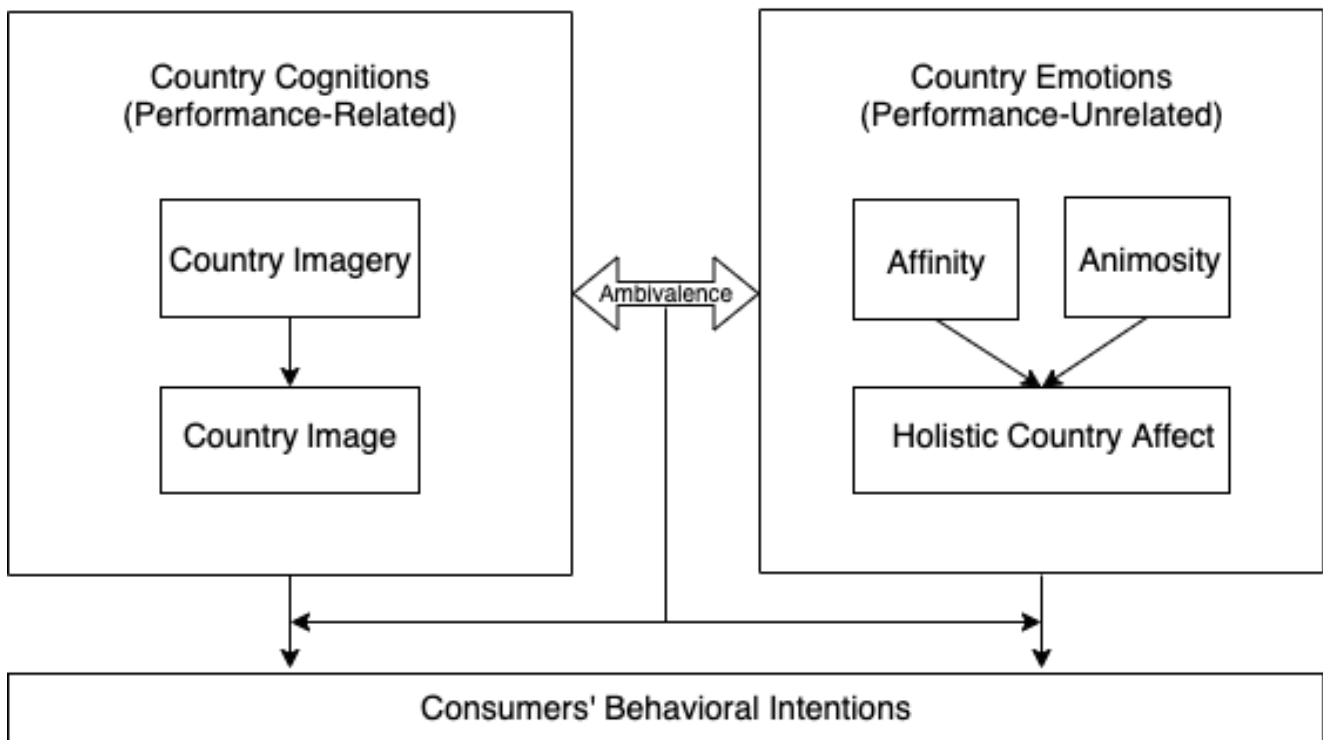
Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf (2019b)

Figure 4

The imagery-image sub model is formed by the country imagery and country image constructs. Country imagery refers to the multidimensional associations consumers store about a country, as an origin of products. The shortcut or summary of the country imagery is the country image (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

The performance-unrelated country emotions sub model is formed by positive and negative emotions constructs: the positive emotions are represented by the affinity construct, while animosity represents the negative ones. In addition, a holistic country affect component is included in the model, a shortcut or summary of

feelings towards a country. These emotions are a consequence of different sources: personal experiences and country-related events, for example wars or international conflicts. Thus, this country emotions occur at the country level and not at the product one (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

Another important aspect to highlight from Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b) research, is the way they measured affinity. As explained before, inspired by Oberecker and Diamantopoulos (2011) and Thomson et al. (2005), the authors developed a three-dimensional scale to measure affinity, being these three dimensions: liking, admiration and attachment.

In line with Kock et al. (2016) highlighting DY does not reflect experiential affective states or affective responses of the individual toward the destination, Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b) also explains how, despite of being different constructs, country-related emotions, such as animosity and affinity, are often confused with performance-related country cognitions.

The results of this article (as shown in figure 5) reflect imagery positively relates to image, and both imagery and image positively relate to willingness to buy. Moreover, affinity relates positively to willingness to buy. And the holistic country affect positively relates to country image. In addition, the study shows the higher the ambivalence between the cognitive and affective components, the weaker the effect of both country image and holistic country affect on willingness to buy (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

Results of the CIP model
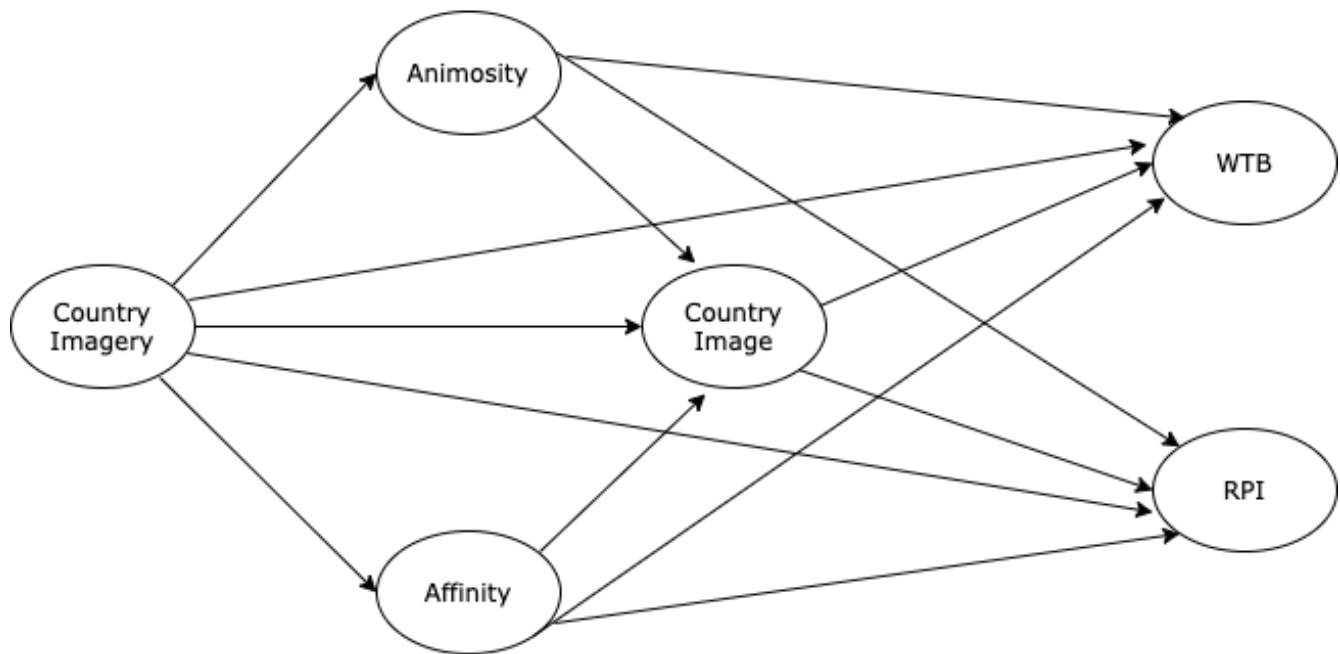
Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf (2019b)

Figure 5

Both the cognitive and the emotional part of the model are crucial to understand consumer's preferences. In this article, Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b) introduced a very illustrative example: Chinese consumers value Japanese products as high-quality ones, but because of their high level of animosity against Japan, they would prefer to buy products from somewhere else. Even though the emotions do not directly relate to the product characteristics, they influence consumers' preferences towards products from certain countries.

Furthermore, it is important to note the associations that make up an imagery, vary with the county of origin, the consumer's nationality and the product category,

as another theoretical implication derived from Kock, Josiassen and Assaf (2019b) research.

3. Framework

Motivated by the lack of research on affinity in tourism and its potential implications, the present research draws on seminal research reviewed in the previous section to develop a new construct and its conceptual framework: TA.

The researchers define TA as *"a positive out-group bias represented by feelings of liking, admiration and attachment towards a specific foreign country, based on tourists' personal interests and past experiences, which influences tourists' intention to travel and shapes other tourist behaviors".*

Regarding the previous definition, it is important to specify that when referring to tourists' personal interests, what the researchers mean is all the qualities that make tourists think something is interesting according to their preferences, thus recognizing interests as what tourists like and enjoy doing. Moreover, the feelings of attachment manifested through TA reflect the emotional bonds that connect the tourist with the country (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

In order to successfully investigate TA, it is necessary to have in mind the whole picture of how tourist mental representation works. As the researchers' main aim in this study is to develop the TA construct, it is necessary to develop a holistic model where the researchers can include, measure and test TA and its outcomes.

The researchers consider that the affective part of the DCM (Kock et al., 2016) should be improved, as an individual can have a great number of feelings for a

certain country, sometimes even contradictory ones, and a summary and evaluative construct of them. For example, a tourist might feel affinity for China because of a positive personal experience related to it but harbor a certain level of animosity towards the country because of its way of managing CO_2 emissions. A final overall aggregation of these feelings would act as a shortcut, evaluating the overall level of affection, but it should not be the only component from which to derive final conclusions about the country.

Consequently, the researchers posit the CIP Model (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b) is more accurate than the DCM, and therefore, it should be adapted to the tourism area and serve this study. In addition, the way the CIP Model measures affinity, through a three components scale: liking, admiration and attachment, will be adapted in this study.

Previously, a literature review on evolutionary psychology and fundamental or ultimate motives associated to it, from a tourism point of view, was conducted. Because TA is based on liking, admiration or attachment to a certain foreign country, the fundamental motive that helps understand it, is affiliation.

At a first instance, exploration sounds very suitable to explain people's motivation to travel. However, people who travel to their affinity country are not normally characterized by travelling because of curiosity, boredom, wanderlust or xenophilia. In this sense, liking, admiration, but specially, attachment can explain why a certain foreign country may rouse the affiliation system in the tourist mind, as attachment is the link a tourist has with a certain foreign country due to, among others, family, friends or past experiences.

Although an evolutionary perspective suggests that affiliation motives are likely to be a particular strong driver of human behavior, little work has examined the influence of affiliation goals on consumption (Mead et al., 2008). This encouraged the researchers to research further the motive of affiliation within tourists when studying TA.

The main motive behind the explanation of TA is affiliation, but this does not mean other motives, as exploration, status or mating can be activated before, during or after the trips to the affinity country. Each motive has evolved to solve a different need, and tourism is known for being quite a dynamic and invigorating activity; thus, tourists face a lot of different decision-making when travelling. Sometimes inherited solutions to two different evolutionary challenges are bipolar and even incompatible. Affiliation was a survival mechanism, and at the same time, it may represent an attempt to attract mates, or signaling the status in a group (J. Kim & Seo, 2019).

Furthermore, TXI (Nørfelt et al., 2019) already explored the ultimate motive of exploration to explain tourists' behavior. In order to make a greater contribution to the literature, the researchers opted to focus this study in exploring the motive of affiliation within TA.

The framework depicts our general assumptions of the causal relationship between DY and TA, and how the latter influences diverse tourists' behavioral outcomes. As this thesis focuses on TA, the DI relation was not included in the model as the researchers considered it out of scope.

The following section provides a theoretical background on predictor and outcome variables in the TA framework and discusses their relationship:

When an individual has feelings of affinity, it is likely that these feelings will show in their role of tourist as well. It is expected that positive bias towards a country, will bring about willingness to visit (WTV) the affinity country. This is supported by theories like attitude theory (Ajzen, 2001), which proposes consistency as the main element individuals seek between their inclinations and their intentions, and actual behavior.

In this sense, the first hypothesis this study would test is the WTV a certain foreign country when a tourist shows affinity feelings for it. Due to its importance, not only for tourism academics, but also for tourism managers, our first outcome for testing would be as follows:

H1: TA has a positive effect on willingness to visit the affinity country.

In an attempt to close the gap indicated by Juvan and Dolnicar (2014), this study will not only test tourist's intentions (as indicated, for example, in H1), but also tourist's actual behavior. Thus, in the next hypothesis, and mediated by H1, this research tests whether TA influences tourists' actual behavior:

H2: Willingness to visit the affinity country has a positive effect on the number of actual trips taken to the affinity country.

Drawing on the concept of DY described as *"an individual's diverse cognitive and affective associations relating to a destination"* (Josiassen et al., 2015, p. 4), the researchers suggest that DY relates to TA.

The main relation between DY and TA is that the former concept represents the pool of cognitive associations embedded in the latter construct. It is important to point out that the affective associations included in DY are just affective descriptors (Kock et al., 2016). An affective nature defines TA itself, but not DY.

In brief, DY is linked with TA as it renders all the descriptive information that will be evaluated by the individual, jointly with the affective states inherent in TA. Drawing on Oberecker et al. (2008), the researchers identified five main categories driving TA: lifestyle; scenery; culture; travel and living abroad; and contact. Lifestyle refers to observable realities of the affinity country and includes three subgroups: people and mentality; lifestyle in general; and cuisine. Scenery relates to the affinity country's environment and includes two subgroups: nature and landscape; and climate. Culture comprises two subgroups: culture and traditions; and cultural similarities or dissimilarities. The travel and living abroad category include two subgroups: holiday experiences and living and long term stay experiences. Finally, contact alludes to the tourist personal contact with friends and/or relatives.

H3: Destination Imagery positively relates to TA.

Following with the initial hypothesis and attitude theory (Ajzen, 2001), making recommendations to others about one's affinity country is another behavior that can be tested. It is an important variable not only for tourism and marketing managers and researchers, but also for policy researchers and policymakers beyond the tourism realm, as WOM could be one of the most effective marketing tools to bring new visitors back to a destination (Phillips et al., 2013).

Moreover, positive WOM cannot only improve cognitive and affective feelings towards the destination, but also increase awareness of the destination to people who are not very familiar with it (Phillips et al., 2013).

The researchers posit it seems reasonable to think that if an individual has a positive bias toward a certain country, this individual may act as an ambassador, spreading positive information, in favor of the affinity country. Therefore, our next hypothesis tests whether affinity leads to spreading positive information about the affinity country:

H4: TA has a positive effect on favorable word of mouth about the affinity country.

While the outcomes in this study are of diverse nature, they have mostly been derived with a view to humans' fundamental motive of affiliation. When the affiliation ultimate motive is activated, consumers seek reviews for other's opinion, and they are more susceptible to WOM information (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

According to Eisingerich (2011), resistance to negative information refers to the extent to which individuals do not allow negative information to diminish their general view of something or someone. The above, which refers to firms, can be extrapolated to our study. More specifically, resistance to negative information can be tested in relation with an individual's affinity country.

As stated in Eisingerich (2011), previous research shows that it takes a strong relationship for consumers to exhibit resistance to negative information. Feelings of attachment can be considered as strong feelings a tourist has for a certain foreign country.

On the other hand, consistency theories (Festinger, 1962) suggests that consistency is the main element individuals seek when they receive and integrate new information. According to this theory, inconsistent information has high options of being rejected by the individual.

Consequently, it will be interesting to test how negative information is processed when there are feelings of affinity for a certain country. Therefore, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H5: TA has a negative effect on susceptibility to negative information from the affinity country.

Social media plays an increasing role in the tourism sector. The use of social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Trip Advisor, enables tourists not only to share

knowledge and experiences, but also form relationships by encouraging online sociability (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). As social media enables social connection via the Internet, the relation with the affiliation motive is evident, as it fulfills this need (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

Bronner and de Hood (2011), studied tourists' motivations for participating in electronic WOM channels and identified that many were related to social benefits, such as: group attachment, interconnectivity, sense of belonging, meeting friends and nice people, and group commitment and reference.

Moreover, tourists motivated by the desire for support and a sense of community, usually rely on discussion forums and seek reviews for others' opinions (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). In this regard, tourists may be disposed to check information about their affinity country before, during or after their visit.

Given all these assertions, this research hypothesizes that TA positively relates to social media activity and checking information about their affinity country:

H6: TA has a positive effect on individuals' use of user generated content about the affinity country in social media.

Tourists are increasingly requiring authentic experiences concerning meaningful interactions with locals (Paulauskaite et al., 2017). From an evolutionary

perspective, the engagement with diverse local aspects of the affinity country is a way of fostering a sense of belonging.

Consequently, the researchers suggest that the ultimate motive of affiliation manifests in the following tourists' behaviors:

H7: *TA has a positive effect on engagement with locals*

Local food consumption is considered as an integral part of any tourist experience. It is connected to a country's heritage and it can take different ways, providing tourists with a number of diverse and interesting opportunities (Hall et al., 2003). From a tourist product point of view, local food can be considered as an attraction which encourages tourists visiting a destination. From a tourist experience perspective, local food consumption may represent either a contrast, an intensification or an extension of the tourists' daily routine at home (Mak et al., 2012).

Fostering interpersonal relationships through the consumption of local food at a touristic destination is one of the many tourists' motivations. This can be regarded as spending time with family and/or friends, along with meeting new people from beyond the normal acquaintance's circle. In this respect, trying local food may enhance the development of functional relationships between individuals and support social integration (Y. G. Kim et al., 2013).

Beyond tourist motivation itself, local food consumption behavior can be influenced by other factors, such as personality traits and cultural ones. For example, some tourists might have the strong desire to understand and experience a foreign culture through local food tasting. In this regard, tourists motivated to visit a destination by its cultural factors, may seek to try local traditional food as a way of exploring the culture. Moreover, tourists who have a predisposition to be neophiliac, seem to have an inclination to consume local food experiences when on holiday (Mak et al., 2012).

In view of the previous accounts, this research hypothesizes that TA has a positive effect on tourists' intentions to try local food as it provides an opportunity to connect with and understand the local culture:

H8: TA has a positive effect on tourists' intentions to try local food.

The way in which tourists relate to one another can be understood through the interactionist perspective, which considers both the influence of social situations and personal factors to explain tourists' behaviors. When joining groups, tourists perceive a sense of "us" which triggers feeling states, like friendship and familiarity. Moreover, tourists seek authentic relationships with others, as a way of fostering interpersonal authenticity and achieving a sense of togetherness (Yarnal & Kerstetter, 2005).

Local tourism experiences, such as guided tours, or others involving physical spaces, like community centers, museums and pubs, promote social interaction

and, consequently, group-oriented activities. The researchers suggest that TA has a positive effect on tourists' preference for group activities, as this behavior represents a sense of community and togetherness for tourists:

H9: TA has a positive effect on tourists' preference for group activities with locals.

The emergence of the sharing economy and its impact on hospitality, travel and tourism has been acknowledged by many scholars (Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017; Paulauskaite et al., 2017). Alongside, companies, such as Airbnb and Couchsurfing, found their path to grow at extraordinary rates. In contrast to traditional accommodation, Airbnb offers a window to local experiences. As part of their marketing campaign, "Don't Go There, Live There", Airbnb promises a sense of belongingness by the main premise of feeling at home everywhere (Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017).

According to extant research, tourists' willingness to stay at peer-to-peer accommodations positively relates to the level of involvement with the tourism experience itself, as it facilitates social interaction and the feeling of connection and group identity with local people (J. H. Kim et al., 2012; Paulauskaite et al., 2017).

Moreover, interacting with local hosts is a factor that makes tourists' travel experiences more authentic and genuine, opposed to staying at conventional accommodation. Furthermore, tourists interacting with local hosts, gain a deeper impression of the communities in which they stay. Based upon diverse accommodation experiences, tourists stressed out that, staying at Airbnb, makes

them feel as locals, like family members and not just as guests, while others mentioned the one-on-one relationship developed with local hosts (Paulauskaite et al., 2017).

Hence, this research hypothesizes that TA has a positive effect on tourists' willingness to stay at unconventional accommodations, like Airbnb, as they can feel like being part of the tourism destination and the hosts' family heritage. This behavior makes possible a connection between tourists and locals hosts, that leads to a more personal and sociable experience, that sparks feelings of familiarity and sociability.

Following the same line of thought, the researchers also suggest TA relates positively to tourists' intention to stay at their relatives and/or family places. Even though distinct segments can be identified among tourists visiting friends and relatives, it is possible to recognize the common motivation oriented around family relationships and the desire to be co-present with friends and relatives (Backer et al., 2017; Gafter & Tchetchik, 2017).

H10: TA has a positive effect on tourists' willingness to stay at unconventional accommodations like Airbnb.

H11: TA has a positive effect on tourists' willingness to stay at their relatives and/or friends' places.

As explained in the literature review, affiliation was very important for our ancestors and it still is, making people invest a lot of resources on it. Among others,

economic resources are invested by consumers (and tourists) when their affiliation system is triggered.

One way in which consumers invest economic resources when their affiliation system is active, is by performing gift-giving. As Crouch (2013) stated, gift-giving is a symbolic strategy that serves not only to make new friends, but also to keep and improve old friendships and coalitions. When affiliation is active, individuals' behavior is characterized by seeking products to connect with others (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013).

Gift-giving is an important component of the tourist experience. As Wilkings (2011) stated, few people will travel without buying some form of evidence of the experience, and, in consequence, souvenir purchases form a significant part of travel budgets. Although it is true that purchasing souvenirs follow different motivations, the majority of tourists acquire souvenirs as gifts for others (Wilkins, 2011). Wilkings (2011), as Griskevicius and Kenrich (2013) did, explained the importance of souvenirs to communicate tourist's own experiences to others.

In this sense, the following hypothesis will test how tourists practice gift-giving when they travel to or return from their affinity country.

In addition, this hypothesis tests an important variable for tourist retailers, as an important part of the travel budget goes to buy this kind of goods.

H12: TA has a positive effect on gift-giving consumption (objects brought from or to the affinity country).

Numerous studies agree on the different dimensions that influence the level of crowdedness perceived by a person in a certain situation. There are three main dimensions of crowding determinants: situational variables of the environment, characteristics of other tourists encountered, and personal characteristics of the individual (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012).

Tourists are capable of identifying a distinction between an objective crowding level (unrelated to preference) and a subjective, emotional level (related to preference) (Choi et al., 1976). In this sense, tourists can distinguish between perceiving a certain situation as being crowded, and valuing a certain crowding level as acceptable or unacceptable (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012).

Some studies suggest that the relationship between crowding levels and acceptability depends largely on individual preferences (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012). The level of TA depends on the intensity towards a feeling of liking, admiration and attachment an individual has in relation to a certain foreign country. Thus, this research highlights a parallel between TA and the subjective, affective evaluation of crowdedness.

Moreover, individuals may either find themselves in a crowded environment either volitionally or for reasons beyond their control. According to Xu et al. (2012), when the density of individuals in a situation, and thus how crowded people feel, is

perceived as high, individuals' voluntary presence may reflect the extent to which they like to be close to others and their affiliation motivations. This would facilitate positive (or moderation of negative evaluations) of high levels of crowdedness. This is aligned with Neuts and Nijkamp (2012), who do not support the negative conception of crowding, generally accepted in Academia (Canestrelli & Costa, 1991; e.g. Saveriades, 2000).

Thus, the following hypothesis will test whether high levels of TA lead to higher acceptance of the level of crowdedness in the affinity country, due to affiliation as the motive behind TA and the positive bias associated, compare to similar encounters in other countries:

H13: TA has a positive effect on the evaluation of the level of crowdedness in the affinity country.

Therefore, the following model (figure 6) has been developed by the researchers in order to measure TA and test the outcomes derived from it:
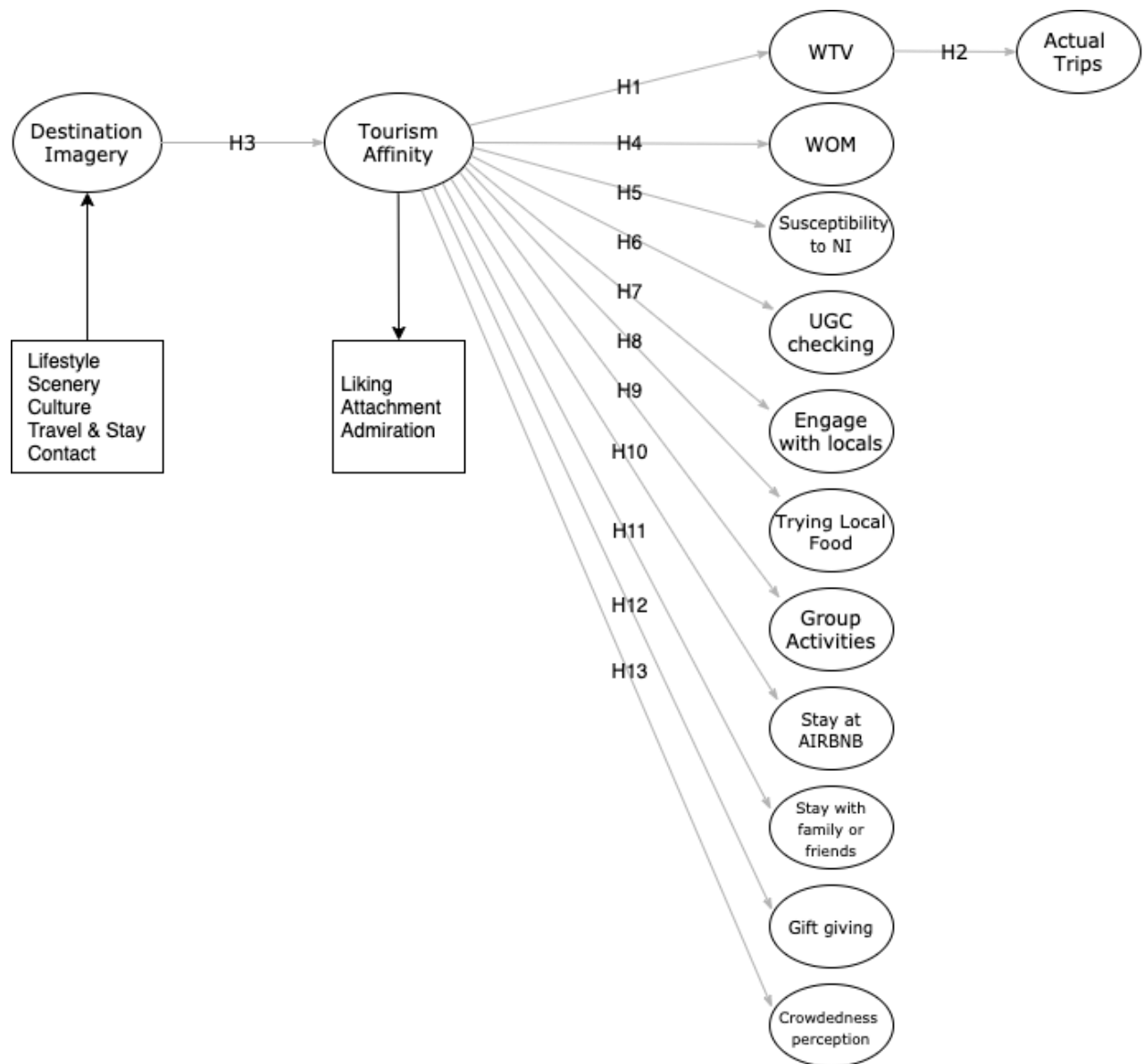
Figure 6

4. Methodology

In this chapter, the researchers make use of Saunders et al. (2009) research onion as a way of depicting various layers of research considerations, applied to test the model and subsequently, explain the findings (figure 7).

The purpose of this research is explorative, as the researchers further investigate the affinity construct, which has been widely studied in marketing and consumer research but remains unexplored in the tourism sector.

Research philosophy and approach are clearly distinctive from research design and tactics (Saunders et al., 2009). While the former group relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of it, research design is focused on the overall plan for the present research. This process is defined by the research strategies, choices and time horizons. Finally, research tactics relate specifically to the finer detail of data collection and analysis (Saunders et al., 2009).

The Research Onion

Philosophies

Approaches

Positivism

Interviews

Data Collection | Cross Sectional | Mix Methods

Deductive

Strategies

Research Design

Choices

Time Horizon

Survey

Objectivism

Techniques and Procedures | Research Tactics
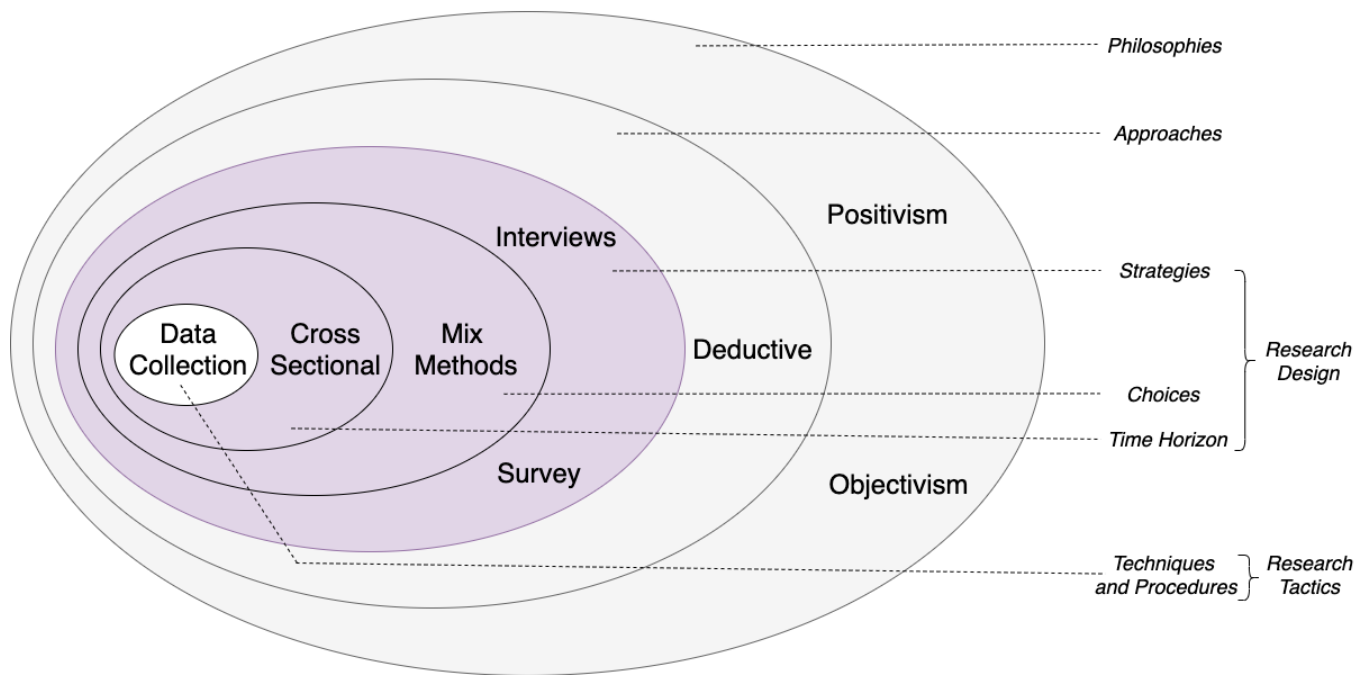
Saunders et al. (2009)

Figure 7

4.1. Research philosophy & approach

Theory is important because it not only provides the logic for the research that is being conducted, but also a framework within which a certain phenomenon can be understood and the findings can be interpreted (Bryman, 2012).

This section's main aim is to explain the relationship between theory and research, and, in particular, how the deductive approach, followed in this research, works.

Moreover, epistemological and ontological considerations will be examined in pursuance of explaining the research design followed in this study.

Epistemological issues are the ones related to what is, or should be, regarded as appropriate knowledge about the social world. In this regard, this study follows a positivism philosophy, as methods of the natural sciences are used to study an objective social reality, and to end up generating a law. The role of theory is to generate viable hypotheses that can be tested (Bryman, 2012).

In line with the above, this study follows a deductive approach of research (explained in figure 8), as previous knowledge is considered in the interest of developing new hypotheses that will be tested and will allow explanations of laws to be assessed, objective and value free (Bryman, 2012).

On the other hand, ontology is concerned with the nature of social entities, and it makes reflect on whether social entities, with their own rules, are separate from social actors. From an ontological point of view, this study follows the objectivism position, as it considers consumers act according to values and internalized mental models, not of their own making. Social phenomena and their meanings have an existence, that is independent of social actors (Bryman, 2012).

The process of deduction

Theory

↓

Hypothesis

↓

Data Collection

↓

Findings

↓

Hypothesis confirmed or rejected

↓

Revision of theory
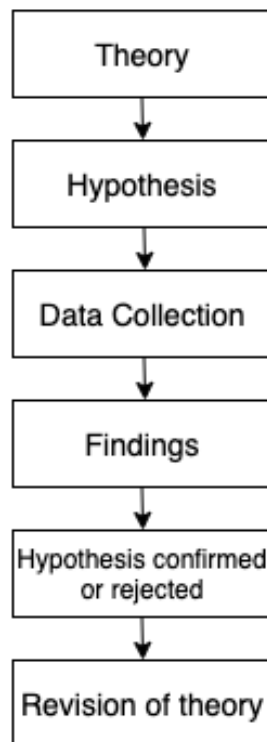
Bryman (2012)

Figure 8

4.2. Research design & tactics

The previous considerations apply despite this study follows a mix method, including a qualitative pre-study (study 1), typically characterized by following other paradigms: normally, inductive approach and, interpretivism and constructionism philosophies; and a quantitative one (study 2). According to Bryman (2012), and due to the weight of study 2 is greater than study 1, but study 1 precedes study 2, this mixed method is classified as qual-QUAN.

Moreover, this research follows a technical version of the use of both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, as the researchers consider a research method from one research strategy can be used in the service of the other, in the forms of completeness, credibility, context or diversity of views, among others (Bryman, 2012).

The time horizon of the research design was cross-sectional, as the researchers studied a particular phenomenon, at a particular time (Saunders et al., 2009). The research instruments employed to collect primary data were 7 interviews and an online survey, which was answered by 175 respondents.

4.2.1. Sampling

The sample selected in the present research is related to the target population, which is a subset of the whole population, and the context this research is based in (Saunders et al., 2009). Accordingly, the target population of this study are Danish tourists.

Due to resource constraints, such as budget and time, this research made use of the non-probability or judgmental sampling technique to collect data (Saunders et al., 2009). The sample was selected following a purposive technique (Saunders et al., 2009), which enabled the researchers to use their judgement to select cases that would best serve to answer the research questions and meet the objectives pursued by this study.

In order to participate in the studies, respondents had to meet four requirements. First, they had to be over 18 years. Secondly, they had to have the same background, and for convenience reasons, they all had to be Danish, as culture is proven to be a sensitive factor when analyzing tourist consumption behavior: culture determines differences in the propensity for travel, the preferred style of tourism and the types of destinations people would visit or avoid (Crouch, 2013). In addition, the associations that make up DY and thus, TA, vary across participants from different cultures and nationalities (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b). Moreover, data about a specific country is best compared when drawn from a single population (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b).

In addition, participants had to have travelled to a foreign country before, so the researchers made sure the sample belonged to the world drawn by the study (Bryman, 2012), and therefore, being willing to travel and able to afford travelling, are considered important requirements when studying a tourism phenomenon.

4.2.2. Qualitative pre-study

The aim of the pre-study was to gather distinctive concepts, associations and attributes individuals hold towards their chosen affinity country, and to establish the basis for developing an imagery measure, specifically tailored for this study (Kock et al., 2016).

Regarding the DY measure, initial coding categories were identified using existing theory and operational definitions for each category were determined (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). First, an initial pool of 22 items were generated by reviewing the

consumer affinity literature. The affinity drivers included in Oberecker et al. (2008) were considered as the main basis, not only because this article is pioneer in studying consumer affinity (Asseraf & Shoham, 2017), but also because these authors tested WTV and included goods and services when studying consumer affinity, being tourism one of the possible services they considered. Moreover, the researchers complemented their pool of items by including the ones contained in Nes et al. (2014) and Asseraf and Shoham (2017), that were missing in Oberecker et al. (2008). In order to limit the number of items, the researchers were conscious of not duplicating any repeated item and evaluated their ambiguous wording. The table below (table 3), shows the items the researchers finally considered from the aforementioned authors.

Oberecker et al., 2008
Lifestyle
-People and mentality
Entertainment *(Nes et al., 2014)*
-Lifestyle in general
- Language
-Cuisine
Scenery
-Landscape: difference and diversity
-Climate
-Architecture
Culture
-History
Arts *(Nes et al., 2014)*
Music *(Nes et al., 2014)*

-Culture and traditions
-Cultural (dis)similarities
Politics & Economics*
-Political situation
Collective memory *(Asseraf and Shoham, 2017)*
-Economical situation
Stay abroad
-Live there
-Long term stay
Travel
-Holiday experiences
-Geographical distance
Contact
-Friends
-Relatives

Table 3

7 in-depth interviews (Bryman, 2012) were conducted in order to validate concepts and conceptually extend existing theories, adapting them to the tourism industry (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Respondents met the requirements stablished for sampling: they were Danish, over 18 years old, they all had travelled to a foreign country in the previous two years and had enough economic resources to travel at least once a year. In order to limit physical interaction and due to Covid-19 lockdown, interviews were conducted via phone and recorded. Moreover, the interviews lasted 5-15 minutes, depending on the flow of the discussion, and the language used was English.

Open-ended questions (see table 4) were asked in order to allow respondents to think freely and use their own formulations when referring to each association.

1	Do you have a favorite foreign country? Which one? Please note you cannot select your COO. Why?
2	Have you ever travelled to this country? If not, would you like to go or are you planning on visiting?
3	Could you tell us more about the aspects you like or value more about this country or in case of having visited, about your past experiences?
4	What is/are your main motivations when visiting the country?
5	Do you identify yourself with any aspect of this country?

Table 4

The first question was designed to obtain a list of different affinity countries from which to select for our quantitative study. Moreover, the question allowed respondents to describe their overall impression of their affinity country. The second question attempted to capture the relationship between harboring TA and visiting the country. The third and fifth questions were designed to capture cognitive and affective components of TA, while the fourth question was related to individuals' proximal and ultimate motives influencing their decision-making.

In order to validate consumer affinity theory and conceptually extend it to the tourism field, this research conducted a deductive content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researchers adopted a directed approach in order to interpret meaning from the content of the collected data and classify it into an efficient number of categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Coding was done by listening each

interview and highlighting all phrases that appeared to represent TA associations. Subsequently, all highlighted passages were coded according to the predetermined categories identified from the existing theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Although individuals have countless associations about a country, only those that are readily accessible are the relevant ones influencing decision making. By only considering these associations, the validity of the scale increases (Kock et al., 2016). Therefore, the researchers grouped synonymous expressions under one label, according to (1) best representative of the underlying meaning and (2) most frequently mentioned (Kock et al., 2016). As it was essential to obtain the most important and salient associations, the researchers based their selection using a threshold, on the basis of associations mentioned at least 3 times. Table 5 shows a summary of the categories mentioned per participant. As a result, the final selection formed by the most frequently mentioned associations, represented the categories having greatest impact on behavior (Kock et al., 2016), and were the ones considered in the DY measurement.

Respondent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL
Lifestyle								
-People and mentality	x	x	x	x	x			5
Entertainment *(Nes et al., 2014)*		x			x			2
-Lifestyle in general	x	x	x	x				4
- Language	x							1
-Cuisine		x		x	x		x	4
Scenery								
-Landscape: difference and diversity		x	x	x		x		4

-Climate	x	x	x		x			4
-Architecture				x				1
Culture								
-History					x		x	2
Arts *(Nes et al., 2014)*								0
Music *(Nes et al., 2014)*								0
-Culture and traditions	x	x		x	x		x	5
-Cultural (dis)similarities	x	x		x	x	x		5
Politics & Economics*								
-Political situation								0
Collective memory *(Asseraf & Shoham, 2017)*								0
-Economic situation								0
Stay abroad								
-Live there	x					x	x	3
-Long term stay	x							1
Travel								
-Holiday experiences		x		x	x	x	x	5
-Geographical distance								0
Contact								
-Friends	x	x	x		x			4
-Relatives		x						1

Table 5

4.2.3. Quantitative study

An online questionnaire was used to collect data through a survey strategy in order to efficiently collect responses from the sample. According to Saunders et al. (2009), constructing a good questionnaire is essential to gather the precise data needed to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions. Moreover, the design of the questionnaire will affect the response rate, the reliability and the validity of the collected data (Saunders et al., 2009).

The researchers designed a self-administered questionnaire which was completed by the respondents electronically using Qualtrics software. The choice of the questionnaire was influenced by a variety of factors and resources availability, such as size of sample, likely response rate, length of the questionnaire and time available needed for data collection (Saunders et al., 2009).

The way questions were worded were influenced by two different types of data variables, collected through the questionnaire: opinion and behavior. Opinion variables recorded how respondents feel about their affinity country or what they think or believe to be true or false. Behavioral variables contained data about what respondents did in the past, do now or will do in the future (Saunders et al., 2009).

The constructed questionnaire was in English and contained items to measure DY, TA and the outcome variables WTV, WOM, SNI, UGC, LOCALS, FOOD, GROUP, AIRBNB, FF, GG and CROWD. Questions were measured on 7-points Likert scales. An introduction, explaining the purpose of the survey and enumerating the requirements to be eligible, preceded the questionnaire. The introduction consisted

of an invitation to participate in the study and clearly explained what participation involved. Moreover, the approximately duration was informed and it was stated that respondents would remain anonymous. In addition, contact information from the researchers was provided.

4.2.4. Measurements (scales)

According to Saunders et al. (2019), the design of each question is determined by the specific data needed to be gathered. Therefore, when designing individual questions, researchers can either refer to questions used in previous studies or develop their own. Due to the nature of this study, the researchers did not come up with any question but adopted and carefully adapted scales from reviewed literature (Eisingerich et al., 2011; Kock et al., 2016; Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b; Narangajavana et al., 2017; Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012; Nørfelt et al., 2019; Thomson et al., 2005). This allowed reliability to be assessed and was also more efficient than elaborating new questions (Saunders et al., 2009).

The previous statement has an exception; the researchers came up with the scale related to the DY construct. Each study needs to develop their own DY scale, as it is a construct that varies with the COO and the individual's nationality object of the study (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b). Therefore, the researchers developed a DY scale according to the objectives and nature of this study. The researchers designed one item per subcategory embedded in the five categories forming DY, that resulted from the pre-study.

The table below (table 6) provides an overall view of each construct measured in this study, the authors from where this study adopted its scales to measure the aforementioned constructs, the number of items conforming each scale, and the final items, after adapting them to this study, included in the questionnaire.

Regarding the use of single versus multi-item measures, there is no unanimity among researchers. Domain Sampling Theory explains the benefits of using multi-item scales, where error is minimized by asking respondents more than one question per construct, assuming that any error will average out over multiple questions (Dolnicar, 2013). By contrast, another stream of research, consider single-item scales are better to measure some constructs, as they do not add additional items that would blur what is being asked. The authors agreeing with Domain Sampling Theory, like Hair et al. (2014), prefer the former, while others, like Rossiter and Bergkvist (2009), are in favor of using single-item scales (Dolnicar, 2013).

In relation with the actual trips (AT) respondents have taken to Spain, only one item was asked, as there is no need to ask more than one question when the intention is to gather natural information. The researchers agree more with the use of multi-item scales, and that is why this study mainly used them to measure the rest of constructs.

Construct	Adapted from (authors)	Number of items per scale	Scale adapted to our study
DY	x	11	1. I like Spanish people's mentality 2. I feel sympathy for Spanish people 3. I am fond of Spanish lifestyle in general 4. I have a pleasant feeling when I think of Spanish cuisine 5. I like the Spanish nature and landscape 6. I have a pleasant feeling when I think about Spanish climate 7. I am captivated by Spanish culture and traditions 8. I feel connected with the Spanish culture 9. I like the cultural dissimilarities that Spain has with Denmark 10. Have you lived in Spain? 11. I feel connected to Spain because of the relatives and/or friends that I have living there
Tourism Affinity (liking, admiration and attachment feelings)	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b Thomson et al., 2005	9	Describe the extent to which the following words describe your typical feelings toward Spain: 1. Captivated 2. Impressed 3. Admire 4. Like 5. Fondness 6. Sympathy 7. Connected

			8. Bonded
			9. Attachment
Willingness to visit	Kock et al., 2016	4	1. I strongly intend to visit Spain in the future.
			2. It is very likely that I would choose Spain as my tourist destination.
			3. I would like to take a holiday in Spain.
			4. I plan to visit Spain as a tourist at some point in the future.
Actual Trips	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a	1	Indicate how many holiday trips to Spain you have taken in the last five years.
Word of mouth	Kock et al., 2016	4	1. I talk up Spain as a holiday destination.
			2. I bring up Spain in a positive way in conversations about holiday destinations.
			3. In social situations, I often speak favorably about Spain as a tourist destination.
			4. I recommend Spain as a tourist destination to other people when asked.
Susceptibility to negative information	Eisingerich et al., 2011	2	1. I am skeptical toward negative things I hear about Spain.
			2. If I heard negative news about Spain, I would not believe them.
Social media	Narangajavana et al., 2017	2	1. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know if Spain

			makes good impressions on others. 2. When I travel to Spain, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident about travelling there.
Intention to engage with locals	Nørfelt et al., 2019	3	1. I intend to engage with Spanish locals on my next holiday to Spain. 2. I will engage with Spanish locals the next time I go on holiday to Spain. 3. On my next holiday to Spain, I will definitely try to engage with Spanish locals.
Intention to try local food	Nørfelt et al., 2019	4	1. I am curious to try Spanish local food that I don't know. 2. When traveling, I like to taste Spanish local food. 3. I enjoy Spanish local food when traveling. 4. When eating abroad, I prefer the Spanish local food alternative.
Preference for group activities	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a	1	When traveling to Spain, I prefer going in groups with local people.
Stay at Airbnb	Nørfelt et al., 2019	3	1. I intend to stay at an Airbnb on my next holiday to Spain. 2. The next time I go on vacation to Spain, I will stay at an Airbnb. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay at an Airbnb when I travel to Spain.

Stay with family and friends	Nørfelt et al., 2019	3	1. I intend to stay with family and friends on my next holiday to Spain. 2. The next time I go on vacation to Spain, I will stay with family and friends. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay with family and friends when I travel to Spain.
Gift-giving	Wilkins, 2011	2	1. I generally buy souvenirs for my family or friends when I come back from Spain. 2. I buy gifts from my country of residence to take when staying with family and friends in Spain.
Crowdedness	Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012	1	How crowded do you think this picture is? (including a picture from a beach in Barcelona)

Table 6

4.3. Validity and Reliability

Multivariate analysis focuses attention on measurement error, which is defined as *"the degree to which the observed values are not representative of the true values"* (Hair et al., 2014, p. 7). Due to the numerous sources of measurement error, all variables used in multivariate analysis assume to have some degree of measurement error (Hair et al., 2014).

When assessing the degree of measurement error present in the study, the researchers addressed two important characteristics of measures: validity and reliability. Validity is defined as *"the degree to which a measure accurately represents what is supposed to"* (Hair et al., 2014, p. 7). This study assessed face validity, which according to Mosier (1947) implies that the test is a valid measure of the concept being measured. Moreover, the researchers tested external and nomological validity, which are evinced in the last section of section 5. As explained by Cronbach and Meehl (1955), nomological validity implies that a construct is defined implicitly by a network of associations or propositions in which it occurs. In this regard, the validation of the construct will only be possible when some of the statements in the network lead to predicted relations among concepts. This relates to external validity, as it examines the extent in which an observed causal relationship can be generalized to and across different settings and drive other concepts (Bracht & Glass, 1968). Thus, it is possible to contemplate external validity as a small part of nomological validity.

Reliability is defined as *"the degree to which the observed variable measures the true value and is error free"* (Hair et al., 2014, p. 8). This study assessed reliability by following the internal consistency approach, which involved measuring the consistency of responses across a sub-group of questions from the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2009). The researchers used the Cronbach's alpha method in order to assess internal consistency. This is a frequently used method in which the value of the alpha coefficient varies from 0 to 1 and values greater than or equal to 0.7, indicate that the scale items are measuring the same concept (Streiner, 2003). All the values were calculated in SPSS and are displayed in table 7:

Variable	Cronbach's alpha (α)
DY	.845
TA	.927
WTV	.912
WOM	.923
SNI	.609
UGC	.786
LOCALS	.952
FOOD	.845
AIRBNB	.950
FF	.974
GG	.680

Table 7

Table 7 shows that mostly all the alpha values are above 0.7. Thus, the researchers confirm that the scale items selected are measuring the same concept.

The researchers were not able to test reliability for the variables AT, GROUP and CROWD, as they are composed of single-item scales.

5. Results

5.1. Results pre-study 1

This section details the main findings derived from the qualitative pre-study.

The affinity countries mentioned by the participants were Spain (2), Tanzania, New Zealand, Italy, Sweden, Brazil, the U.S. and Japan. It was decided to use Spain as the target country, as it came up twice compared to the other affinity countries.

Furthermore, this pre-study set the basis for developing the DY scale. Based on the categories mentioned three or more times by the participants, this qualitative pre-study yielded 10 relevant associations which were the basis for the final 5 cognitive dimensions (in bold) embedded in DY, and thus driving TA (table 8). These categories were the basis for developing the imagery scale, concluded in the quantitative study.

DY DIMENSIONS DRIVING TA
Lifestyle   -People & Mentality   -Lifestyle in general   -Cuisine
Scenery   -Nature and Landscape   -Climate

Culture
-Culture & Traditions
-Cultural (dis)similarities
Travel & Stay Abroad
-Live there
-Holiday Experiences
Contact
-Friends & Relatives

Table 8

Moreover, some concepts and attributes participants mentioned they hold towards their affinity country, helped the researchers understand better TA and validated some of the theories used in this study:

From an evolutionary approach, and, as expected, affiliation was one of the main fundamental motives participants mentioned, thus this study validated it as the motive behind TA. However, exploration, as already indicated in previous literature, was mentioned several times by the participants. This indicates the key role exploration has within the tourism context, as one of the main reasons why people travel (Kock et al., 2018).

Another important insight the researchers encountered was some participants did not have an affinity country beforehand, but all of them could identify at least one after explaining further what is considered to be an affinity country for tourism purposes. Moreover, some participants indicated more than one affinity country, and mentioned the possibility of changing their choice throughout time.

Finally, during the interviews, some participants commented some negative connotations about their affinity country, apart from the positive ones.

5.2. Results study 2

Before using any statistical test, it is essential to determine the distribution of values for variables containing numerical data (Saunders et al., 2009). Normality of data was assessed using SPSS, and two components of normality, skewness and kurtosis, were analyzed.

Skewness has to do with the symmetry of the distribution. It refers to where the data lies, thus being heavily weighted towards the left or the right. If a variable is skewed, the mean is not in the center of the distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2000).

Kurtosis has to do with the peakedness of a distribution, which reflects either a peaked distribution (short and thick tails) or flat distribution (long and thing tails) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

The researchers concluded that not all the variables met the assumptions of normality, with skewness and kurtosis coefficient being within the acceptable limits of -1 to 1. For the variables WTV and FOOD the researchers identified issues with skewness. For the variables WTV, AT, FOOD, AIRBNB and FF, the researchers identified issues with kurtosis. However, this is a common outcome for studies with

small data sets (Boomsma, 1983; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The values for each variable are indicated in table 9

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
DY	.184	-.530
TA	1.86	-.298
WTV	1.238	1.001
AT	-.284	-1.452
WOM	.677	-.068
SNI	.046	-.272
UGC	.070	-.906
LOCALS	.593	-.220
FOOD	1.696	4.751
GROUP	.042	-.628
AIRBNB	.086	-1.191
FF	.056	-1.320
GG	-.069	-.784
CROWD	.693	.818

Table 9

In order to examine the relationship between variables, the researchers used a regression analysis. According to Hair et al. (2014), the statistical method of regression is a multivariate analysis technique, which refers to any simultaneous analysis of multiple variables. When the analysis involves only one independent variable, the method is known as simple regression. On the other hand, when the analysis involves two or more independent variables, the method is known as

multiple regression (Hair et al., 2014). The nature of this study's model explains the choice of a simple regression analysis, as it displays single relationships between one independent variable and a dependent variable.

The researchers' purpose to conduct a simple regression analysis is twofold. Firstly, to use the regression analysis to predict a single dependent variable, from the knowledge of one independent variable. Secondly, to explain the reasons for the effects of the independent variable, thus complementing the predictive applicability (Hair et al., 2014).

The regression analysis was performed in the software SPSS Statistics. Initially, the primary data was collected through the survey software Qualtrics and exported into SPSS. Before undertaking the analysis, the researchers addressed the process of cleaning data in order to prepare the data set. When doing this, two main issues were considered: the impact of data coding and checking data for errors. The first procedure was to identify reverse coded items, thus items that had the reverse interpretation as intended, compared to the rest of the items on the measure. According to the content of the questionnaire, AT variable was reverse coded. Consequently, the researchers transformed the values by recoding them. The second process was to identify and replace missing values. The researchers ran the SPSS procedure that shows the frequencies of the data set and identified two missing items. After investigating why these data points were missing, the researchers concluded they were due to system errors and replaced them using the mean method.

As regression analysis is a dependence technique, the starting point in the regression analysis was to divide the variables into dependent and independent. Consequently, the relationships between variables and the overall fit of the regression model were assessed:

Correlation Coefficient (R)

The correlation coefficient (R), is a measure of linear association between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Thus, this enables to assess the strength of relationship between the pair of variables. The R value can range between -1 to 1, indicating whether the slope of the regression line is positive or negative. Accordingly, a positive coefficient means that as values of one variable increase, those of the other will increase as well. In contrast, a negative coefficient represents that as values of one variable increase, those of the other decrease. The closer the coefficient is to 0, either with a negative or positive value, the weaker the correlation. A value of 0 means that the variables are perfectly independent (Saunders et al., 2009). The R values in table 5.2 indicate positive correlations between the independent variable and the dependent variable for each hypothesis.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2), is a measure of the predictive accuracy of the regression model. Thus, this enables to measure the proportion of total variation of the dependent variable explained by the independent variable. The R^2 value can range between 0 and 1. Accordingly, the closer the coefficient is to 1, the higher the prediction, while when the coefficient is 0, none of the variation can be explained (Saunders et al., 2009). However, specifying a general rule to interpret the values of the coefficient is difficult, as it depends on the research discipline or

field of study (Hair et al., 2016). Even though some of the R^2 values in table 10, are close to 0, an interpretation from a social science perspective suggests that the regression model has an acceptable level of predictive accuracy. This relates to the difficulty to explain and predict individuals' behaviors, making it impossible to control the amount of inputs when studying a phenomenon in social sciences (Hair et al., 2016).

Hypothesis	R	R^2
H1	.654	.482
H2	.399	.159
H3	.847	.717
H4	.682	.466
H5	.421	.177
H6	.182	.033
H7	.423	.179
H8	.489	.239
H9	.275	.076
H10	.150	.022
H11	.155	.024
H12	.212	.045
H13	.036	.001

Table 10

The Regression Coefficient (b)

The regression coefficient (b), represents the type and strength of relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the regression

variate. The sign of the regression coefficient indicates either a positive or negative relationship. The value of the coefficient represents the change in the dependent variable each time the independent variable varies by one original unit (Hair et al., 2016). The b values are indicated in table 11 and are further analyzed when assessing hypothesis testing.

Testing for Significance

The researchers tested the hypotheses of this study through an examination of the statistical significance. Testing the probability of a relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable occurring by chance alone, is known as significance testing (Saunders et al., 2009). In order to carry out the hypothesis testing, the researchers assumed a level of 5% significance. This represents the error, hence the chance that there is no relationship between the two variables.

If the probability (p-value) of the test result is very low ($p < 0.05$), there is a statistically significant relationship (Saunders et al., 2009). The researchers refer to this as accepting the hypothesis. Contrarily, if $p > 0.05$, the researchers concluded that the relationship is not statistically significant, thus rejecting the hypothesis. Even if there might be a relationship between the variables under such circumstances, the researchers cannot make any conclusion with certainty.

Table 11 provides an overview of the regression analysis results, as it displays the regression coefficients and the levels of statistical significance for each relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. The table is followed by the results from the hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis	b	Sig.
H1	.637	.000
H2	.819	.000
H3	1.217	.000
H4	.766	.000
H5	.398	.000
H6	.252	.016
H7	.525	.000
H8	.421	.000
H9	.398	.000
H10	.234	.048
H11	.279	.041
H12	.307	.005
H13	.037	.637

Table 11

H1. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' WTV the affinity country. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.637, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H1.

H2. This study hypothesizes that WTV the affinity country will positively affect individuals' AT to the affinity country. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.819, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H2.

H3. This study hypothesizes that DY will positively affect TA. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 1.217, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H3.

H4. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' favorable WOM about the affinity country. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.766, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H4.

H5. This study hypothesizes that TA will negatively relate to individuals' SNI about the affinity country. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.398, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H5.

H6. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' use of UGC about the affinity country in social media. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.252, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H6.

H7. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' willingness to engage with locals. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.525, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H7.

H8. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' willingness to try local food. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.421, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H8.

H9. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' willingness to engage in group activities with locals. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship positive and significant (b = 0.398, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H9.

H10. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' willingness to stay at AIRBNB. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.234, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H10.

H11. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect individuals' willingness to stay at friends and relatives' places. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b= 0.279, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H11.

H12. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect gift-giving consumption. Results from the regression analysis show that the relationship is positive and significant (b = 0.307, p < 0.05). Therefore, the findings support H12.

H13. This study hypothesizes that TA will positively affect crowdedness perception. Results from the regression analysis show that the relation is positive and not significant (b = 0.037, p > 0.05). Therefore, the findings do not support H13.

6. Discussion and implications

6.1. Discussion

After testing the hypotheses indicated in the framework, this section will discuss the results, outlined in the previous section.

This study develops and empirically tests the TA construct. Specifically, this research conceptualizes and tests TA and DY within an overall model and examines its impact on some behavioral intentions and actual behavior.

The first important finding derived from this study is the cognitive and affective dimensions driving TA. After adopting and adapting these categories from previous literature, the results empirically show the five final categories this study considered from a cognitive point of view (lifestyle, scenery, culture, travel and leisure, and contact), and the feelings of liking, admiration and attachment, from an affective point of view, positively relate and measure TA.

Another important finding is the evidence of a positive influence of TA on WTV the affinity country. This result is in line with Oberecker and Diamantopoulos (2011), who previously discovered this relationship when they tested consumer affinity and the intention to visit the affinity country. This is supported by attitude theory (Ajzen, 2001), which explains the consistency individuals seek between their predispositions, intentions and actual behavior. Our results evidence positive attitudes towards a certain foreign country, positively influences the intention to visit and the trips made to the affinity country, as will be explained below.

Furthermore, and in line with the previous finding, the results show a positive influence of tourists' travel intentions, mediated by WTV, on actual behavior. This finding contributes to closing the gap existent in the literature, regarding the lack of studies testing actual behavior. Our research evidences WTV the affinity country makes individuals keener to travel to their affinity country.

This study also show that TA makes individuals less susceptible to negative information from their affinity country. This is explained by consistency theories (Festinger, 1962), that suggests consistency is the main element individuals seek, when they receive and integrate new information. If an individual holds a positive bias for a certain country, negative information would be inconsistent with their leaning, and therefore, the individual will be less susceptible to it. According to Eisingerich (2011), previous research shows that it takes a strong relationship for consumers to exhibit resistance to negative information from what this study concludes, TA is a strong feeling, tourists have for a certain foreign country. Furthermore, this study reveals when individuals feel affinity for a certain country, they will recommend it to others, as a tourist destination. WOM is a powerful marketing tool and its practical implications will be explained further in the corresponding section.

Moreover, this study reveals affiliation as the ultimate motive explaining TA. There are certain behaviors individuals show when their affiliation system is triggered (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). According to Griskevicius and Kenrick (2013), when the affiliation fundamental motive leads the individuals' mind, they seek others' opinions, are more susceptible to WOM, consume products and services that can be enjoyed in groups or with someone else, more than individually, and gift-giving consumption increases.

This study evidences when there is TA, these behaviors arise. In this sense, TA positively affects the fact tourists check content about their affinity country in social media, not only before travelling there, but in general, showing the positive effect of TA on checking others' reviews. Social media not only creates social bonds, but also serves as a source of inspiration and offers reviews of, inter alia, destinations.

Another important set of findings is the one related to engagement with local aspects of the affinity country. The results empirically demonstrate that TA has a positive effect on willingness to engage with locals, trying local food, choosing group activities with locals, and preference to stay with friends and relatives, or in an Airbnb accommodation. These results can be explained by the motivation tourists have for living an authentic experience when travelling abroad, as a way of exploring the new culture (Mak et al., 2012). However, it is also a way of fostering a sense of belonging and of creating social bonds, within the group tourists travel with, or by meeting new individuals, that can be locals or other tourists (Backer et al., 2017; Gafter & Tchetchik, 2017; Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017; Y. G. Kim et al., 2013; Yarnal & Kerstetter, 2005).

This study evidences the positive effect TA has on gift-giving consumption. This finding is especially important to explain the link between TA and affiliation, as gift-giving is a symbolic strategy, that serves, not only to make new friends, but also to keep and improve old friendships and coalitions (Crouch, 2013). In addition, due to the high percentage of budget spend in souvenirs (Wilkings, 2011), the practical implications will be explained in the corresponding section.

Finally, the results indicate lack of effect of TA on the evaluation of the level of crowdedness in the affinity country. The perception of level crowdedness is determined by so many different variables, and it is likely participants replied to this question objectively, without having the chance to express their preference for a crowded place. This finding will be explained further in the limitations section.

6.2. Theoretical implications

This study makes important contributions to the literature. First, to the affinity literature, developing previous theories into the tourism reality. In addition, regarding intergroup biases in tourism, by positioning TA as a positive bias for a certain foreign country. In this sense, this study develops one more construct from the consumer attraction-repulsion matrix developed by Josiassen (2011), in the tourism area.

This study does not consider individuals in their role of tourists, as rational ones. Therefore, it explains another motivation to consider when analyzing tourism behavior and decision-making, that goes beyond the quality of the destination, or the price associated with the trip. Thus, contributing to the literature on symbolic reasons for travelling.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the existing knowledge related to ultimate and proximate motives individuals have, when choosing a destination. In addition, this study provides with insights, regarding the motivations tourists have, when thinking of travelling to their affinity country, and gives important insights on how TA shapes individuals' intentions and behaviors in their role of tourists.

The researchers make use of an evolutionary approach to explain how TA shapes individuals' intentions and behaviors in the role of tourists, and this study contributes to the literature by using this promising theory in tourism (Kock et al., 2018). Furthermore, this study is the first to link a positive intergroup bias in tourism with the ultimate motive of affiliation. The researchers tested some of the behaviors individuals show when their affiliation system is triggered, and this study's findings reveal affiliation as the fundamental motive behind TA.

Additionally, the results from the pre-study show the fundamental motive of exploration is also related to TA. This can be explained by the importance of this motive in tourism, as it is one of the main reasons why people travel (Kock et al., 2018). In this regard, the findings related to the engagement with local aspects of the affinity country also support this idea, as local aspects tested in this study, willingness to engage with locals and to try local food, and the preference for group activities with locals, to stay in Airbnb accommodations, or to stay with family and friends, provide tourists with authentic local and new experiences, the core of the motive of exploration.

6.3. Practical implications

The findings of the present study have significant implications for organizations and businesses, operating in the tourism industry. An important side-effect of the globalization phenomenon is the significant rise in international tourism (Azarya, 2004). In view of this, tourism managers focus their efforts on comprehending what

is necessary to promote travel to their countries. Understanding what is behind tourists' decision, of spending their holidays in a specific country, is important. What is more, understanding the potential impact of this behavior, is, therefore, of substantial importance. In this regard, knowledge about TA, can provide tourism managers with insights about tourists' motives and preferences, which are valuable for designing tailored tourism products. Similarly, managers can consider TA knowledge when strategizing in current or new markets.

This study shows tourists with high levels of TA, will prefer to stay at Airbnb, as it represents an authentic experience, due to contact with locals. This could provide increased knowledge for destination managers to understand tourists' expectations and underlying motivations. In terms of managerial implications, marketers of such business models, can work towards the development of quality hosting and touristic experiences, focusing on authenticity and the creation of genuine feelings. In this manner, they can shape the tourist experience, by tailoring it, based on other tourists' preferences explained by TA, such as willingness to try local food and organize activities with locals. For example, a local guided tour can represent an original way for tourists to discover the destination from an authentic perspective. Likewise, offering cookery classes can be a good opportunity for tourists to experience local and exotic cuisine and at the same time learn about the local culture.

Among the various motives driving tourists to choose Airbnb accommodation, affiliation is a contributor one. Therefore, managers can focus upon innovative ways of promoting the establishment and maintenance of positive relationships between tourists and locals. For example, managers could creatively develop cultural activities, that can stimulate visitors' affiliation systems. Similarly, marketers could

develop promotional materials, for their businesses, including diverse affiliation elements, such as messages or images, promoting relationship enhancement.

Using these insights, managers would be better equipped, when designing their business model, to fulfill travelers' needs, by creating and delivering value, for both the traveler and firm. This is crucial, as value creation is the most fundamental aspect, in order to be able to capture value (Teece, 2010). This relates to the need organizations face, of changing and adapting, in a constantly changing world, in order to keep up with the competitive landscape (Chesbrough, 2010; Teece, 2010).

WOM is one of the most important information sources when consumers make purchase decisions, especially, in the tourism industry, as intangible products cannot be evaluated prior to consumption (Litvin et al., 2008). In this regard, managers can focus on assessing the current level of WOM and understand which tactics are needed to increase it. This study's findings suggest that tourism and destination managers, and policymakers, can make efforts to trigger TA feelings in tourists, in order to strengthen the positive WOM, therefore improving their overall marketing and promotion strategy. For example, the digitalization of WOM creates new possibilities for tourism and marketing managers, as they can access loads of information at relatively low cost.

Moreover, destination and marketing managers can attain an increased understanding of UGC in relation to TA levels and convert this information into an asset. In particular, running campaigns using UGC, through social media channels, can be used to promote awareness and create interest towards a country, when managers identify high levels of TA in a certain society. In accordance with Jaffe

and Nebenzahl (2006), affinity can be considered a segmentation variable for international marketers. In this sense, marketers can target a specific segment feeling TA towards a country and increase visits from tourists. However, this represents a challenge, as they need to choose the right tool for each market and segment, since each requires different strategies (Hede & Kellett, 2012). In this way, managers can work towards the achievement of destination smartness and take strategic decisions in several areas, such as planning, branding, and imaging.

As explained previously, a deeper understanding of TA levels in the market and among the customer base, allows for a better segmentation and consequently, an increased ability to meet customer needs. As shown, TA influences different tourist outcomes, and managers and policymakers can detect which of these are important for their organizations, in order to analyze the potential effects. As, for instance, the effects of high levels of TA, on gift-giving consumption, can lead travel agencies to facilitate original souvenirs for tourists, or alternatively, provide them with information about where to find specific souvenirs.

In relation to this, tourism managers should also contemplate how to benefit from high levels of TA, decreasing tourists' susceptibility towards negative information about the affinity country. Whether the information is true or false, tourists with high levels of TA will mostly reject or show skepticism towards negative information about their affinity country. Therefore, this can generate incentives in managers and policymakers, of triggering TA feelings in tourists.

Moreover, tourists with high levels of TA will recommend their affinity country. This is especially important for those who are not aware of the destination and for those who, despite knowing the country, show indifference about it. In any case, WOM is one of the most effective marketing tools to bring new visitors back to a

destination (Phillips et al., 2013), and brings along associated economic advantages.

The identification of TA as a positive bias means, that tourism managers can identify segments with specific levels of TA and target them accordingly, with specific and tailored communication efforts. The allocation of resources could be related to the identified TA levels, as it is more probable tourists with higher TA levels become customers, than tourists with lower levels of TA. For example, hospitality managers might want to adjust a restaurant menu depending on the TA levels of the customers. Tourists with higher TA levels, would be more open to try local and exotic food than tourists with lower levels of TA.

Last, but not least, effective management of the destination attributes, impacting TA, identified in this study, can lead to higher levels of TA in tourists attracted to a destination. For example, managers can identify and highlight the most significant aspects of the country's lifestyle, culture, history or nature, differentiating it from the rest of the tourism world. Therefore, managers can create diverse experiences related to each of these aspects, in order to increase the probability of providing strong foundations for high levels of TA and consequently, more tourists visiting the destination.

Overall, the implications suggest, the more organizations acknowledge the underlying phenomenon and effects of the positive bias of TA, the more benefits and opportunities can arise. However, it is essential for managers and policymakers to understand how to combine TA insights in a strategic way, in order to generate value and capture it through a sustained competitive advantage.

7. Limitations and Future research

This thesis presents some methodological and theoretical limitations, which can be addressed by future research, in order to further expand the field under investigation.

Regarding the data collection, the sample assessed entails several limitations. Firstly, as the present study only relies on a sample of Danish residents, evaluating Spain as the target affinity country, this restrains the generalizability of the findings. Intergroup biases usually exist across all cultures, making TA a possible pancultural phenomenon (Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a). Therefore, the researchers invite to further investigate this phenomenon in other cultures and affinity countries. In addition, it would open the possibility to study the differences of TA between different cultures.

Secondly, another limitation, due to the nature of this study, is the sample size in both studies. This resulted in normality and external validity issues. A bigger size of the sample would have increased the external validity of the study (Bryman, 2012) and normality results.

Finally, and despite the sample requirements set at the beginning of this study, and the explanation of them in the questionnaire cover, the researchers could not control who took part on the online questionnaire. The researchers made a call to Danish participants, but this might be a limitation, as participants from other countries could access the online questionnaire.

Another limitation relates to the time when this study was conducted. The findings show the status of TA at one point in time. Therefore, the researchers point out that it would be interesting to investigate TA across time.

Moreover, the researchers were not considering situations in which the context can modify the way TA is developed and results in tourist behavior. This limitation points to further research opportunities, in order to enhance the understanding of the TA phenomenon and its moderators.

Furthermore, some limitations related to the scales used in this study were identified. When adopting and adapting the scales from previous literature, the researchers included items that measured different concepts, for measuring variables developed in this study. These items were included as questions in the online questionnaire. The researchers realized this mistake and corrected it, by deleting all the data regarding the questions that did not measure the corresponding variable. Despite the researchers' intention was to include multi-item scales for measuring each variable, due to the research stream that prefers to use single-item scales (as explained in the methodology section), the researchers decided to carry on with this study as they understood it was correct to use some single-item scales. However, this is something the researchers learnt and would do differently in future studies.

Finally, and regarding the results, one reason that might explain why TA does not have an effect on the perception of the level of crowdedness by the tourist, might be the objectiveness the tourist has towards a country, despite feelings of TA towards the country. From the pre-study, the researchers found out that while most

of the attributes towards their affinity country were positive, they also mentioned some negative ones. As explained in the framework, the level of crowdedness perceived by an individual depends, among others, on individual preferences. Besides, the question regarding crowdedness in the online questionnaire, did not explain the picture showed was from a beach in Spain. This might have influenced the data gathering and, thus, the results for this hypothesis. The researchers suggest further investigation regarding TA and crowdedness.

Additionally, other fruitful avenues for future research are proposed. For example, TA might also play an important role among locals, who constantly face incoming foreign tourists. Therefore, the researchers suggest future research into the role of TA among residents. Further, this study investigated a positive out-group bias that enhances understanding on tourist behavior. The researchers thus call for research to build on this and investigate further intergroup biases and their potential impact on tourist behavior. Finally, the researchers would like to stress the need for future research to examine new variables potentially affected by TA.

8. Conclusion

This research is driven by the idea that TA is a potentially important foundation of tourism. The researchers drew on psychology research for the conceptual basis of TA and define it as a positive out-group bias represented by feelings of liking, admiration and attachment towards a specific foreign country. The research objectives were met through a mixed method research design, which included a qualitative and a quantitative study. Over both studies, the cognitive and affective associations driving TA were identified, as well as the effects of TA on diverse individuals' intention and actual behaviors.

The purpose of the qualitative study was to find the concepts comprised in a valid and accurate conceptualization of TA. The first study shows that TA comprises both descriptive information and affective states. Through its findings, this thesis contributes to the understanding of the tourism literature pertinent to consumers' preferences, as a comprehensive examination of TA, including associations based on performance-related country cognitions and performance-unrelated country emotions, is provided.

The purpose of the quantitative study was to test the hypotheses developed in the theoretical framework. The second study shows TA can be linked to several important tourist behaviors. It was found that individuals with higher levels of TA make more trips to the affinity country and are more willing to: visit the affinity country, provide favorable WOM and be less susceptible to negative information about the affinity country, increase their use of UGC at every stage of their customer journey, engage with local aspects of the affinity country and increase

gift-giving consumption. Through its findings, this thesis contributes to the knowledge of the tourism literature pertinent to consumer behavior.

Finally, the researchers highlight that this study serves as an aid, to tourism managers, governmental policymakers and researchers, in better understanding tourist behavior.

Overall, TA is an important phenomenon to understand for tourism researchers and managers, and it enables a bunch of opportunities for further research, given the potential insights for tourism theory and practice.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Questionnaire scale with items

Construct	Adapted from (authors)	Original scale	Scale adapted to our study
DY	x	x	1. I like Spanish people's mentality 2. I feel sympathy for Spanish people 3. I am fond of Spanish lifestyle in general 4. I have a pleasant feeling when I think of Spanish cuisine 5. I like the Spanish nature and landscape 6. I have a pleasant feeling when I think about Spanish climate 7. I am captivated by Spanish culture and traditions 8. I feel connected with the Spanish culture 9. I like the cultural dissimilarities that Spain has with Denmark

			10. Have you lived in Spain?
			11. I feel connected to Spain because of the relatives and/or friends that I have living there
Tourism Affinity (liking, admiration and attachment feelings)	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019b Thomson et al., 2005	**Affinity** *Admiration* 1. Captivated 2. Impressed 3. Admire *Liking* 1. Like 2. Fondness 3. Sympathy *Attachment* 1. Connected 2. Bonded 3. Attached	Describe the extent to which the following words describe your typical feelings toward Spain: 1. Captivated 2. Impressed 3. Admire 4. Like 5. Fondness 6. Sympathy 7. Connected 8. Bonded 9. Attachment
Willingness to visit	Kock et al., 2016	I strongly intend to visit [country] in the future It is very likely that I would choose [country] as my tourist destination I would like to take a holiday in [country] I plan to visit[country] as a tourist at some point in the future	1. I strongly intend to visit Spain in the future. 2. It is very likely that I would choose Spain as my tourist destination. 3. I would like to take a holiday in Spain. 4. I plan to visit Spain as a tourist at some point in the future.

Actual Trips	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a	Indicate how many holiday trips to foreign destinations have you taken in the last five years.	Indicate how many holiday trips to Spain you have taken in the last five years.
Word of mouth	Kock et al., 2016	I talk up [country] as a holiday destination I bring up [country] in a positive way in conversations about holiday destinations In social situations, I often speak favorably about [country] as a tourist destination I recommend [country] as a tourist destination to other people when asked	1. I talk up Spain as a holiday destination. 2. I bring up Spain in a positive way in conversations about holiday destinations. 3. In social situations, I often speak favorably about Spain as a tourist destination. 4. I recommend Spain as a tourist destination to other people when asked.
Susceptibility to negative information	Eisingerich et al., 2011	Negative information about [company name] has no effect on me Negative information about [company name] does not change my general view of the firm	1. I am skeptical toward negative things I hear about Spain. 2. If I heard negative news about Spain, I would not believe them.
Social media	Narangajavana et al., 2017	I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations	1. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know if Spain makes

		make good impressions on others. When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident about travelling to the destination.	good impressions on others. 2. When I travel to Spain, tourists' online travel reviews make me more confident about travelling there.
Intention to engage with locals	Nørfelt et al., 2019	I intend to engage with the locals on my next holiday to a foreign destination. I will engage with the locals the next time I go on holiday to a foreign destination. On my next holiday to a foreign destination, I will definitely try to engage with the locals.	1. I intend to engage with Spanish locals on my next holiday to Spain. 2. I will engage with Spanish locals the next time I go on holiday to Spain. 3. On my next holiday to Spain, I will definitely try to engage with Spanish locals.
Intention to try local food	Nørfelt et al., 2019	1. I am curious to try local food that I don't know. 2. When traveling, I like to taste local food. 3. I enjoy local food when traveling.	1. I am curious to try Spanish local food that I don't know. 2. When traveling, I like to taste Spanish local food. 3. I enjoy Spanish local food when traveling.

		4. When eating abroad, I prefer the local food alternative.	4. When eating abroad, I prefer the Spanish local food alternative.
Preference for group activities	Kock, Josiassen, & Assaf, 2019a	1. I prefer going in groups with people from my home country.	When traveling to Spain, I prefer going in groups with local people.
Stay at Airbnb	Nørfelt et al., 2019	1. I intend to stay at a bed and breakfast on my next holiday to a foreign destination. 2. The next time I go on vacation to a foreign destination, I will stay at a bed and Breakfast. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay at a bed and breakfast when I travel to a foreign destination.	1. I intend to stay at an Airbnb on my next holiday to Spain. 2. The next time I go on vacation to Spain, I will stay at an Airbnb. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay at an Airbnb when I travel to Spain.
Stay with family and friends	Nørfelt et al., 2019	1. I intend to stay at a bed and breakfast on my next holiday to a foreign destination.	1. I intend to stay with family and friends on my next holiday to Spain. 2. The next time I go on vacation to

		2. The next time I go on vacation to a foreign destination, I will stay at a bed and Breakfast. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay at a bed and breakfast when I travel to a foreign destination.	Spain, I will stay with family and friends. 3. It is very likely that I would choose to stay with family and friends when I travel to Spain.
Gift-giving	Wilkins, 2011	1. I generally buy gifts for my family or friends 2. I buy souvenirs as a gift to take when staying with family and friends	1. I generally buy souvenirs for my family or friends when I come back from Spain. 2. I buy gifts from my country of residence to take when staying with family and friends in Spain.
Crowdedness Perception	Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012	1. Could you indicate a number on the crowding scale that matches your perception of the current situation?	1. How crowded do you think this picture is? (including a picture from a beach in Barcelona)

Appendix 2: Interviews online repository from the pre-study

https://www.dropbox.com/home/Master's%20Thesis%20Tourism%20Affintiy

Appendix 3: Picture displayed in the scale regarding crowdedness