



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ
ΤΜΗΜΑ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΗΣ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΕΩΝ

ΔΙΑΤΡΙΒΗ

*για την απόκτηση διδακτορικού διπλώματος του
Τμήματος Διοίκησης Επιχειρήσεων*

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**Tourists' Personality and Consumer Behavior
in Social Media**

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UNIVERSITY OF THE AEGEAN
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

DISSERTATION

*in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the department of
Business Administration*

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«ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ»

Πλάτων

“The unexamined life is not worth living”

Platon

Αφιερωμένο σε δύο πρόσωπα που έφυγαν νωρίς, που όμως δεν θα ξεχαστούν
ποτέ...

Ιωάννης Τσομπάνης & Βασίλειος Μπότσαρης

Dedicated to two persons that left early, but will never be forgotten...

John Tsobanis & Vasilios Botsaris

Abstract

User-generated-content and its sub-category, the consumer product reviews, have generated a global word-of-mouth, which has changed the balances in the information-intensive tourism industry. One of the most radical influences of this eWOM is its impact on travelers' decision-making process. Consequently, hospitality producers have been also highly affected by these changes. Travel suppliers exploit the advantages of the UGC for marketing purposes, while they also produce their own content aiming to affect consumer's decisions. On the other hand, traveler's behavior is not only induced by external influences, such as the content of social media, but also by internal factors, such as the individual's personality. Nevertheless, research didn't explore yet how the user-generated, as well as the marketing-generated content affect tourist behavior and travel decision-making in social media, relatively to individual's personality.

The current research project examines the role of personality on travelers' decision-making, with respect to social media content use and exploitation. Moreover, it examines whether self-congruity holds on social media. Based on the EBM model of traveler decision-making process and the Big Five trait model of personality, the study examined a sample of travel consumers who are social media users. In total, 582 questionnaires were collected and analyzed. Results revealed that personality influences all travel decision-making phases, while self-congruity is a prerequisite, in order the individuals to feel attached with the user-generated, as well as the marketing-generated content. Additionally, the survey showed that user-generated-content influences travelers' behavior more than marketing-generated-content. The findings revealed significant contributions to the traveler's decision-making theory, as well as to the marketing practices that should be followed in social media.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my advisor Professors Dr. Marianna Sigala and Dr. Evangelos Christou, who were exceptional mentors to me. I would like to thank them for encouraging my research and for allowing me to grow as a research scientist. Their advice on both research as well as on my career have been priceless. I appreciate all their contributions of time, ideas, and support to make my Ph.D. experience productive and stimulating. The joy and enthusiasm they have for research was contagious and motivational for me, even during tough times, in the Ph.D. pursuit. I am also thankful for the excellent example they have provided to me as successful scientists and professors, as well as persons.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Andreas Papatheodorou, Dr. Christos Vasileiadis, Dr. Nikos Kalogeras, Dr. Konstantinos Koutsikos, Dr. Nikolaos Konstantopoulos. Thanks to them and their brilliant comments and suggestions my defense became an enjoyable and edifying moment. I would especially like to thank the staff of the Department of Business Administration and the Postgraduate Studies in "Tourism Planning, Management and Policy" of the University of the Aegean, and more precisely Mrs. Maria Stathakou and Mrs. Vasso Vasiliou for their support and services during my Ph.D. thesis.

I would also like to thank all of the friends I have made during my studies. Thank you for your friendship and support to strive towards my goal. A special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my parents for all of the sacrifices they have made on my behalf. At the end I would like to express my appreciation to my beloved sister Dora, who was always my support in the moments when there was no one to answer my queries and who stood by me psychologically, practically and financially: *"I will never forget what you did for me and I will be always grateful and here for you"*.

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PART I
INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

Context and Rationale

1.1 Background

Travel marketing critically depends on the consumer needs. Consequently, marketing strategies should be developed according to the consumer requests. Understanding consumers is, therefore, the key element of making sufficient marketing decisions (Lennon et al., 2001). The best way of capturing consumer's wants is the study of the consumer behavior. Several studies have been dedicated to the consumer behavior and a large number of theories have been developed. However, the consumer decision-making process is the theory which dominates in this research. The decision-making process conceptualizes the consumer's behavior into a series of phases that consumers experience when making decisions. Marketing efforts are concentrated on recognizing consumers' requirements in each phase, aiming to affect consumer decisions.

Consumer behavior, however, is not an independent procedure. Several factors have impact on the consumers during their decision-making process. Personal and interpersonal factors, such as consumers' needs/wants, perceptions, learning, personality and self-concept, as well as culture, reference groups, social classes, opinion leaders, family and external factors, such as marketing, influence the consumer's final decisions (Morrison, 1996; Schiffman et al., 2008). When analyzing consumer behavior it is, therefore, necessary to consider the various elements influencing individuals. Understanding travelers' behavior requires the examination of the complex interactions, internal and external, which consumers face during decision-making process.

Moreover, the evolution of the Web 2.0 technologies has extended the consumer role, from a pathetic receiver of tourist information into an energetic contributor



and active reviewer of this information. Nowadays, social media incorporated more and more in consumers' decisions, with travelers to become more sophisticated in their consuming behavior. Hence, research must follow these changes in order to explain the vacationing behavior. Although, academic research has largely focused in social media impact on consumer behavior, it appears that the majority of this research is dedicated to tourists' segmentation and description rather than to the explanation and understanding of their decision-making processes.



1.2 Motivation and Objectives

User-generated-content is the cornerstone of Web 2.0. The evolution of UGC has changed the dynamics of the travel industry, by empowering the role of consumers and travelers. With consumer travel reviews and content, a sub-category of UGC, a remarkable number of recommendations are delivered to other users about travel destinations, suppliers, products and services (Zhang et al., 2010). The global word-of-mouth, generated by consumer travel reviews and posts, has radically impact the information-intensive industry of tourism (Mendes-Filho et al., 2009). Users' reviews strongly affect the decision-making process, by helping consumers to form an unbiased understanding of a product, construct a set of criteria for its evaluating, and make an accurate choice with reduced cognitive costs (Decker et al., 2010; Liu et al., 2011). Consequently, hospitality producers have been also highly affected by these changes. Sigala (2009) provided a wide range of the demand and supply social media implications for the tourist industry, concluding that *"UGC and Web 2.0 have a tremendous impact not only on the behavior and decision-making of Internet users, but also on the e-business model that organizations need to develop and/or adapt in order to conduct business on the Internet"*. Moreover, travel suppliers do not stay only on capturing UGC advantages, but they also produce their own content in the social media, for marketing purposes, aiming to affect consumer's decisions.

Nevertheless, research has not yet focused on how UGC, as well as marketing content in social media affect tourist behavior and travel decision-making. The research has tended to focus on how people utilize social media, rather than on how this use impacts consumers' attitudes and perceptions. Sirakaya (2005) provided a detailed report related to decision-making theories of travelers. One of the research propositions for future research referred to the questions: *"Do consumers of tourism services/products or destinations rely more on personal than non-personal sources? If yes, at what stage (of the decision-making process) they become more important? How do consumers use non-personal sources of information in their decision*



processes?". The current dissertation aims to fill this gap by exploring the impact of the non-personal source of social media travel content on travelers' behavior.

On the other hand, the traveler's behavior is not only induced by external influences, such as the social media, but also by internal factors, such as the individual's personality. In tourism marketing, personality is considered as one of the main factors which affect consumer's decisions. Personality, along with motivations, perceptions, attitudes and learning falls in the first level of influences that influence the traveler (Moutinho, 1987). Despite the importance of personality, research on its impact on travel decisions is limited. Cheung (2003) reviewed the literature of online consumer behavior, and concluded that *"factors related to consumer characteristics like demographics, personality, value, lifestyle, consumer resources, and knowledge were not explored"*. The purpose of this research is to contribute to personality research by examining the role of travelers' personality on making vacation decisions in social media.

All in all, the shift from the traditional WOM to the eWOM, has *"profound consequences in the way businesses approach customers' needs and wants through their marketing strategies"* (Hvass & Munar, 2012). Hence, the detection of how consumer needs and wants are formed in Web 2.0 appears critical, from both theoretical and industrial perspectives. The current project aims to disclose how these needs are shaped, by studying personality's associations with social media impact on the travel decision-making process.

Motivated by these incentives the present dissertation aimed to achieve the following objectives, related to literature and empirical research, as well as to the practical and theoretical implications and contributions.

Objectives connected to literature:



- O1** Examination of Personality Research on Web 1.0 and Web 2.0
- O2** Examination of Personality Research on Consumer Behavior and Travel Planning Process
- O3** Examination of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 Research on Consumer Behavior and Travel Decision-Making

Objectives connected to empirical research:

- O4** Exploring the role of personality and User-Generated-Content on travel decision-making process
- O5** Exploring the role of personality and Marketing-Generated-Content on travel decision-making process
- O6** Exploring the role of self-congruity and social media content on travel decision-making process

Objectives connected to research implications and contributions:

- O7** Establishing a better understanding of consumer behavior in social media
- O8** Identifying how travel decision-making process is modulated under UGC and MGC impact
- O9** Detecting academic and industrial implications

Accordingly, thesis structure and research design were built to serve these objectives.



1.3 Research Design

Research was designed according to the following procedure:

- *Determination of the theoretical framework.* Two theoretical frameworks were incorporated, one related to consumer decision-making and another related to the personality's measurement. The Engel, Blackwell & Miniard – EBM model (Engel et al., 1995) was adopted to analyze consumer behavior in social media. The EBM travel decision making-process includes the pre-purchase processes of need recognition, information search and evaluation of alternatives, the purchase processes of decision and purchase and the post-purchase processes of consumption and evaluation. The Big Five traits model was incorporated for the analysis of personality. Big Five traits include neuroticism or emotional stability, extraversion, openness-to-experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Scheier, 2008).
- *Review of the literature.* Literature review followed the aspects of the theoretical frameworks, namely personality's associations with social media usage and personality's associations with the consumer decision-making process.
- *Defining the research gaps.* The severe gaps in the literature formed the research questions of the dissertation.
- *Defining the research instrument.* An online questionnaire, related to research objectives and questions, was built and distributed.
- *Analysis of findings.* The reported results were analyzed and discussed in comprehensive manner, and interesting conclusions were detected.



1.4 Chapters Overview

The dissertation is organized into four parts. Part I is the introduction of the study, namely Chapter 1. The second part is the review of the literature. Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 belong to this part. Part III refers to the methodology and research design, as well as to data analysis and report of the results. This part consists of Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. Part IV refers to the discussion findings and to the conclusions of the study. It contains Chapter 8 and Chapter 9.

Part I Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the subject of the dissertation. It gives the motives and the objectives of the study, as well as the research design.

Part II Review of the Literature

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the concepts of social media and Web 2.0, as well as to user-generated and marketing-generated content. The evolution of the Web 2.0 is given through an analytical description of its tools. A systematic reference to the user-generated-content is provided afterwards. Great emphasis is given to the role of the online consumer reviews. Next, is described the concept of the marketing-generated-content, as well as the social media marketing. The definitions of the two variables – UGC and MGC - that penetrate the total research, are provided in this chapter, specifying why is vital to be further examined, the impact of social media content in traveler behavior.

Chapter 3 is about traveler behavior and decision-making. The cognitive models of consumer decision-making are described here. Great emphasis is given to the EBM model, the theoretical framework of the study. The decision-making of travelers, as



well as online decision-making are also provided. Subsequent, are presented the factors – internal and external – that affect consumers as decision makers, such as personality.

Chapter 4 describes the phenomenon of personality. The concept of personality is defined, as well as the personality's self-schemas. Next, are given the theories which describe personality measurements, starting from the psychoanalytical approaches of Freud and Jung, and gradually reaching the trait theories. Big Five traits theory is described in details given, in this way, the reasons that the theory has been selected as the dissertation's personality measurement instrument.

Chapter 5 reviewed initially the research of personality, which has been undertaken so far in the Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. Subsequently, the stages of: travel need recognition, travel information search, evaluation of travel alternatives, travel purchase decision and travel post-purchase behavior were reviewed according to personality, internet and social media research. The review revealed the research gaps that led to the research questions.

Part III Methodology - Results Report & Analysis

Chapter 6 refers to the methodology of the thesis. Here are presented the research questions related to the corresponding literature gaps. The research instrument is also described in this chapter.

Chapter 7 provides the results of the study. The outcomes of the travel decision-making in the social media, as well as the personality and the self-congruity findings are presented and analyzed here.



Part IV Discussion - Conclusion

Chapter 8 debates the findings of the research. The results for the tourist decision-making stages were discussed. According to the UGC and the MGC impact, as well as to the personality's influences, several implications were provided for each stage.

Chapter 9 gives the implications, limitations, and future research implications, as well as the study's contribution to knowledge.



PART II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter 2

Social Media: The evolution of UGC

2.1 Introduction

The role and the character of the Web has evolved, the last twenty years, from an information tool to a social interaction tool, with several implications for both users and companies. The initial static Web pages and sites have been enhanced by more clever applications which allow direct contact and collaboration among internet users (Li et al., 2010). While organizations were about to feel comfortable with their web presence, with simple corporate sites and e-commerce services, the evolution of the new technologies came to shake up what was already known in marketing practices (Berthon et al., 2012). This new category of online applications generates the Web 2.0, also known as Social Media. The technologies of social media connect internet users in unique ways, without geographical and time limits and, more importantly, without the need of knowing each other in the non-digital life. Furthermore, the mass collaboration and communication originated by the Web 2.0 *“empowers users, democratizes entrepreneurship and innovation by providing users with numerous opportunities for social collaboration, networking, learning, intelligence and community building”* (Sigala, 2011).

From the consumers’ perspective, the convenience of the e-commerce services in the Web 1.0, is now enhanced with additional benefits. The direct and uninterrupted communication among users, results in a more efficient, rich and participative information exchange about a huge variety of products, while this information is accessed with less effort and reduced costs. Peers opinions can be any more easily found, with users’ judgments to often overlap the marketing efforts (Borges Tiago et al. 2014). However, social media also provide a series of remarkable marketing advantages for firms (time, audience, relations and cost advantages)



highlighting one of the most recent marketing phenomena (Kirtis & Karahan, 2011). As the use of social media by individuals continuously grows, companies started to take advantage of these technologies for marketing and advertising reasons, delivering in efficient and low cost ways integrated marketing services to their customers (Kim & Ko, 2012).

In this manner, Web 2.0 has implications on both demand and supply aspects of the tourist industry. Social media technologies significantly impact consumer behavior affecting all the stages of travelers' decision-making process, and consequently influencing the way companies do business online (Sigala, 2009; 2012).

Given the rising interest, both in business and academic world, about social media implications, the current chapter tries to shed lights in the following questions: which are these social media applications, what is user and what is marketing-generated-content, in which ways these technologies affect consumer behavior and marketing practices, what are the implications for travel and tourism produces. The chapter aims to investigate how all these concepts impact on the formation of the new notion of social media marketing and to provide their significance to the consumer decision-making.



2.2 Web 2.0: The social media world

The new category of the online technologies of social media originated Web 2.0 which is defined by Constantinides et al. (2008) as *“a collection of open-source, interactive and user-controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal users’ networks facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing the efficient generation, dissemination, sharing and editing / refining of informational content”*. Even though, Web 2.0 and social media terms are interchangeably used, Web 2.0 is more related to the applications themselves, while social media associated to the social aspects (participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectedness) of Web 2.0 tools.

According to the above definition Web 2.0 refers to the evolution of the content on the internet era, known as “user-generated-content”. While in Web 1.0 the content was solely generated by suppliers, in Web 2.0 users are offered with the ability to contribute to this creation providing their own information on the web (van Velsen et al., 2009). As already mentioned, Web 2.0 is an amalgam of social media platforms and technologies. According to Peters et al. (2013) social mediums are multi-way, immediate and contingent and they can be understood only when their respective characteristics (structure, context, contingency, goals, sequences of actions and reactions) are defined. However, interactivity is what differentiates social media of other traditional offline and online media. Kietzmann et al. (2011) classify what users do in social media platforms into seven categories:

- **Identity:** Identity refers to the ways that users present themselves online. Self-disclosure can be conscious or unconscious and includes data such as age, name, profession, location and other information.
- **Conversations:** Conversations represent the communication among users and groups in social media.



- **Sharing:** Sharing describes how people interact (exchange, distribute and receive) content in social media. Sharing is related to the common interests of users.
- **Presence:** Presence is whether the user informs the web community that he is “available or hidden” online, so the other users know if they can communicate in real-time with him.
- **Relationships:** This term refers to the web-relationships formed via the social media. These relationships can be transferred from the real to the virtual world or they can be built only in terms of the virtual world. Such type of relationships helps the association, sociability, and connectivity of users.
- **Reputation:** Reputation concerns with the fame one holds on the social media platforms. Reputation can be measured by the number of friends or followers, number of content views, number or posts, etc.
- **Groups:** Users of social media can participate to various groups, a type of online communities. These communities can be open to everyone or close.

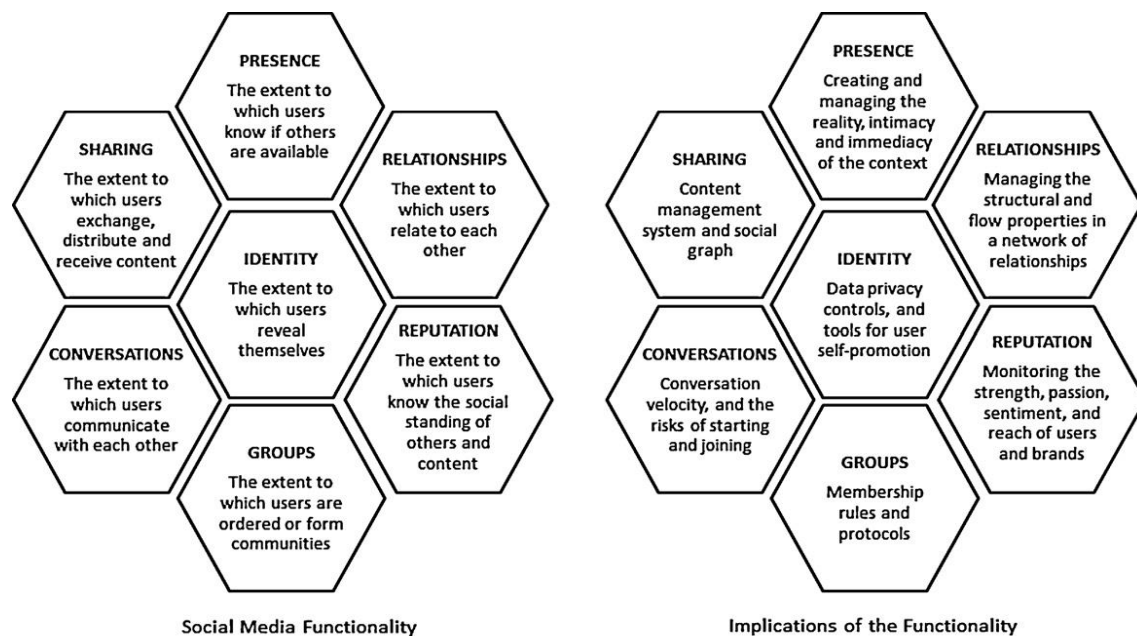


Figure 2.1 The honeycomb of social media

Source: Kietzmann et al., 2011



Users' activities in social media also have a tremendous number of implications for firms and brands, as shown in Figure 2.1 (on the right honeycomb). Firms might be interested in starting or getting involved in a conversation related to their brands, managing their reputation in social media or building relationships with consumers. In other words, social media, even though they are a user-driven medium, they are also effectively exploited by companies for marketing purposes and reasons. According to Berthon et al. (2012) Web 2.0 and its technologies shifted activity from the desktop to the Web, as well as value production and power from the firm to the consumer.

2.2.1 Social Media Classification

The plethora of social media platforms have been classified by Kaplan et al. (2010) according to the two key elements of Social Media: media practices (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure) (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Classification of Social Media by social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure

		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Source: Kaplan et al., 2010

Consistent with the above classification the different social media types are grouped into six categories as follows:

- **Blogs and microblogs**

Blogs are web based journals published in reverse chronological order which are free to public and include a collection of tools to share authors' thoughts (news,



information, commentaries) such as texts, images, videos, audios and links (Volo, 2010). Blogs, short of weblogs, allow users communication and form a kind of virtual communities which share similar interests that strongly influence the way participants relate, act and make decisions (Marques et al., 2013). Communication takes place as participants read and comment on each other's posts and results in a kind of information exchange which forms social ties among users and promotes collaboration, knowledge exchange and socialization. On the other hand, micro-blogs differ from blogs on their minimal content. Twitter, perhaps, gives a limit of 140 characters. However, micro-blogs have become one of the most popular social networks and provide a powerful and reliable tool for both information seekers (to acquire valuable content) and information providers, such as companies (to release profit-making messages) (Li et al., 2014).

- ***Collaborative projects***

Collaborative projects are *“social media applications that enable the joint and simultaneous creation of knowledge-related content by many end-users”* (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This specific type of social media considered as the most democratic one, since it allows posting, adding and changing content in an equal manner to all web users. They are also defined by Kaplan et al. (2014) as *“a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”*. The same authors give a distinction of collaborative projects into four separate forms:

- **Wikis.** Wiki platforms enable *“a voluntary environment with collaborative knowledge contribution and maintenance in a simple and effective manner”* (Zhao et al., 2013). Wikis allow group collaboration in creating and editing content via user friendly technologies (Sigala, 2009) and affect knowledge creation, sharing, integration, and utilization about a plethora of topics, including travel and tourism (wikitravel.org).



- **Social bookmarking sites or Collaborative tagging services.** Tagging allows the classification and categorization of web content according to specific labels, called 'tags', put by users to this content. Tags are given in a free and non-controlled form and enable content sharing as other users find information on the web based on keywords produced from tagging (Sigala, 2009).
- **Online forums or Message boards.** Forums are *"online communication tools that engage people in interactive ongoing conversations on particular subjects"* (Safko & Brake, 2009) via which people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages.
- **Review sites.** Review sites are exactly what their name says. They are websites that provide users with the ability to write down their reviews about products, services, firms and so on. TripAdvisor is one of the prominent sites in this category. Through review sites users exchange feedback about their favorite commodities (Kaplan et al., 2014).
- ***Content or virtual communities***

A virtual community is *"a community of people with a common interest or shared purpose whose interactions are governed by policies in the form of tacit assumptions, rituals, protocols, rules, and laws, and who use computer systems to support and mediate social interactions and to facilitate a sense of togetherness"* (Ku, 2011). Virtual communities *"allow people who interact to satisfy their own needs and to share purpose such as an interest, need, information exchange, or service that provides a reason for the community"* (Baglieri & Consoli, 2009). Content communities include: Podcasts (iTunes), Videos (YouTube and Vimeo), Photos (Flickr, Instagram), and Presentations (SlideShare). Among the different types of virtual communities, also lie the virtual brand communities which are *"a set of individuals who voluntarily relate to each other for their interest in some brand or product"* (Casalo et al., 2007).



- **Social networks**

According to Harbaugh (2010) social networks defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. Social networks include platforms such as Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn. According to the purposes for which friendship connections are made, SNSs are distinguished into: socializing, networking, and social navigation (Thelwall, 2009). Socializing SNSs focus on recreation intentions, Networking SNSs on building associations with people of common interests, and navigation SNSs on finding particular type of information or resource.

- **Metaverses**

Metaverses are massively multi-player online role-playing games, so-called MMORPGs. They copy real world since users can act in three dimensional platforms with avatars representing them on the web. They can be distinguished into Virtual Game and Virtual Social Worlds (Sigala, 2009; Kaplan et al., 2010):

- **Virtual game worlds.** Virtual game worlds are developed around a theme that defines the game’s goals (e.g. World of Warcraft). In this sense, virtual game worlds are low in self-presentation even though they are high in media richness.
- **Virtual social worlds.** Social virtual worlds allow users to behave in more free and unrestricted ways. In other words, they allow high self-presentation and self-disclosure of the “residents”, as the users called in these applications. Second Life is a representative platform of this kind of media where residents can also produce content, such as designing virtual clothing or furniture and “selling” this content to other residents.



2.3 User Generated Content

User-generated content (UGC), also known as user-created content (UCC) or consumer-generated content (CGC) refers to the content published in social media by the internet users. In other words UCC consider users or consumers to have the central role in the content generated on the Internet. In UGC activities, users are both the producers and the consumers of the created content (Mendes-Filho et al., 2009). Nevertheless, companies are also consuming the users-created content for their own purposes (market research). According to Shim et al. (2009) user-created content (UCC) is the term describing the content created or copied from other sources by users and then, more importantly, publicly distributed on the web. It is the content submitted by the “digital common” rather than web publishers. The tremendous growth of UCC has put it in the heart of the most relevant and faster growing web applications (Ryu et al., 2009).

UCC content can be found on internet in many different forms, all generated by users' information exchange. Such forms include text exchange (discussion boards, blogs, etc.), photos, videos, music, audios, wikis, customer review sites, video games, virtual objects and any other way which offers the opportunity to users for interaction and sharing. This sharing contains users' knowledge, experiences, as well as opinions about a product, a service or an experience (Oum et al., 2011). Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) describe UGC as “*the sum of all ways in which people make use of Social Media*”. According to the OECD (2007) definition UGC is identified by three characteristics:

- **Publication requirement:** The publication of the content is a prerequisite. In this manner e-mails or two-way instant messages cannot be considered as UCC. Only open published content on the web falls in this category.
- **Creative effort:** The published content must be the result of users' creative efforts. The republication of already existed content cannot be included in



this category. The creative effort can be also the result of users' collaboration.

- **Creation outside of professional routines and practices:** UCC must be created with no professional intentions or implications. On the contrary, the motives behind UGC can be the expression of oneself, the peer-to-peer connection, contact and communication, the achievement of fame, notoriety or prestige.

UGM usages include consuming, participating, and producing of UGC. Speaking differently, users can be either producers, participants or consumers of the content (Shao, 2008). Usually individuals start their contact with UGC as consumers. They seek for UGC in order to get information or entertain themselves. In this stage they don't interact with the content (participate or contribute). Overcoming the initial obstacles users start gradually to participate by ranking, commenting and distributing the content. Participating gives the opportunity to users for social interaction that build virtual communities. At a further step users might go ahead to produce content. Self-expression and self-actualization are usually the reasons behind UGC production. UGC producers are concerned in attracting others interest aimed at constructing their personal identity online.

However, not all users go through all these stages. On the contrary, only the minority of users produce content, while others stay forever consumers. Nevertheless, UGC productions lies on the top of UGC pyramid since without production nobody could speak about user-generated-content. Figure 2.2 shows the interdependence among the three types of UGC usage. As people produce content others participate by providing comments or by spreading the information producing even more content for consumption.

From a marketing perspective, UGC exploitation fluctuates across a range of contribution, creativity and collaboration among users (Berthon, et al., 2012) as follows:



- First consumers can get involved into informal discussions about products and services.
- Following, consumers can create structured reviews and evaluations in the form of text or videos.
- Then, consumers might go further by promoting or demoting brands (i.e. through self-created “advertising” videos).
- Lastly, consumers’ involvement can extend to innovations by modifying products and services and distributing them to others.

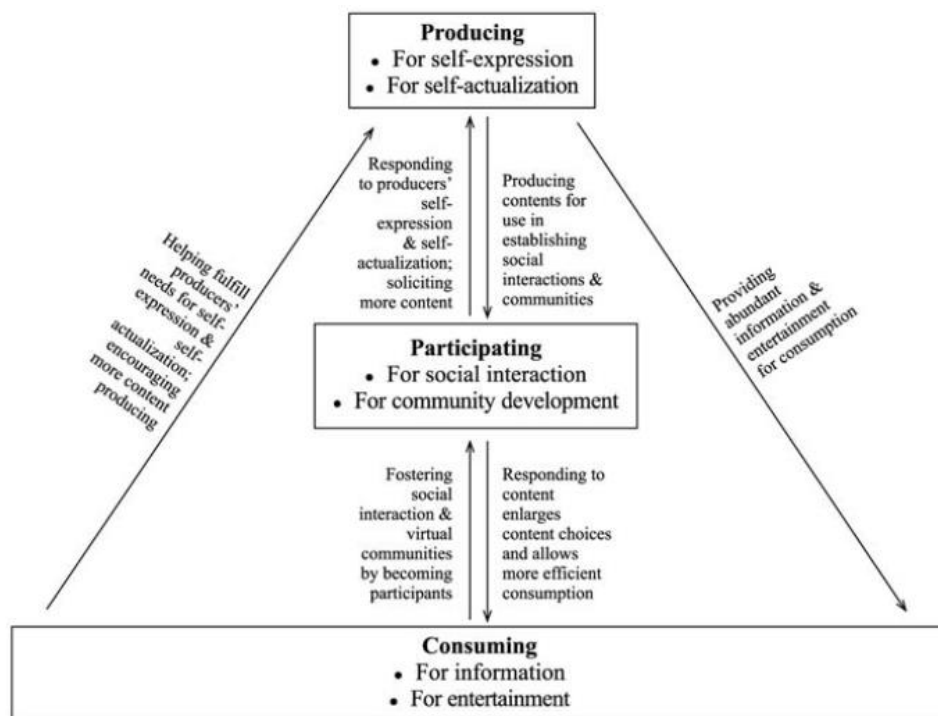


Figure 2.2 Interdependence of people’s consuming, participating, and producing on user-generated media

Source: Shao, 2008

Regardless, the above usages of UGC its main contribution is consumer empowerment on the web and more importantly on the tourism sector (Mendes-Filho et al., 2009). Given that tourism is an information intensive industry, UGC is changing its dynamics due to the global word-of-mouth engendered. In comparison to other product categories, travel products are the most often searched on the

web. Consequently, hospitality producers are also highly affected by these changes. Consumers are now able to directly communicate with others of similar interests and they frequently use travel consumer-generated content, such as online reviews, to support their travel-related decisions (Mendes-Filho et al., 2009; Hills et al., 2011).

2.3.1 Online Consumer Reviews

As already mentioned, a sub-category of the user-generated-content constitutes the reviews provided online by customers. Online consumer reviews deliver user-oriented information about products and services, and work for other consumers as recommendations (positive or negative) about them (Zhang et al., 2010). Online reviews have a strong influence on consumer's decision making process (Decker & Trusov, 2010). They provide a trusted source of product information and product quality. Liu, Karahanna & Watson (2011) state that online reviews can help consumers to:

- form an unbiased understanding of a product
- construct a set of criteria for evaluating a product
- make an accurate choice
- reduce the cognitive costs of making such a choice.

Sparks et al. (2011) strongly support that when consumers facing product decisions rely more on online search, including review sites. Online travel consumer reviews are motivated by self-directed purposes, social benefits, consumer empowerment but mainly by the need to help other vacationers (Bronner et al., 2011). On the other hand, consumers search for online reviews posted by other travelers in order to reduce the risk, to assure quality (included value-for-money and price elements) because it is convenient and, more importantly, in order to find out what is new in the market (Kyoo Kim et al., 2011). This conclusion shows evidence that product awareness and need recognition can be motivated by UGC consumption.



Furthermore, online consumer reviews and ratings increase the awareness of hotels and the possibility to be considered for purchase by tourists (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Recommendations by non-experts start to be considered as unbiased forms of information in contrast to experts placements. Products and services value, price and quality seem to be placed in consumers mind according to their peers' recommendations. A recent study by Nielsen (2012) has shown that travel lies among the most discussed topics on social networking sites, while 60% of the participants stated that UGC influence their travel purchase decisions. Moreover, there are cases where online consumer reviews impact on consumer behavior has been found to be more effective than traditional advertising, information provided by formal producers, or promotion messages provided by third-party websites (Xie et al., 2014).

The great magnitude of consumer reviews is by the fact that even negative reviews can have a positive influence. According to Utz et al. (2012) *“positive consumer reviews increase sales whereas negative reviews decrease sales. However, negative reviews can also increase sales, mainly because reviewed products have a greater chance to end up in the consumers' consideration sets than products that have not even been reviewed”*. Nevertheless, recent studies underline the importance that reviewers and receivers characteristics play in reviews acceptance. Williams et al. (2010) stresses the receivers' need of having more information about reviewers in order to be able to identify somehow themselves with them and verify that reviewers' opinions are convenient to them. Furthermore, Cheung et al. (2012) point out that research should also focus on receivers' characteristics (gender, consumer skepticism, cognitive personalization) to detect the adopting procedure from the side of UGC consumers and how this adoption or rejection affect their purchase decisions.



2.4 Marketing Generated Content

Regardless of the user-driven nature of social media, marketers are also interested in them because they produce a tremendous amount of word-of-mouth (WOM). WOM is defined as *“oral, informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization, or a service”* (Eisingerich et al., 2014). Social media and more precisely UGC produce an electronic form of word-of-mouth, the so-called eWOM. Hennig-Thurau et al. define eWOM as *“any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet”* (cited in King et al., 2014). Traditional WOM and eWOM share some common characteristics, however they are different in some other that create the uniqueness of the eWOM communication, such as (Cheung et al., 2012):

- eWOM is an asynchronous communication. This characteristic drives to a great speed of content diffusion since the contact among consumers is continuous, without time or geographical limits, in contrast to the traditional form of WOM.
- eWOM comes in text and as the Latin proverb says *“scripta manent”*. In other words, eWOM has an archive character and can be reached by audience even after long periods of time.
- The previous characteristic makes eWOM easier to be gathered and analyzed by researchers, compared to the traditional WOM. Therefore, firms have the option to get advantage of what is written on the web about them, their products and services, as well as about competitors, and exploit this content in many ways, including marketing.
- Finally, while in traditional WOM receiver usually knows in person the sender of the information, eWOM is a more impersonal communication.



The eWOM produced by consumer reviews and by UGC, in general, has a tremendous impact on consumer behavior and consumer decision making (Williams, 2010; Berger, 2014; Bronner et al., 2011; Chen et al., 2011; Luo et al., 2015; Zhou & Wang, 2014). The shift from traditional WOM to eWOM has “*profound consequences in the way businesses approach customers’ needs and wants through their marketing strategies*” (Hvass & Munar, 2012), including tourism producers. Kastner & Stangl (2012) support that tourism suppliers must uncover what are the motives of people accessing UGC as a source of information. Pradiptarini (2011) concluded that the effectiveness of social media marketing depends on business’ content quality, involvement, and integration with the other media platforms.

2.4.1 Social media marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) is “*the intentional influencing of consumer-to-consumer communications by professional marketing techniques*” (Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). SMM is also known as WOM marketing, buzz marketing, stealth marketing, word-of-mouth or viral marketing. Kaplan & Haenlein (2011) define viral marketing as “*electronic word-of-mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand, or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way, often through the use of social media applications*”. The same authors (Figure 2.3) show the direct link between eWOM and SMM. They support that the exponential growth of WOM via internet and, more precisely, via social media results in a viral way of information diffusion, creating the viral form of marketing.

However, SMM does not come to replace traditional marketing strategies. In contrast, it comes to enhance them being a part of the company’s integrated marketing mix. Nevertheless, SMM differs from the other marketing methods since it is mainly based on consumers’ participation. More precisely, SMM strategies (Erdogmus et al., 2012):



- aim to build relationships with consumers (relationship marketing) – at the social media continuum firms must focus on “marketing connections” with the consumers than just “trying to sell”
- focus on “small acts”, which can be easily create audience awareness in short time, than stick to “big marketing campaigns”
- provide a more sincere communication – focusing more on brand features and not only on image control
- must be easily accessible in every social media platform, since consumers are more busy and powerful in our days.

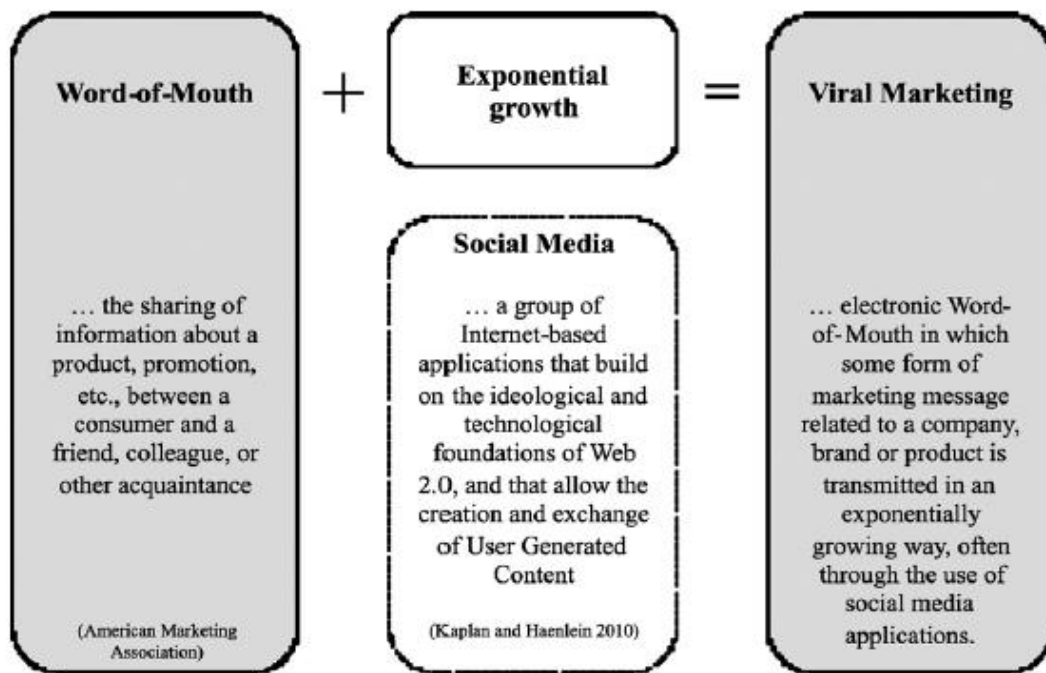


Figure 2.3 Relationship between word-of-mouth and viral marketing

Source: Kaplan et al., 2011

Hvass & Munar (2012) provide a framework of how UGC can be used to promote and communicate company's products, services and/or activities. In Table 2.2 is given the User generated content promotional marketing mix along with explanations of each element.



Table 2.2 User generated content promotional marketing mix

UGC PMM	Definition
Advertising	Product/service description or explanation, either at company's initiative or as a response to a question
Selling	Company provides a link to purchase a product/service
Sales promotion	Description and/or link to specific promotions or partner companies; no selling is involved
Public relations	A company's general response to a question not worded as an advertisement; for example, providing general information, soliciting for contributions from customers, or a challenge/ game for customers
Sponsorship	Information about a company sponsored event or initiative
Direct mail	Real-time or pertinent information to travelers
Word-of-mouth	Promoting content uploaded by other users
Social activity	Initiating a dialog without specific information about the company; for example, wishing happy holidays

Source: adopted and modified from Hvass et al., 2012

Web 2.0 technologies provide a multitude of platforms where companies, including travel producers, can disseminate UGC promotional marketing mix. Blogs are widely used since they provide services such as: (1) promotion of travel products and services, (2) publicity building for the company and brand name enhancement, (3) development of networks and contacts for the company giving the opportunity to blog for a general audience or focus on niche markets, (4) creation of an R&D Centre - open 24/7 (e.g. obtaining personal data from individual consumers), (5) direct feedback (personal comment) from the audience on professional issues (Huang et al., 2011). Virtual Communities help in: (1) creating new types of services, (2) enhancing existing products, (3) creating new divisions and capabilities, (4) strengthening positive image, (4) establishing relationships with customers, (5) rising customer loyalty and, consequently, sales (Illum, 2010). Social Network Marketing Opportunities include: (1) finding new customers, (2) brand loyalty enhancement, (3) innovation facilitation via consumer inputs and suggestions, (4) effective market research, (5) advertising (through wish list features and tell-a-friend applications), (6) provide product knowledge via consumer reviews and ratings that people in the



network interact with, (7) an inexpensive way to promote a company, since marketing is facilitating by consumer incorporation (Assaad et al., 2011). In general, Cantalops et al. (2014) support that eWOM provides the following opportunities for the company: (1) generating loyalty, (2) quality control and new procedures, (3) revenue management – price premium, (4) online reputation comparison, (5) customer interactions – response and recovery, (6) focus on target communication, (7) specific marketing strategies.

Nevertheless, all the above social marketing actions and strategies are ineffective without consumer engagement in company's content. Parent et al. (2011) describe this engagement into a 6C model of social media engagement (Figure 2.4). The model supports that consumers' interaction with company's content is the core concept behind the competitive advantages organizations can get in the social media world.

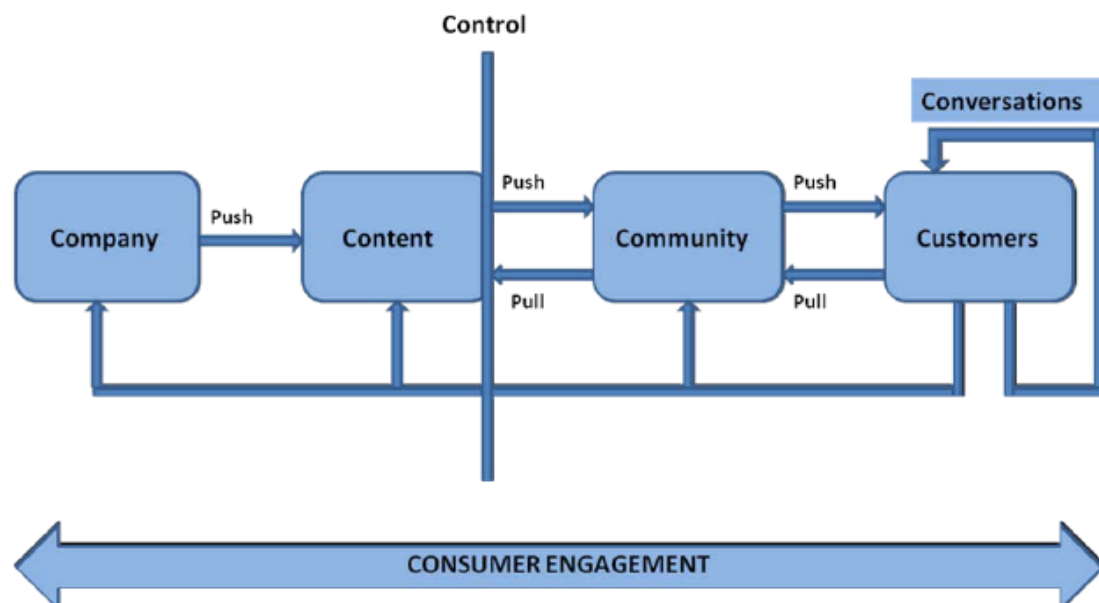


Figure 2.4 The 6C model of social media engagement

Source: Parent et al., 2011

The 6C components of the model are: company, content, control, community, customers and conversations. The “pull” companies' intentions in Web 1.0 are now

converted into “push” activities by content distribution. Companies produce content related to their products and services, and diffuse it to social media to attract consumers’ interest. Control is a type of invisible “wall”, representing the point at which company transfers control to consumers. The ultimate goal here is the content to reach the community of consumers related or interested to the product or service. As shown in the graph the communication is anymore bidirectional with consumers being able to take, comment, modify, diffuse, adapt or reject the original content. The conversations generated by this process aim to reach the customers of the product or/and service. Authors suggest that consumer interaction with the content includes six sequential steps: viewing – forwarding – commenting – creating – moderating – arbitrating. Finally, consumers’ participation and interaction with the original released content in social media by the company, gives direct feedback to marketers about customers’ needs and beliefs.

Consequently, apart from users, companies (including travel and tourism firms) are also produce and release content in social media. A study conducted by the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) showed that social media can create strong emotional connections with the consumers and that *“to create an emotional connection brands really need to provide clear, timely and, most important of all, relevant content that develop a conversation”* (Glenday, 2013). Chin (2006) separates user-generated content from engineered content. He describes UGC as the content created by the users themselves, while he states that engineered content is created by established knowledge experts and content owners. In this manner, travel companies’ content is described as Marketing Generated Content and defined as *“all the information and content produced and released to social media by travel producers for marketing reasons”*.



2.5 Conclusions: chapter's significance and contribution to the study

Social media constitute a newly established tourism-related information resource (Manap et al., 2013) that is primarily based on consumer contribution. Web 2.0, known as Travel 2.0 in the tourism industry, provides a range of opportunities for travelers to record and share in social media their travel experiences, engendering user-generated content (Pang et al. 2011). UGC produced by tourists is described by Munar (2010) as Tourist-Created-Content (TCC) and defined as *“the creative media content produced by the tourists and published through the Web”*. TCC connects travelers in exchanging opinions about their travel interests and creates a global word-of-mouth, which dynamically intervenes in the travel industry “equilibrium” (Mendes-Filho & Tan, 2009). One of the main changes that eWOM incorporates is tourist’s behavior and decision making influence. A number of studies emerge the role of TCC on travelers’ behavior, decision-making and trips planning (Cox et al., 2009; Fotis et al., 2011; Gretzel et al., 2007; Parra-Lopez et al., 2011).

The key role that UGC plays in the tourist decision-making often competes traditional tourism providers (classic media, tourism companies and news agencies), in affecting tourists behavior (Manap et al., 2013). However, tourism producers do not stay out of this competition. *“Travel and tourism companies are currently changing and redefining their business models in order to address the needs and expectations of this new generation of travelers”* (Sigala, 2012). Tourism marketers are gradually starting to integrate social media in their marketing communication strategies, in order to reduce the distance with tourists and engage them more and more with their products, services and activities (Christou, 2012). Web 2.0 platforms can be described as a perfect toolset that enable tourism organizations to directly communicate and collaborate with consumers, creating value and competitive advantages for the firm by applying the principals of viral marketing (Hede et al., 2012).



All in all, social media content affects consumer decisions (Decker & Trusov, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Sparks et al., 2011; Kyoo Kim et al., 2011; Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009) and business practices (Hvass & Munar, 2012; Parent et al., 2011). Moreover, Web 2.0 influences all stages of the travelers' decision-making process, from the realization of a travel need and the sources that travelers utilize for searching information and evaluating travel alternatives, to the decision of booking and buying travel products, as well as the online sharing of travel experiences during post-travel evaluations (Sigala, 2012).

Summarizing the above analyzed notions, two are the key concepts that engage into the study: User-Generated-Content and Marketing-Generated-Content approached from the tourism and travel perspective. The study defines UGC according to the OECD context as *“all the travel content produced and released in social media by users and out of professional purposes”*, and MGC as *“all the information and content produced and released to social media by travel producers for marketing reasons”*. It should be mention that the study is not interested in the type of social media used by the travelers but on the travel content itself. Independently of how, when and for what reasons (utilitarian or hedonic) people use social media, the current study aims to shed lights on what are the differences or similarities of UGC and MGC impact on consumer behavior and travel decision-making, as discussed in the following chapters.



Chapter 3

Consumer Behavior on the Web: The Personality Implications

3.1 Introduction

Satisfying customer needs is all about marketing. In other words, consumers and their needs fall in the heart of marketing. The ways that these needs are shaped and expressed through purchasing is what consumer behavior aims to investigate. Consumer behavior is defined as the processes and procedures getting involved when individuals or groups tend to satisfy their needs and wants by searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing products and/or services (Solomon, 2007; Schiffman et al., 2008). Arnould et al. (2004) define consumer behavior as *“individuals or groups acquiring, using and disposing of products, services, ideas or experiences”*. Interestingly, this definition gives a broader view of consumer behavior including even the ideas and the experiences generated by the purchase and use of a product and service, such as travel experiences.

Thus, understanding consumer behavior is a core concept of marketing. Nevertheless, consumers and their needs are continuously facing several influences. These influences are modifying consumer behavior and choices in a regular basis. Such influences include cultural factors (consumers' culture, subcultures and social class), social factors (consumers' reference groups, family, roles and status), personal factors (consumers' age and life-cycle stage, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle, personality and self-concept) and psychological factors (consumers' motivations, perceptions, learning, beliefs and attitudes) (Kotler et al., 2005).



On the other hand, marketing also plays a very effective role in consumers' behavior. The importance of marketing strategies on consumer behavior and choices is underlined by Foxall's definition for marketing. Foxall (2001) states that marketing is the study of both consumers and marketers behavior as they interact on each other. Marketing elements, product, price, place and especially promotion are focused on affecting and manipulating consumer decision-making and behavior. Marketing advertising strategies, for instance, are usually developed in order to affect customers' beliefs and attitudes with respect to the corresponding product or service (East et al., 2008). Regardless the type of factors, internal or external, that influence consumers the study of consumer behavior seeks to find out how consumers' make decisions. In other words it focuses on Consumer Decision-Making.

Decision-making has been broadly studied in the tourism field, as well. The current chapter discusses the notion of consumer decision-making and reviews the grand dominant models that describe traveler's behavior and travel planning process. The chapter gives in brief the basic models of consumer decision-making and introduces internet and social media impact on the decision process. Particular attention is given to the EBM model and its five consumer decision-making phases. The objectives of this chapter also focus on the role of personality as an influential factor on consumer behavior, both offline and online, namely the theoretical background of how personality affects the consumer as a decision maker. The chapter concludes with the study's model, which selected in order to investigate the travel decision-making in social media, with respect to personality.



3.2 Consumer Decision Making

Consumer behavior is defined by Khan (2006) as “*the decision-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services*”. Services differ from products according to the well-known four characteristics of services: intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability (Wolak et al., 1998). Due to this character of the services, consumers are more information-sensitive and count much more on word-of-mouth than when they consider the purchase of physical products (Blythe, 1997). And they do so, in order to minimize the risk and uncertainty of the high-involvement decisions, such as the service purchase decisions. From this perspective, consumer decision making theory considers individuals as information-processing consumers, else known as cognitive consumers (Foxall & Ronald, 1994). A large number of theoretical models have been developed and applied to decode consumers’ decision making process. Cognitive approach - along with the economic, the psychodynamic, the behaviorist and the humanistic approaches - lies among the major theories which aim to explain consumer behavior based on psychology traditions (Bray, 2013).

3.2.1 Cognitive Models of Consumer Decision-Making

Cognitive models distinguished according to Bray (2013) into analytical and prescriptive models:

- Analytical models are represented by the so-called grand or comprehensive models of consumer behavior. The grand models of consumer decision-making are conceptualized in Nicosia model -1966-, Howard-Sheth model -1969-, and Engel, Kollat & Blackwell -1968- (Erasmus, et al., 2001). These models describe consumer decision making as a procedure that goes through several steps or stages and based on the assumption that psychological mechanisms highlight each of these stages.



- Prescriptive models are more concerned about consumer behavior structure. They are represented by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). TRA suggests that intention drives behavior, while intention is determined by attitudes and subjective norms and that individuals will *“engage in a behavior when they have a high intention, and their intention is increased when they evaluate a behavior positively (attitude) and believe that significant others want them to engage in it (subjective norm)”* (Downs et al., 2005). The Theory of Reasoned Action was extended with the measures of control belief and perceived behavioral control resulting in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Southey, 2011).

Below are described the grand cognitive models where tourism research is emphasized most (Sirakaya, 2005).

Nicosia model

The Nicosia model is based on the relationship developed between the individuals and the organizations. The model consists of four fields (Khan, 2006; Rice, 1997):

- Field one: the first field refers on the one hand at the firm's and the product's attitudes (subfield one) and on the other hand on consumer's attitudes (subfield two).
- Field two: the second field is the procedure of information search and evaluation of the product alternatives
- Field three: the third field refers to the purchase and use of the product
- Field four: the last field is post-purchase behavior

The model assumes that the consumer decision procedure starts when he exposed to firms' messages (Naik et al., 1999). Each field constitutes the input of the next one and the output of the previous one. The last field is the feedback both for organizations and individuals. According to its output it determines consumer's



attitude towards the product, as well as firm's attitudes of future marketing strategies. Interactions among the fields may occur in sequence or simultaneously (Rice, 1997). Figure 3.1 gives a graphical illustration of the model.

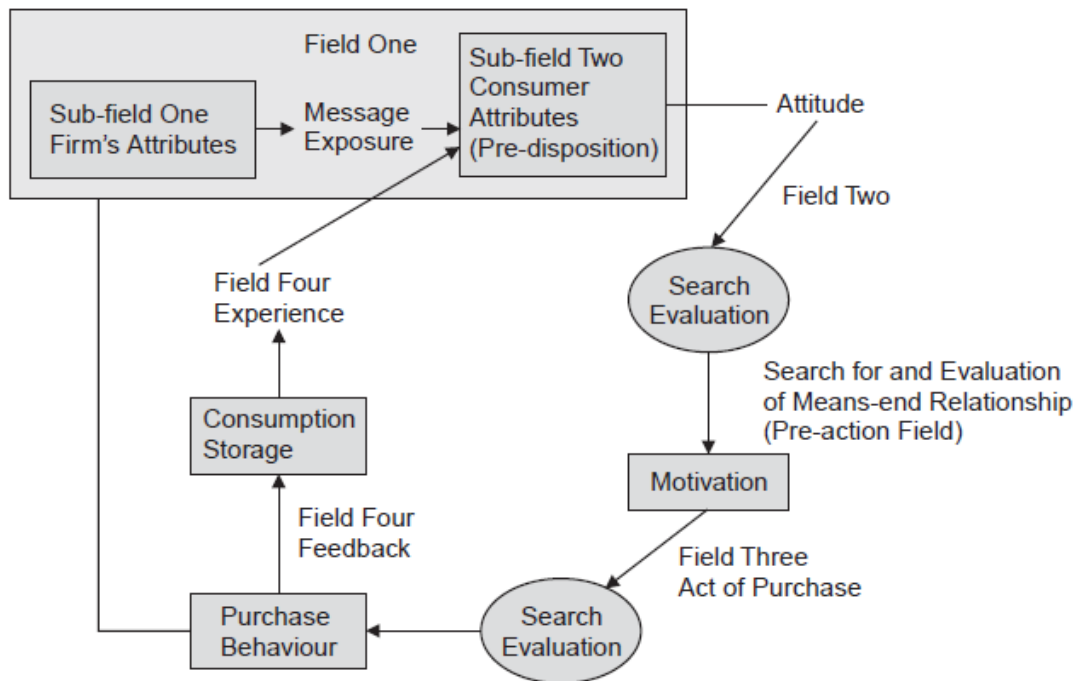


Figure 3.1 Nicosia model

Source: Khan, 2006

Howard-Sheth model

The Howard-Sheth model, which pictured in Figure 3.2, includes the following segments (Rice, 1997):

- Inputs: the stimuli provided to the individual both by marketing and social environment
- Perceptual & Learning constructs: the internal procedures in each individual, such as motives, attitudes, perceptions that affect his decisions
- Outputs: the actual decision-making process

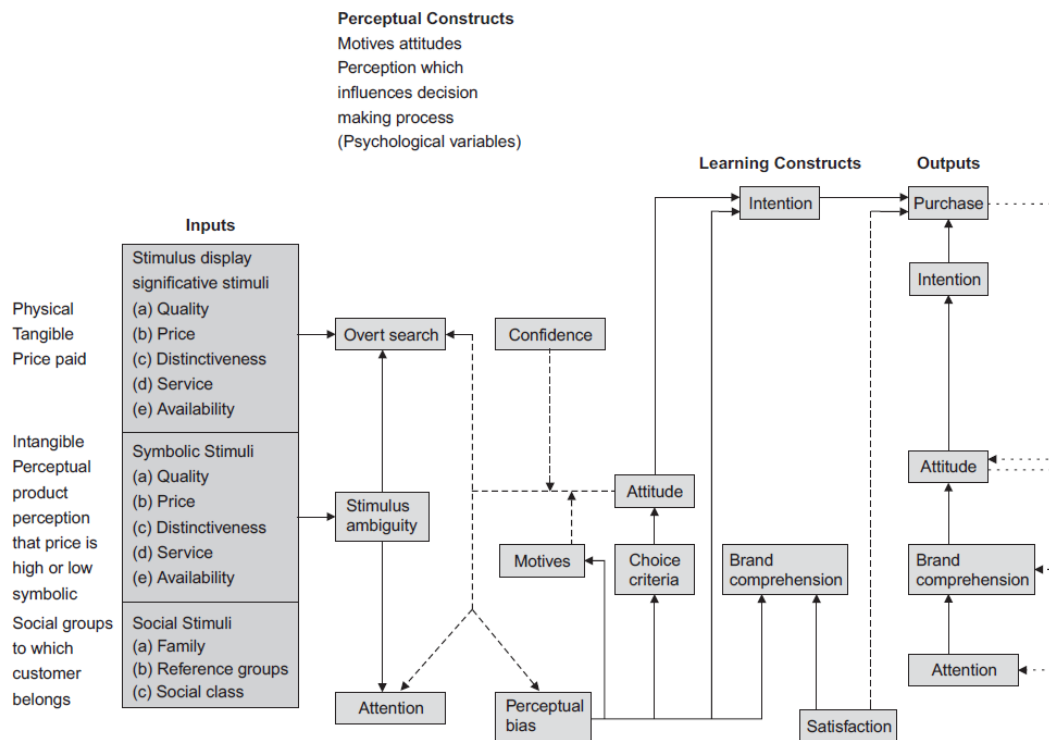


Figure 3.2 Howard-Sheth model

Source: Khan, 2006

As in the case of the Nicosia model, the different segments are not isolated but rather depended on each other, influencing and forming severally and jointly the decision process. The model also includes the influences of exogenous variables such as: social class, time at the disposal, importance of the purchase, financial status and individual's personality traits. Though these external variables are not defined in the model they are taken as granted and the hypothesis behind them is that they indirectly affect decision-making according to the individual's specific characteristics (Khan, 2006; Naik, 1999).



Engel, Kollat & Blackwell model

The assumption behind the model is that the consumer has a problem to solve which can be solved by the appropriate purchase and the process is taken as “a problem-solving/decision making exercise” (Rice, 1997). The model’s graphical representation is given in Figure 3.3.

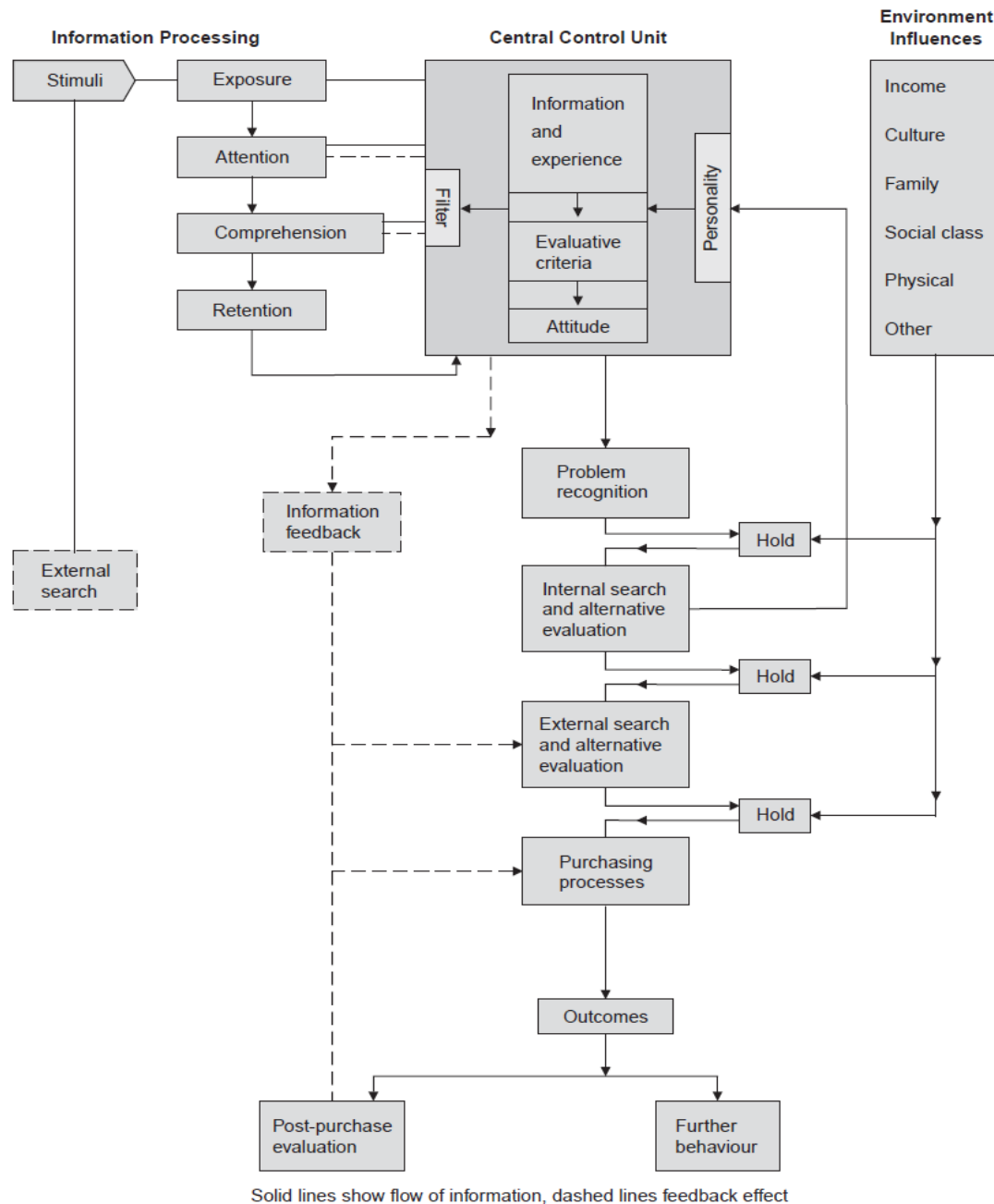


Figure 3.3 Engel-Blackwell-Kollat model of buyer behavior

Source: Khan, 2006



Engel, Kollat & Blackwell model consists of four components (Khan, 2006):

- Information processing: marketing and non-marketing stimuli
- Central control unit: analysis and evaluation of the information gathered or already owned by previous experiences (this procedure is affected by individual's personality) which leads to the recognition of the problem
- Decision process: problem recognition, internal and external search, evaluation and purchase
- Environmental influences: social, family, culture and so on.

The model also stresses the role of external factors in decision-making, while it highlights the “multi-dimensional” character of consumer's behavior - where a plethora of factors and processes intervene and affect the procedure from the original stimuli to the final output.

According to Gilbert (Sirakaya, 2005) the grand models have some common points:

- They consider consumer behavior as a constant decision-making process
- They focus on individual's decision-making
- They look at behavior as a functional (or utilitarian) phenomenon which can be explicated
- They regard that consumers follow a procedure of searching, evaluating and storing information
- They assume that during the decision-making process, consumers are eventually narrowing down that range of information and they are developing alternatives from which they choose
- They declare that the results of previous purchase decisions deliver a feedback to consumers for future consumption.

More importantly, an overall look to the grand models shows that they conceptualize consumer decision-making process into a funnel procedure with five



main stages: (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) alternative evaluation and selection, (4) outlet selection and purchase, and (5) post-purchase processes. These stages shape the so-called EBM (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard) model of consumer decision-making process which has been developed from the original Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (EKB) model (Teo et al., 2003).



3.3 The EBM Model

The Engel, Blackwell & Miniard – EBM model (Engel et al., 1995) supports that consumer goes through five stages when he considers a purchasing decision. Figure 3.4 is graphically illustrates the EBM consumer decision making-process. These five stages are the pre-purchase processes of (1) need recognition, (2) information search and (3) evaluation of alternatives. The purchase processes of (4) decision and purchase and the post-purchase processes of (5) consumption and evaluation (Wilkie, 1994). As in the previous models, the above stages are not isolated. In contrary, they are a part of the holistic consumer's decision making. More analytically, the procedure that consumers' go through described as follows (Khan, 2006):

- *Problem recognition* occurs when the individual discovers that he has a need which can be fulfilled by a product or/and service.
- In order to learn about the product that might satisfy this need he provides *information search*.
- When he has a number of possible options (products or/and services) that possibly cover his need he considers an *evaluation of these alternatives* (positives and negatives). He, then, selects and purchases the “best” product or/and service.
- *Purchase* action (the store or any other way used to buy the product) is also considered.
- *Post-purchase behavior* refers to consumer's feelings (satisfaction or dissatisfaction) with the purchased product or/and service, as well as the purchase action.





Figure 3.4 Consumer Decision Making Process (EBM model)

Source: Teo et al., 2003

The stages are further presented and analyzed in the following section.

3.3.1 The 5 stages of the EBM model

Need Recognition

Need or problem recognition is the initial stage of any decision-making process. Without the recognition of a problem or a need the procedure of decision-making wouldn't occur (Hawkins et al., 2004). In this stage the consumer perceives a need and becomes motivated to solve the recognized "problem". Since the problem or the need is recognized consumers are motivated to satisfy the new need (Wilkie, 1994). The consumer decision-making process starts!

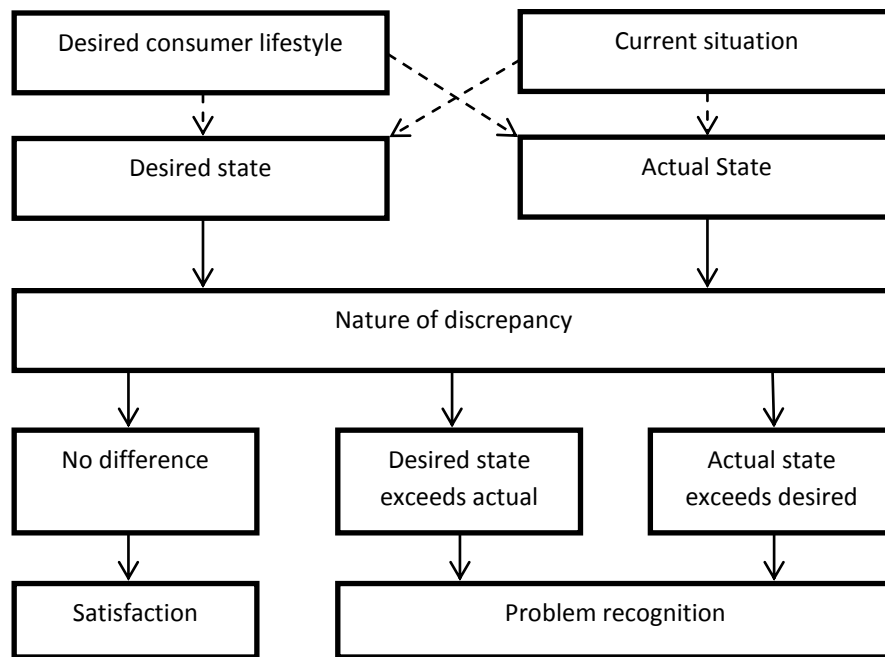


Figure 3.5 The Process of Problem Recognition

Source: Hawkins et al., 2004

There are two different states that individuals face while a need or a problem related to consuming arises: the actual state and the desired state (Schiffman et al., 2008). Need recognition occurs when a person senses a difference between the desired state (where he wants to be) and the actual state (where he is). The desired state describes the situation that the individual wishes/wants to be at the present



time. The actual state refers to the situation that the individual perceives himself to be in at the present time (Hawkins et al., 2004). The problem recognition procedure is described in Figure 3.5.

Need recognition is affected by various internal and external factors (Figure 3.6). Internal factors are consumer past experience, characteristics (demographics, lifestyle, and personality) and motives. External factors are environmental influences (culture, consumer's social class, interactions with other consumers and individuals) and marketing influences (marketing mix).

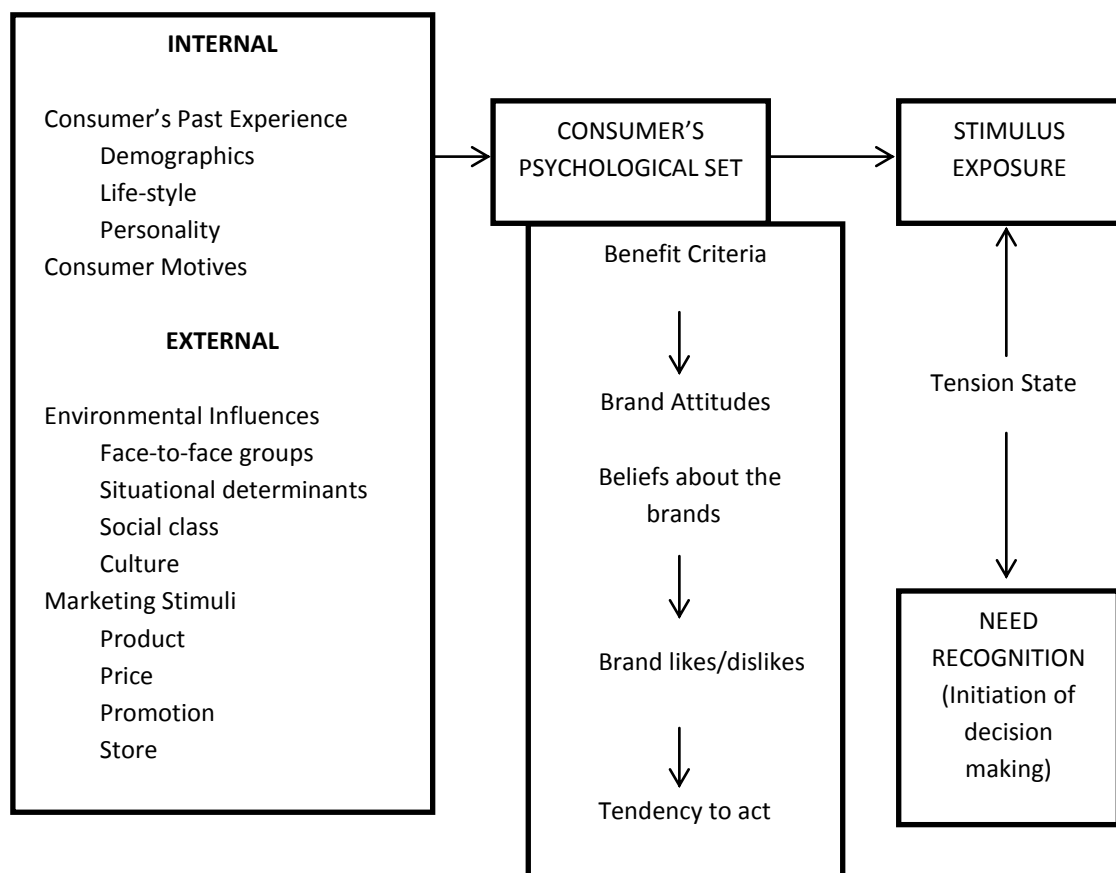


Figure 3.6 Need arousal

Source: Assael, 1992

The need to travel is described in tourism literature by the *motives* inspiring and stimulating people to go on a vacation. Motivation to travel refers to a set of needs that cause a person to participate in a tourist activity (Pizam, Neumann, & Reichel,

1979). In other words need recognition in tourism is all about why people travel (Fodness, 1994). Tourists take a vacation for travel benefits or the rewards of travel (Goeldner, Ritchie & McIntosh, 2000) such as spirituality, social status, escape, and cultural enrichment. In early research, Crompton (1979) distinguished nine travel motivations: escape from the mundane, exploration, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, facilitation of social interaction, education, and novelty. Based on Crompton's research, many travel motivation studies have been designed to subdivide tourists into meaningful segments (tourism styles) for marketing purposes. Loker and Perdue (1992) used travel motivations to segment six tourist styles:

- excitement and escape
- pure adrenalin excitement seeking
- family and friends-oriented
- naturalist (those who enjoyed nature surroundings)
- escape (those who valued the escape by itself), and
- an all-encompassing group that liked all benefits

The above mentioned motives are intrinsic motives and referred as “push” factors. Tourist and visitation behavior can be examined by the “push–pull” framework which explains the motivations underlying travel intentions (Dann, 1977; Klenosky, 2002). In this framework pull factors refer to the specific forces outside the person that influence his decision to take a vacation, while push factors refer to the inner forces that predispose him for a travel decision. Pull factors are associated to the attractiveness of a destination (Mehmetoglu, 2011) and are often utilized by marketing to create travel intentions. The pull motives are mainly attached to the socio-psychological reasons of taking a vacation, while push motives are related more to the choice of a destination (Crompton, 1979).

A number of studies refer to travel motives according to pull and push motivations. Riley et al. (1992) found that Australian movies do inspire USA tourists to visit



Australian destinations. Oh et al. (1995) combined in their study for overseas travel motivations pull and push motives and resulted in five different tourist segments: Sports/Activity Seekers, Safety/Comfort Seekers, Culture/History Seekers, Novelty/Adventure Seekers and Luxury Seekers. An analogous study by Baloglu et al. (1996) identified three dominant travel segments of overseas tourist motives: Novelty seekers, Urban-life seekers and Beach/resort seekers. Both of the studies concluded that the appropriate combination of push and pull factors can increase a destination's level of attraction. More importantly researchers underline the essential role of push factors when different destinations have the same pull attraction elements. Baloglu and Uysal (1996) emphasize that when understanding the push motives then tourist products can be better tailored according to the customer's needs. According to Kim et al. (2002) "*people expect their needs for an optimal level of stimulation to be fulfilled by their tourism experience*".

Kozak (2002) analyzed the implications of push and pull motives among different nationalities and destinations. Results indicated that the push-pull framework has distinct differences among people origin, as well as their chosen destination. Mehmetoglu (2011) examined how motives (push and pull) are related to length of stay at the destination. He concluded that both types of motives have direct and indirect effects (push via pull and pull via push) on vacation duration. Pesonen et al. (2011) found that different push motives correspond to different destination attributes for rural tourism.



Information Search

Since the recognition of a problem or a need has been identified, the second stage in the consumer decision-making process is generated. This stage refers to the search of the information relative to the identified need. Consumer requires information in order to make his final purchase decision. Information search can be defined as *“the motivation of knowledge stored in consumer’s memory and the acquisition of information from the environment”* (Engel et al., 1995). In other words, information search can be either internal or external. Internal search procedure is described in Figure 3.7.

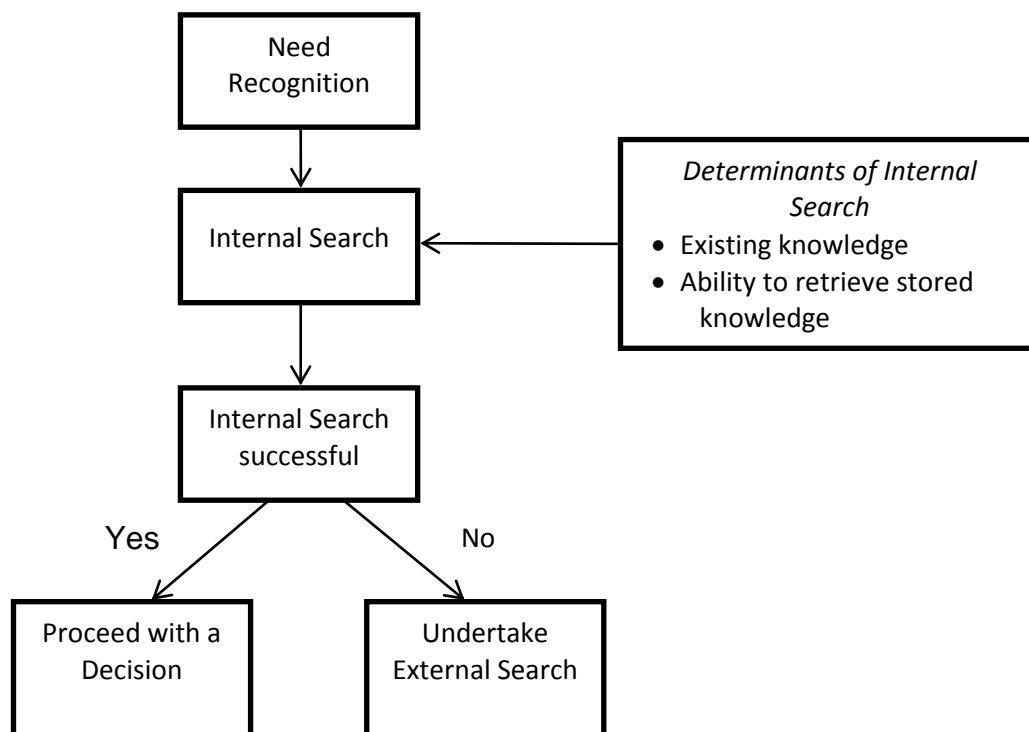


Figure 3.7 The Internal Search Process

Source: Engel et al., 1995

As it is shown in the Figure the nature of internal search follows the recognition of the need. When the consumer faces a new need he, first, scans his memory for relevant decision making in which he has been involved in the past. If his past



experience provides him with the necessary information then he proceeds with a decision based on his internal knowledge. If this knowledge is not helpful then he turns to the external search. External search for purchase decision making is also known as pre-purchase search (Engel et al., 1995). Pre-purchase information search is distinguished from the ongoing information search. In the ongoing search the information acquisition occurs on a relative regular basis regardless the arousal, or not, of a need. In other words information search can be either goal-directed or exploratory (Tsao et al., 2010). The goal-directed search is when consumer has already had a plan for purchase, while exploratory search is that type of search that has no specific plan or ideas of purchasing. However, both types of search affect consumer's intentions to buy.

Assael (France et al., 2002) provides a model of consumer's information acquisition (Figure 3.8). This model is divided into five stages. The first stage refers to the individual's background where along with other variables personality is one of the influential factors.

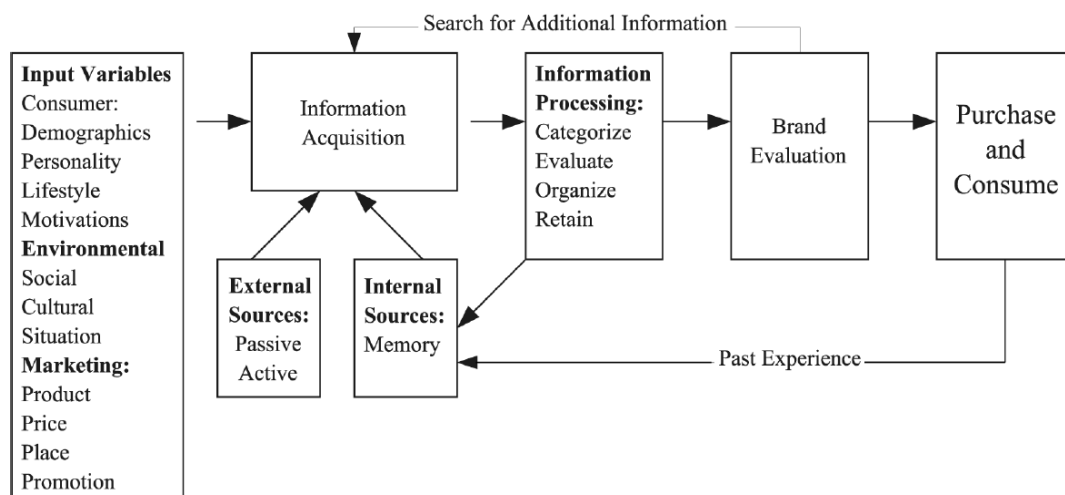


Figure 3.8 Assael's consumer information acquisition and processing model

Source: France et al., 2002

Vogt & Fesenmaier (1998) further discussed Assael's model. They pointed out that this model is describing the situations when a decision to purchase has already



made and it is not covering the case on the ongoing information search. Given this restriction Vogt et al. (1998) developed a model for the ongoing tourist information seeking. In their model (Figure 3.9) information needs interfere and determine the types of information sources. These needs include functional, hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign constructs. In other words the type of the informational source that the consumer looks for is affected both by his behavioral traits and his information needs.

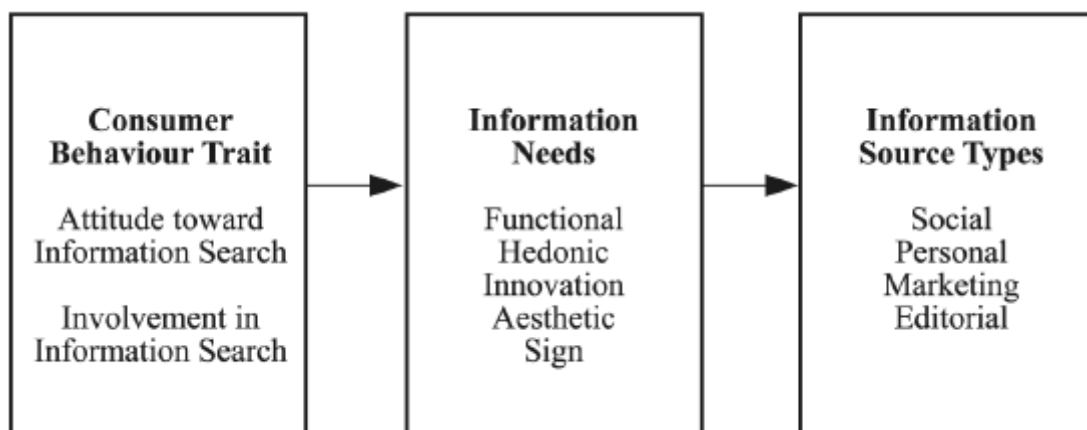


Figure 3.9 Conceptual Model of Information Search and Source Utilization

Source: Vogt et al., 1998

Evaluation of Alternatives

In order the consumer to make a purchase decision he needs to evaluate the information gathered during his internal and external information search. The third stage in consumer decision making refers to the evaluation of the different alternatives he has. This evaluation takes place according to several consumers' criteria. Figure 3.10 shows the procedure that consumers apply in order to evaluate their alternatives. First they determine their criteria and their choice alternatives. Once they have formulated them they go on with the evaluation of alternatives performance to conclude with a purchase decision.

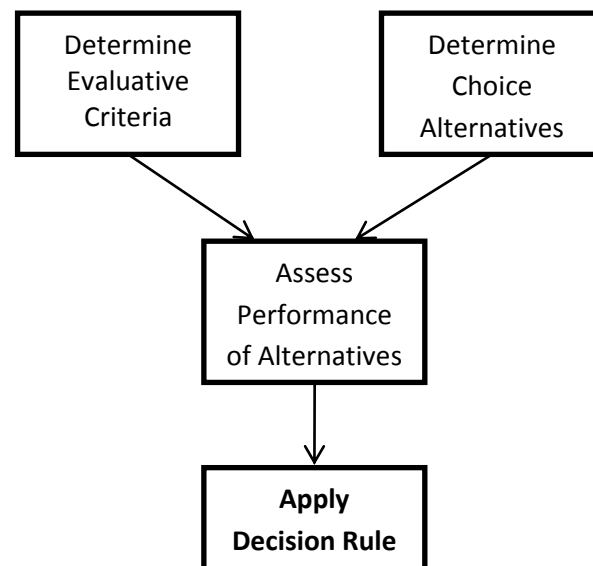


Figure 3.10 Basic components of the Pre-purchase Alternative Evaluation Process

Source: Engel et al., 1995

Decision making, theoretically, starts from all the potential alternatives given to the consumer such as brands, products, destinations, etc. Nevertheless, very rarely, consumers are aware of all the potential alternatives they have for a specific purchase. Usually consumer is aware of some products or brands and unaware of some other. In this manner every consumer who faces the procedure of making a purchase decision holds an awareness and an unawareness set of the potential



products and/or brands. Since unaware products or/and brands are unknown to the consumer he only considers the products included in his awareness set.

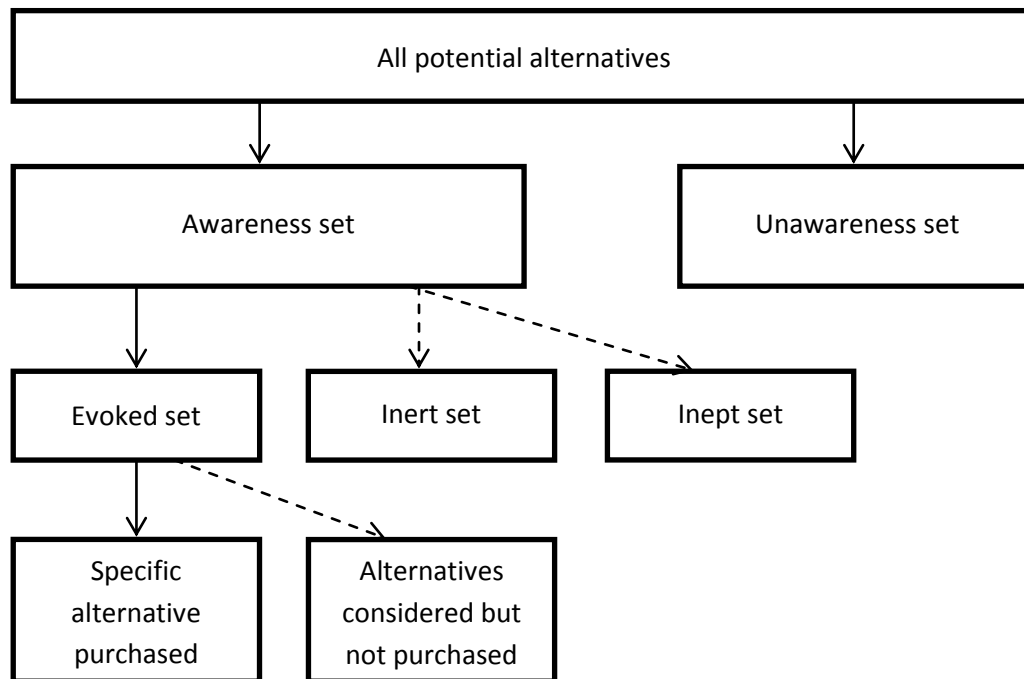


Figure 3.11 Categories of Decision Alternatives

Source: Hawkins et al., 2004

However, consumers do not consider all the products are aware of in order to make a purchase decision. Instead they form a consideration set (evoked set) from the known products and brands. The evoked or consideration set includes all the brands and products which cover the criteria set by the consumer. The rest of the products of the initial awareness set are categorized in consumer's inert and inept sets. Inert set refers to products that fulfill consumer's prerequisites but are not the favorable ones. Although inert set consists a set of backup alternatives if the consideration set fails to drive to a decision (Hawkins et al., 2004). Inept sets include the unacceptable alternatives that consumer avoids to consider in his purchase consideration. The purchasing decision is more likely to be originated from the evoked set. Consumers analyze, search and evaluate the products and brands in the consideration set and

they come up with a specific alternative purchase which covers the criteria have been originally set. This procedure is graphically illustrated at Figure 3.11.

The set of alternatives described above are referred in literature as choice sets. A great effort of research has been made in respect of choice sets. The first who suggested that consumer's alternatives are grouped into an evoked set was Howard (1963). He defined the evoked set as the brands consumers consider acceptable for their next purchase. According to Decrop (2010) consideration or choice set models assume a funneling categorization process through which consumers narrow the number of destination alternatives they are aware of down to a single choice (Figure 3.12).

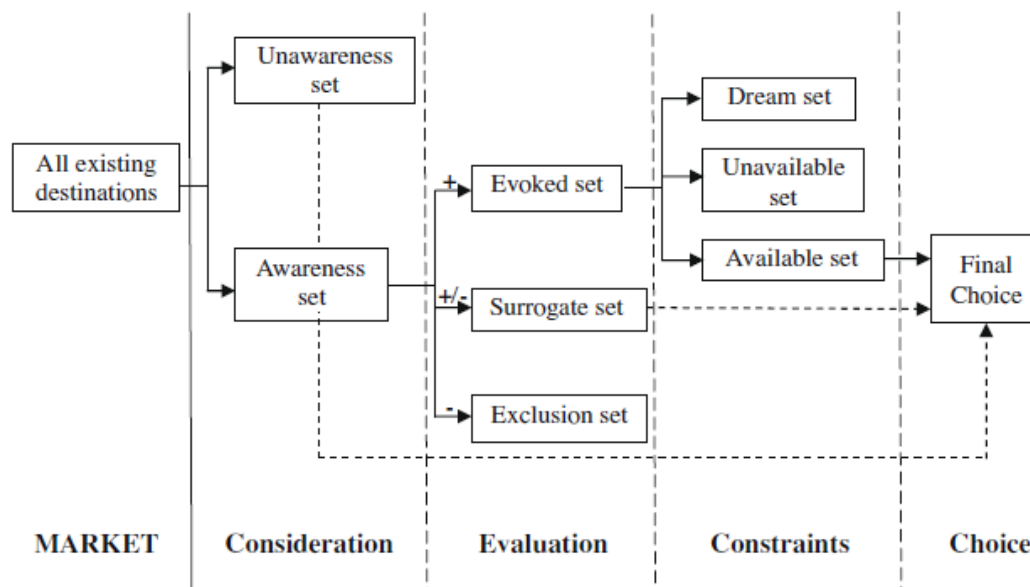


Figure 3.12 The Formation of Destination CSs

Source: Decrop, 2010

When a purchase task is new or modified and when the purchase decision entails some degree of high risk then choice sets theory is most likely to be applied. As tourist and destination decision making is a high-involvement situation choice sets structure is likely to be most useful to consumers (Crompton, 1992). Crompton (1992; 1993) in his study for vacation destination choice sets formed three stages in



consumer's choice sets: the first stage is the development of the initial set of destinations (early consideration or awareness set), the second stage refers to the elimination of the destinations (late consideration or evoked set), while the third stage is the selected destination.

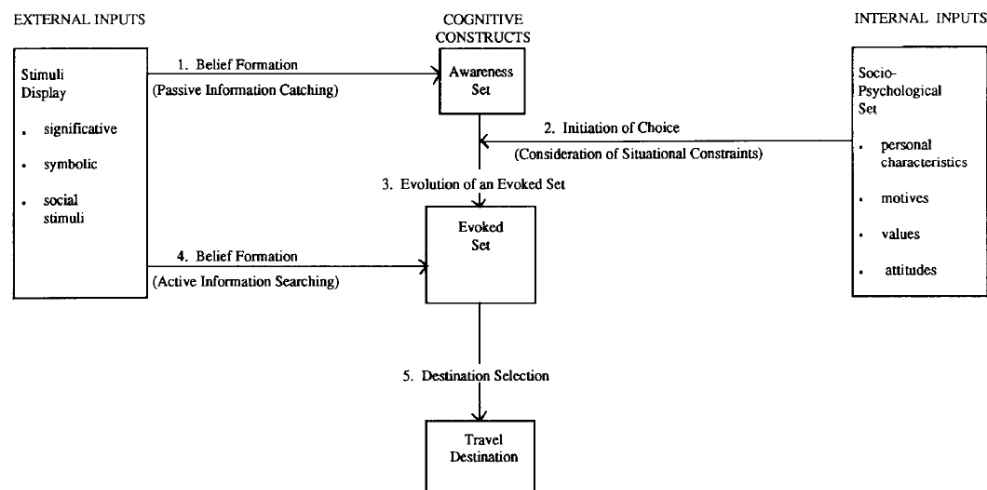


Figure 3.13 A Model of the Pleasure Travel Destination Choice Process

Source: Um, 1990

Awareness and evoked sets are both influenced by market and social stimulus. Personality interferes in the procedure of eliminating the destinations from the early to the late consideration set (Um, 1990). In other words the awareness set is formulated while the consumer is on the process of ongoing search and is affected by external influences. However, his final decision is in accordance with his internal influences, such as personality (Figure 3.13).

Purchase Decision

The purchase decision is the next step in travelers' decision making process, and it requires a series of decision on its own (Engel et al, 1995). Consumers are now facing the question of whether, when, what, where to buy and how to pay (Lindquist & Sirgy, 2006). Apart from products or services consumer must also select retail outlets to realize a purchase. Consumers follow the same procedure of decision-



making in order to select the store or retailer, except of the evaluation criteria which differ in the case of vendors, where location, size, personnel, store image and atmosphere, price reductions, and so on (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). One way of actualizing a purchase is via the internet. Furthermore, regarding Travel 2.0, purchase decision has to do with individual's consulting social media on choosing not only travel producers but also travel attributes such as what to do, eat or see at the destination.

Post-Decision Behavior

Post-decision behavior in tourism refers to the customer's level of satisfaction with the undertaken vacation trip, image and attitudes formation, repeat and recommending intentions (Kozak, 2006). Satisfaction is explained according to the expectation-disconfirmation model developed by Oliver (1980). Consumers hold some expectations about the destination, which they compare with the actual performance when the vacation actualized. When actual performance exceeds expectations then a positive disconfirmation occurs which reveals to satisfied customers, and vice versa. Tak-Kee et al. (2006) stress the role that internal influences (such as psychological influences) along with external forces (such as destination features) play on travelers' satisfaction and destination loyalty. However, in social media post-decision behavior takes the form of the level of travelers' engagement in eWOM, referring to the willingness of individuals to share their travel experiences on internet contributing to the generation of travel UGC.



3.3.2 Travel Planning Process

A comprehensive model of tourism decision-making is given by Woodside and MacDonald (Pizam et al., 1999). This model, displayed in Figure 3.14, provides a general framework of tourists' choice decisions. The framework identifies eight choice sub-sets of tourism services: destination, accommodation, activity, attraction, travel mode or route, locational (destination area and route), eating, and shopping (gift and other durable purchases) choices. It is assumed that these sub-sets of choices can be stimulated by "start nodes" related to need recognition and information acquisition (Hedlund, 2013).

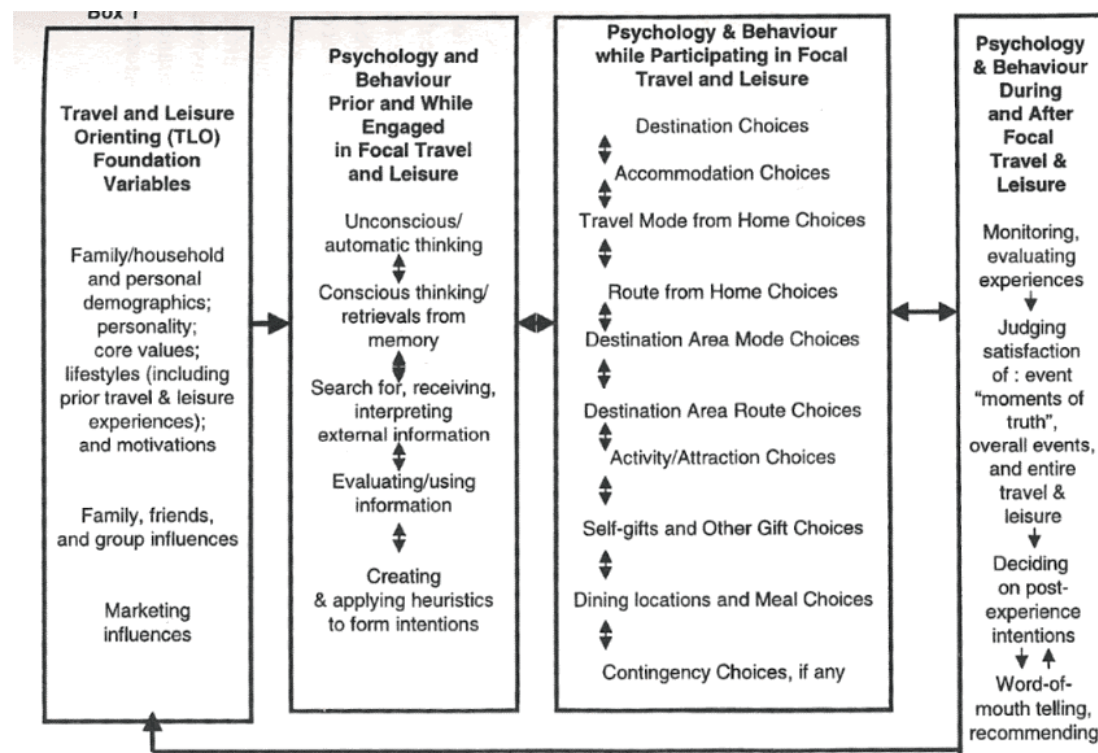


Figure 3.14 General systems framework of customer choice decisions in tourism services

Source: Pizam et al., 1999 (Based on: Woodside and MacDonald, 1994)

The double-sided arrows indicate that causality is not determined a priori but is consistent to the individualism of each tourist. The model clarifies how initial

decisions, interactions between travel party members and selection of activities attach to each other and bring to other activities or events. In other words, the framework concerns sequential travel choices as a consequence of the early travel choices triggering (Decrop, 2006). Nevertheless, travel industry has also adopted the EBM model to analyze consumer behavior and the linear five-stage model of travel buying behavior was described by Mathieson and Wall (1982).

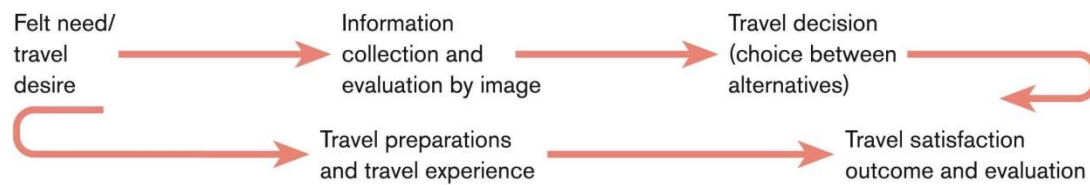


Figure 3.15 Travel-buying behavior

Source: Cooper et al., 2008

The travel-buying behavior model is presented in Figure 3.15, and includes the following stages (Cooper et al., 2008):

- Felt need or travel desire – the desire to travel occurs and examined (pro and con)
- Information and evaluation – several sources of information checked (travel intermediaries, brochures, advertisements, friends, relatives and experienced travelers, the web) and the collected information is evaluated
- Travel decision – destination, model of travel, accommodation and activities being selected
- Travel preparation and travel equipment – bookings, budgets, clothing and equipment fixed and actual travel takes place
- Travel satisfaction evaluation – the whole experience of travel (during and after) is evaluated resulting in travelers' aspects about future decisions.

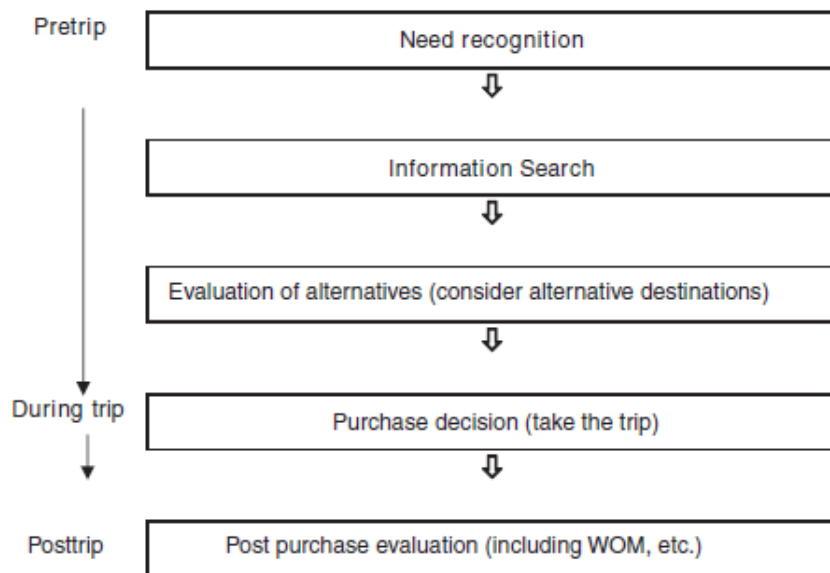


Figure 3.16 The travel planning process

Source: Cox et al., 2009

However, in travel services as in all cases of services consumption, the decision-making process is often divided into three principal stages (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). These stages are given in Figure 3.16 and discussed below (Cox et al., 2009; Correia, 2008):

- The pre-trip or pre-decision stage, which includes the need recognition, information search and evaluation of alternatives stages of the initial model.
- The during-trip or decision stage, which refers to the actual holiday taking.
- The after-trip or post-decision stage, which is the level of tourist's satisfaction with the undertaken vacation and his willing to repeat the visit or to recommend it to others.

Finally, Sirakaya (2005) gives an analytical description, review and critique of travel decision-making models mentioning that central to all these theories is the information-processing theory. This theory supports that consumers follow a funnel-like procedure of narrowing down choices among alternative vacation options, a



process that is influenced both by psychological or internal variables and non-psychological or external variables.



3.3.3 Online Decision Making

The diffusion of the internet has also affected the way consumers make purchase decisions. Though, the EBM model is also suggested for consumer behavior on the web (Chaffey et al., 2009). Below are described the decision-making process on the internet and in social media.

The Decision Making on the Internet

A summary of how can internet affect the consumers' decision-making process is given in Figure 3.17. This procedure includes the stages of EBM model - starting from the point that consumer is yet unaware of a need and surfing on the internet inspires purchasing intentions (Chaffey et al., 2009):

- Problem recognition – internet generates awareness about products, services and brands
- Information search – internet provides a unique medium of information acquisition not only from companies but also from other users
- Evaluation of alternatives – internet enables consumers to effectively compare product features in a side-by-side context
- Purchase – internet provides online purchasing options of the selected products or/and services
- Post-purchase – internet gives the opportunity to companies for after-sales services (customer support, personalized sales promotion messages, and so on), as well as the opportunity to customers to express their feedback related to their consuming experience.



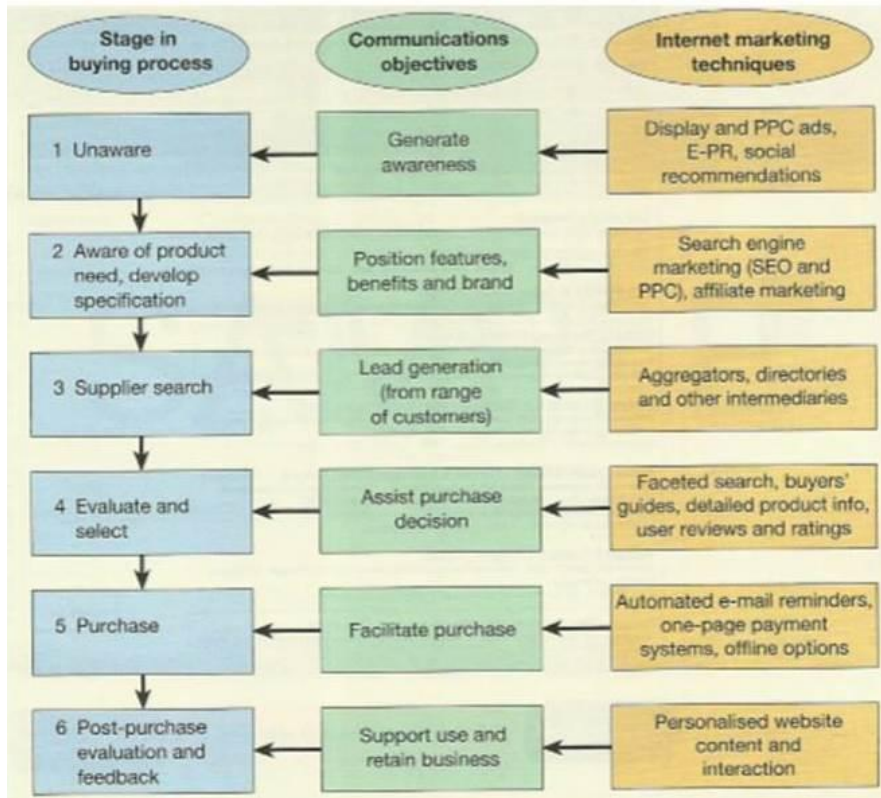


Figure 3.17 Internet's impact on the buying process

Source: Chaffey et al., 2009

However, on the internet things can be also considered somehow differently. Due to the nature of the web sometimes the processes of the EBM model are not necessarily sequential or/and they are compressed. The online purchase consumer decision-making process is describing by Windham & Orton (2000) as a procedure of three phases (Figure 3.18) which are:

- The confidence building phase. This phase compresses the need recognition (stimulate and consider) and the information search phases. Here consumer learns about purchasing alternatives and decides to get action to consume the desired goods and services. Marketers' role in the confidence building phase is to raise consumer awareness, to build credibility and create trust about their brand.
- The skirmish phase. This phase represents the evaluation of the alternatives and the purchase processes. In the skirmish phase the marketers target to



customer acquisition, to close the deal, to deliver the value and to ensure satisfaction in order the consumer to selects and purchase their goods.

- The war phase. This is the post-purchase procedure where the business focuses on customer retention by remaining competitive and attracting customers to buy more.

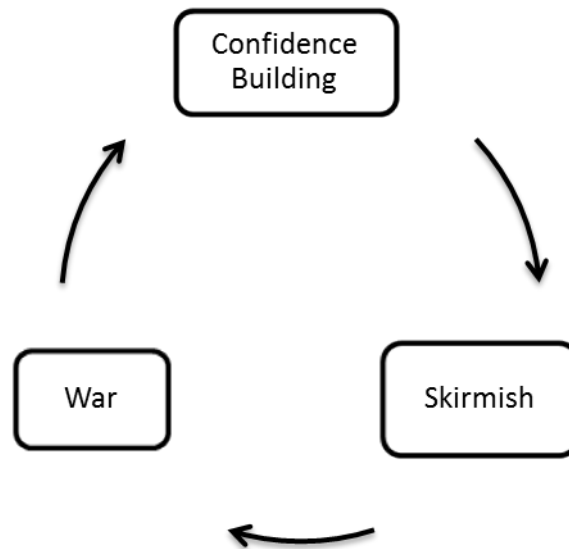


Figure 3.18 The new consumer purchase decision cycle

Source: Windham & Orton, 2000

The Decision Making in social media

Nowadays, the participating character of the internet and the creation of UGC, as well as the firms' viral marketing implementation have all impacts on consumer decision-making. The Social Feedback Cycle (Evans et al., 2010) presented in Figure 3.19 gives an illustrative picture on how Web 2.0 interferes in the travelers' decision making process. The connectivity provided via the social media to C2C communication is rapidly changes the ways that consumers making decisions. The online word-of-mouth generated on the web in the form of UGC affects the role of marketers on all the phases of the decision-making process.

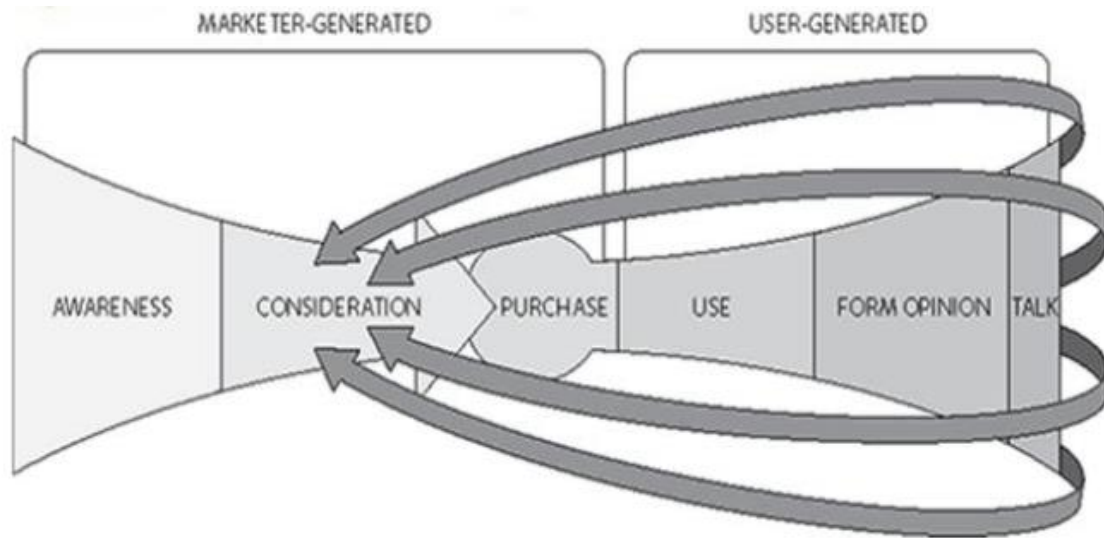


Figure 3.19 The social feedback cycle

Source: Evans et al., 2010

In other words, online tourism marketers are lately facing the competition from social media and user-generated-content in their effort to attract and retain customers. UGC can influence attention, awareness, trial, and loyalty levels of the consumers and, therefore, marketers' attempts focus on how these relationships are shaping in the Web 2.0 era (Tuominen, 2011). In this framework, the current study focuses on the role of UGC in the social media travel planning and decision making context.



3.4 Personality Implications on Consumer Decision-Making

As shown in the analysis of consumer behavior models, decision-making is not an independent procedure but rather a process that is under the impact of several factors. For individual customers these factors are divided into personal and interpersonal (Morrison, 1996). The personal factors are the psychological characteristics of the individual such as his needs/wants, perceptions, learning, personality and self-concept. The interpersonal factors are culture, reference groups, social classes, opinion leaders and the family.

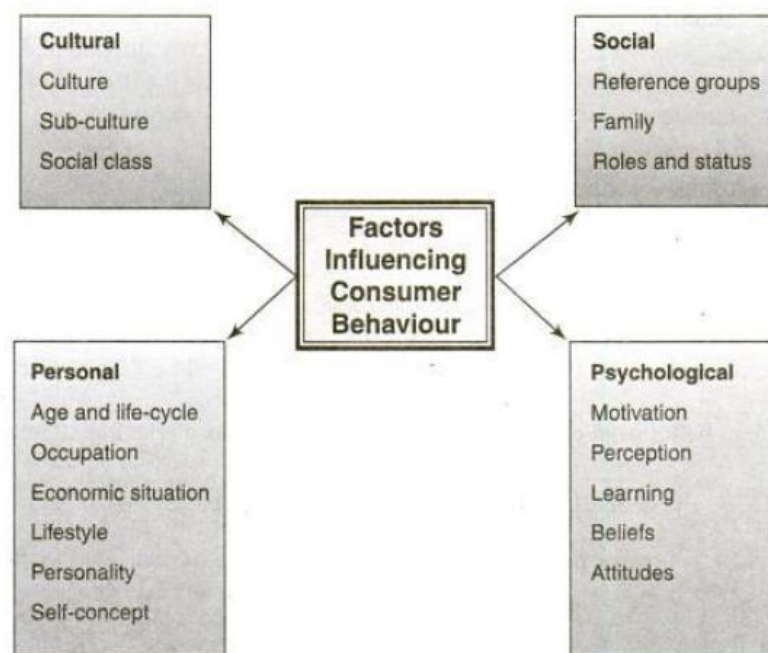


Figure 3.20 Factors influencing consumer behavior

Source: Kumar, 2010

Kumar (2010) distinguishes the factors which affect consumer's behavior somehow differently. He defines four major categories of this kind of factors: cultural, social, personal and psychological. The cultural factors include the culture, the sub-culture and the social class. The social factors include the reference groups, the family and the roles and status of the consumer. Personality and self-concept are included in the personal factors, while motives, perceptions and learning in the psychological factors (Figure 3.20).



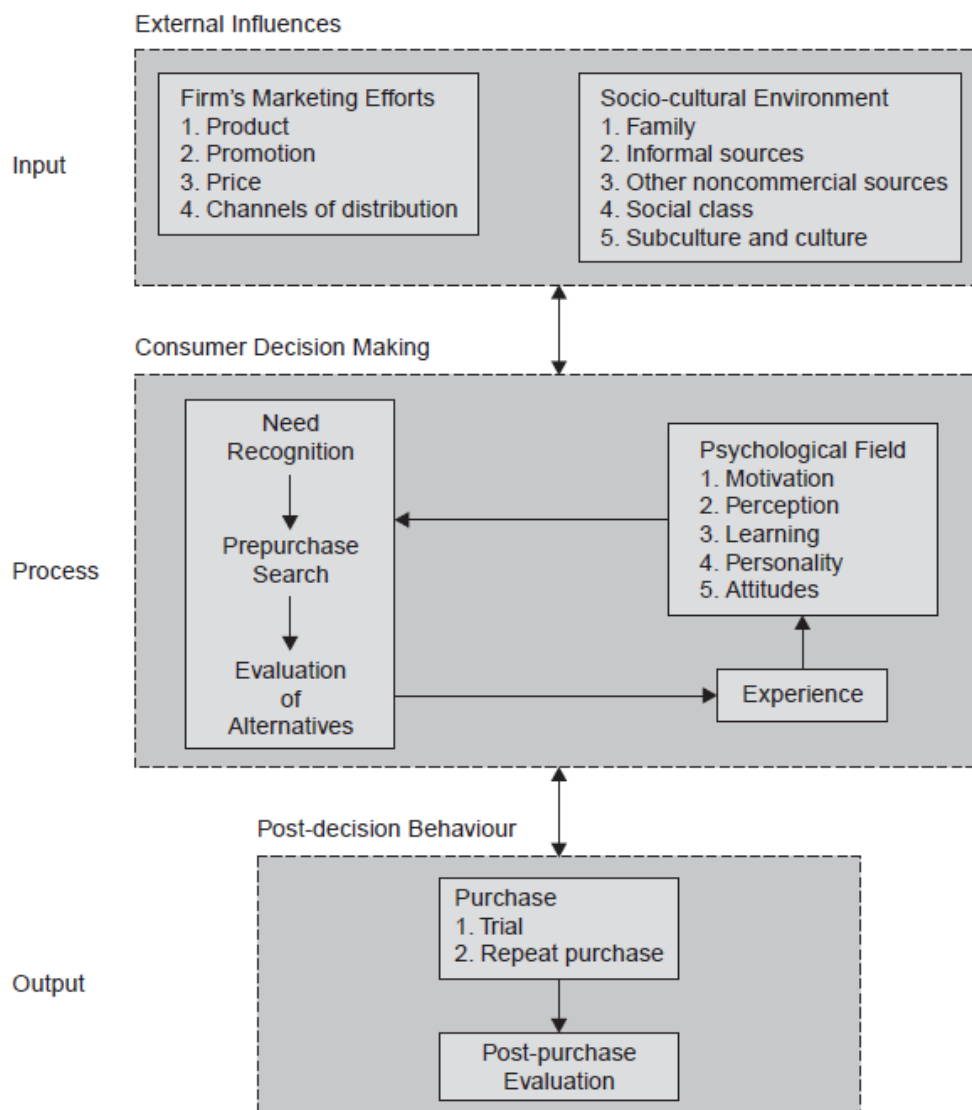


Figure 3.21 A simple model of consumer decision making

Source: Schiffman et al., 2008

These factors interfere in the EBM modes as described in Figure 3.21, where consumer's decision-making is presented as a model of three components: input, process and output (Schiffman et al., 2008). When an individual is facing a purchase decision he is influenced from both external and internal factors. External influences constitute the input of decision making and refer to marketing and socio-cultural effects. The internal influences, such as personality and other characteristics of the individual, are considered as mechanisms that intervene into the pre-purchase processes. The output of consumer's decision making is the post-evaluation and the



post-purchase decisions and behaviors. Online behavior is also affected and explained by several factors such as (Cheung et al., 2003):

- Individual/Consumer Characteristics - demographics, personality, value, lifestyle, attitude, consumer resources, consumer psychological factors (flow, satisfaction, trust), behavioral characteristics (looking for product information, access location, duration, and frequency of usage), motivation, and experience
- Environmental Influences - culture, social influence, peer influence, and mass media
- Product/Service Characteristics - knowledge about the product, product type, frequency of purchase, tangibility, differentiation and price
- Medium Characteristics - ease of use, quality, security and reliability of the electronic commerce systems, as well as web features: ease of navigation, interface and network speed
- Online Merchants and Intermediaries Characteristics - service quality, privacy and security control, brand/reputation, delivery/logistic, after sales services.

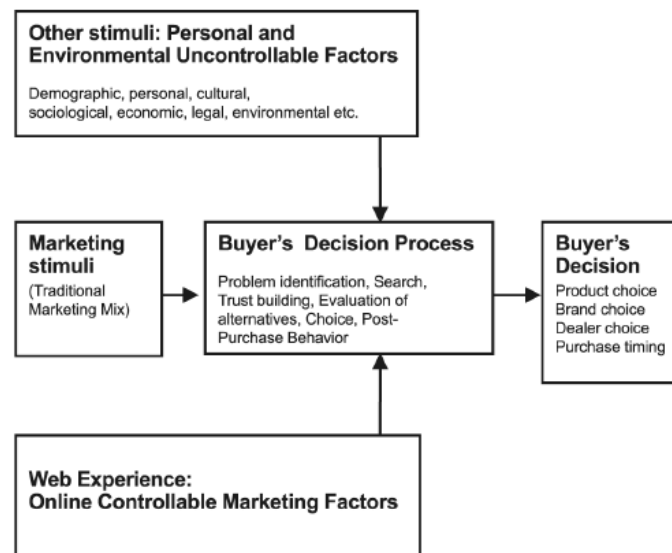


Figure 3.22 Factors affecting the online consumer's behavior

Source: Constantinides, 2004

Constantinides (2004) provides a graphical illustration of these factors (Figure 3.22).



Constantinides & Fountain (2008) also provide the factors affecting the buying decision-making process in an internet (Web 2.0)-mediated environment. As illustrated in Figure 3.23, Web 2.0 technologies are added to the traditional and to online factors of Web 1.0 that affect buying decision-making process. These technologies are characterized in the model as uncontrollable by marketers, stressing the ineffectuality of the traditional marketing strategies on a Web 2.0 environment.

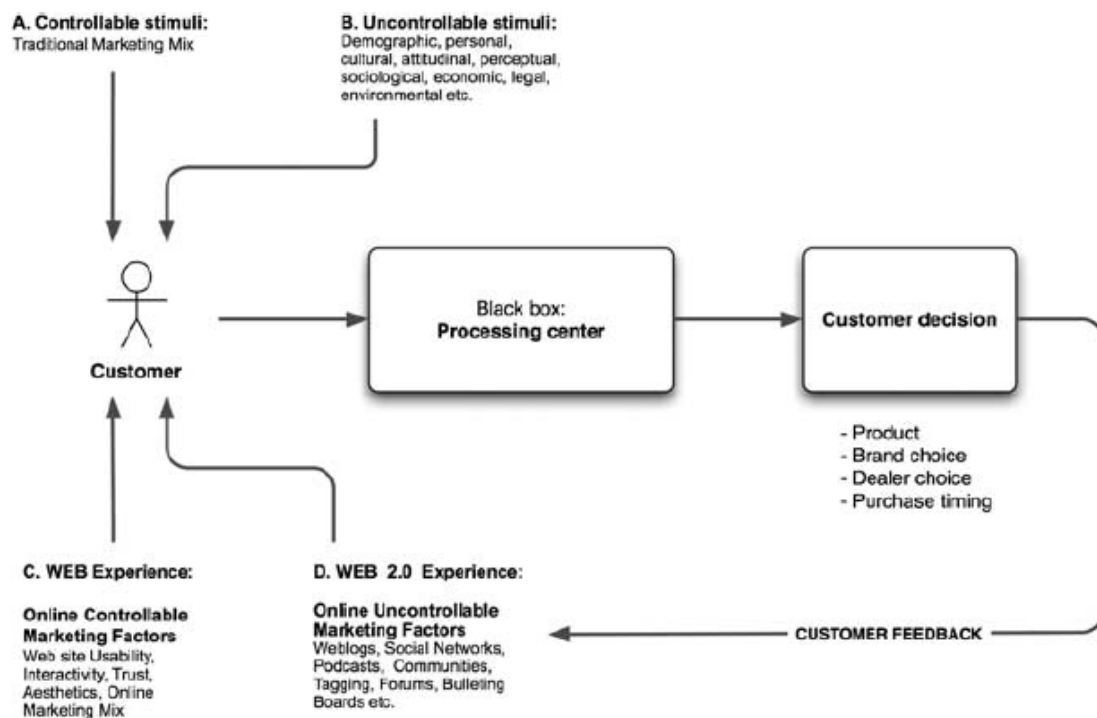


Figure 3.23 Factors affecting the buying decision-making process in an internet (Web 2.0)-mediated environment

Source: Constantinides et al., 2008

In tourism marketing personality is considered as one of the main influential factors which affect consumer's decisions. Moutinho (1987) emphasizes the role that the personality plays in travel decision making (Figure 3.24). Personality, along with motivations, perceptions, attitudes and learning falls in the first level of influences

that affect the consumer. Socioeconomic, cultural, reference group and family influences fall in the second level of influences.

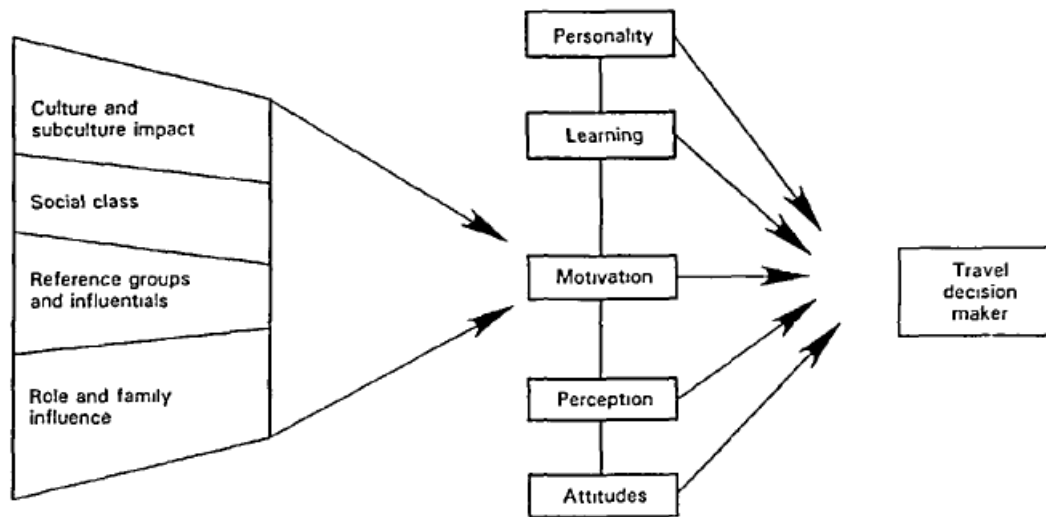


Figure 3.24 Major influences on individual travel behavior

Source: Moutinho, 1987

The personal influences of an individual are also described as psychographics. Psychographics include the activities-interests-opinions (AIOs), the attitudes, the values, the lifestyle, the needs and the personality traits of the consumers (Wells, 1975; Kotler et al., 2006; Schiffman et al., 2008). Another aspect states that psychographics or lifestyle is resulting from the person's value system and personality (Keng & Cheng, 1999).

Khan (2006) states that our personality is reflected on the type of goods we consume. All in all, personality is an influential factor of traveler's decision making and therefore, it is interesting to see how interferes on internet and social media use.

3.5 Conclusions: chapter's significance and contribution to the study

The model which has been chosen to examine UGC and MGC influence on travelers' decision-making behavior is the information-processing EBM model. The EBM model has been selected due to its several characteristics that fall in the heart of the decision-making process (Erasmus et al., 2001; Teo et al., 2003; Cooper et al., 2008):

- It reveals consumer behavior as a decision process
- It is based on the well-known grand models of consumer decision-making constituting a comprehensive generalization of them
- It approaches decision as a logical problem-solving procedure and presents consumer behavior in a coherent way
- It is appropriate for extended problem-solving, such as tourism decision-making
- It is mainly focusing on the individual's consumer behavior
- It views decision-making as a multi-staged and complex process that is stimulated by diverse factors, from problem recognition to the final decision, and triggered by individual's expectation that a product or service will "solve" this problem
- It regards memory, information processing and consideration of both positive and negative decision consequences, features that are in some cases neglected by related models
- It encompasses the concept of feedback
- It considers behavior to be rational and, in principle, explanatory
- Its explanatory character it is further enhanced by its ability to predict
- Its rationality, its capability of evaluating unrelated alternatives and the consideration of post-purchase dissonance attaches extra robustness to the model since it can be used to interpret of a wide range of research findings in almost any situation and it is applicable to a broad range of decision-making situations, including tourism decisions.



Moreover, personality has substantial implications on the EBM model of travelers' behavior. Personality falls in the first level of influences that affect consumer behavior (Moutinho, 1987). The concept and the theories of personality are given in the next chapter.



Chapter 4

Personality Concept & Theories

4.1 Introduction

Psychology lies among the theories which are related to the consumer's decision-making process (Ranjbarian 2010), with personality concepts to have lately attracted the interest of research in decision-making (Lauriola et al., 2001). Whelan & Davies (2006) state that *"we tend to buy products that are complementary to the perceptions we hold of ourselves"*. Moreover, the investigation of the role of personality on consumer behavior evidences its influence at the different stages of consumer decision-making process (Roosmand et al., 2011). Likewise, Ross (as stated in Frew et al., 1999) confirms that in the tourism field *"there could be no more appropriate or useful study than personality as it illuminates tourist behavior"*. A review of personality research in the field of tourism and hospitality given by Leung & Law (2010) shows the substantial role of personality in a variety of dimensions (disposal, biological, intrapsychic, cognitive, social, adjustment and brand personality) in the travel industry.

Furthermore, personality and its concepts and traits (extroversion and neuroticism, need for cognition, need for closure, sensation seeking, and so on) also show significant relations to the internet use. Personality is related to the Internet, while it constitutes a prominent factor in understanding how individuals behave on the web (Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010). On the top of that, new studies emerged lately, indicating the connections between users' personality and social media exploitation (Buffardi et al., 2008; Harbaugh, 2010; Hughes et al, 2012; Lee et al., 2012; Moore et al., 2012). A large amount of research is dedicated to personality influence on users' presentation, connections, content and other aspects of social media use, showing lower or higher influence of personality or lower traits and self-concepts (Nov et al., 2008; Orr et al., 2009; Ryan et al., 2011; Quercia et al., 2011).



As personality is a determinant of consumer behavior, internet and social media use it is interesting to see how personality is described and defined by personality psychologists. It is also important to investigate the self-schemas of personality which embrace personality's development. Additionally, personality has received much attention in the field of psychology research from Hippocrates to Freud and more recent theorist. A plenty of personality theories have been developed through this long history of personality study. A brief description of the main theories and methodologies of personality measurement is given in order to understand the concept and its implications and applications. The proposed model of personality measurement of the current study is discussed at the end, setting up the reasons for this selection.



4.2 Description of Personality

According to Cattell (cited in Cloninger, 2000) personality is *“the underlying causes within a person of individual behavior and experience”*. Another definition given by Scheier (2008) states that the *“personality is a dynamic organization, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create the person’s characteristic patterns of behavior, thoughts and feelings”*. Feist et al. (2006) define personality as *“a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person’s behavior”*.

The latest definition incorporates the term of traits. In psychology, personality has been described in three different ways according to types, traits and factors. Types are distinct and discontinuous categories, while traits are continuous variables. People can be divided into types with just one category to fit to one person (Carver et al., 2000). The first formation of types was given by the Greek physician Hippocrates (Taylor, 2009) and included four groups: choleric (irritable), melancholic (depressed), sanguine (optimistic) and phlegmatic (calm).

Traits are the determinants of behavior, described as *“what a person will do when faced with a defined situation”* (Cattell, 1979). Traits refer to thoughts, feelings, actions or behavior and distinguish people from one another (Hogan et al., 1997). Personality traits are also known as personality dispositions. Personality dispositions are the temporally stable tendencies of behavior that characterize an individual’s personality (Asendorpf, 2009).

Factors are variables that come up when positively correlated traits are combined. Table 4.1 gives a brief description of personality’s components and their functions.



Table 4.1 Three ways to describe Personality: Types, Traits and Factors

Types	Type membership is an “all or nothing” thing (a qualitative variable). A person belongs to one and only one category. Theoretically, a small number of types describe everyone. A person fits into only one type.
Traits	Trait scores are continuous (quantitative) variables. A person is given a numeric score to indicate how much of a trait the person possesses. Theoretically, there are a great many traits to describe everyone. A person can be described on every trait.
Factors	Factor scores are also continuous (quantitative) variables. A person is given a numeric score to indicate how much of a factor the person possesses. Theoretically, a small number of factors describe everyone. A person can be described on every factor.

Source: Cloninger, 2000

Amichai-Hamburger (2002) describes several personality types that are related to the Internet usage, such as:

- *Need for closure.* People with this type of personality have a high need for closure and prefer to avoid uncertainties.
- *Innovators.* These people feel comfortable in unstructured environments and approach change with confidence, in contrast with conformists who seek stability and order.
- *Locus of control.* Internal locus of control is related to a person’s own ability to control his life events, while external locus of control is related with the belief that life events are the result of external factors like chance or luck.
- *People with an Attachment.* The secure style people feel confident to be attached, close and interdependent. People with avoidant style prefer emotional distance with others.



- *Personality structure of profile of interests*. This personality type is subdivided into six categories:
 - The *realistic* personality type.
 - The *investigative* personality type.
 - The *artistic* personality type.
 - The *social* personality type.
 - The *enterprising* personality type.
 - The *conventional* personality type.

- *Risk taking*. This personality dimension refers to the degree to which people are ready to take an action that involves a significant degree of risk.

A person's choice of situations is influenced by personality. People choose to enter or to avoid situations according to their perceptions of what fits and what is failing to fit to their personalities. In addition the types of relationships that an individual holds are also affecting his choice of situations (Hogan et al., 1997).



4.3 Personality “Self-schemas”

Personality is shaped during the development of the individual from his infancy to his adulthood. In this manner individual personality formation is not independent of social and environmental situations but it rather shaped by social control and effect. People are, from the beginning of their lives, members of several social groups and schemes. According to the situation an individual can act in line with the social demands (social control) or in line with his own idiosyncratic characteristics. The relationships between society and behavior, as well as behavior and society are given in psychology by the self-conceptions or self-definitions aspects (Lyons, 1998).

In general, self-schemas are derived from the information and attributes that individuals have about them due to their social experience and they constitute substrates of personality. The relation of personality to self is direct, since self-schemas shape personality traits which express our personality (Dumont, 2010). Below are presented some of the “self-schemas” that affect personality formation and expression and have attracted interest in consumer behavior studying.

4.3.1 Self-Concept

Sartain et al. (1967) state that *“the self is not what we really are nor what we appear to be to others. Rather it is the thoughts and feelings we have about ourselves..... , the self is the individual as known to and felt about by the individual”*. Baumeister (1997) reports that the *“self-concept refers to the totality of inferences that a person has made about himself or herself”*, that the self-concept is a combination of one’s personality traits and schemas with his social roles and relationships. Hayes (1996) describes self-concept by three major aspects:

- Self-concept is formed by the feedback individuals’ get from others about them



- Self-concept is formed by social interactions further to others reactions such as, social norms, personal values and cultural patterns
- Self-concept is reflecting the collection of the social roles that an individual is called to play into his life.

According to Rosenberg (cited in Sirgy, 1982) self-concept is the "*totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to him as an object*". Self-concept is not a single, unified concept. It is rather a set of ideas, inferences and illusions that reveal to f-schemas than a single self-concept per se (Baumeister, 1997). Sirgy (1982) refers to the multidimensional character of self-concept that consists of:

- Actual self - how a person perceives himself
- Ideal self - how a person would like to perceive himself
- Social self - how a person presents himself to others.

4.3.2 Self-Identity

Identity is that part of the self-concept by which an individual is known to the others (Zhao et al., 2008). According to Baumeister (1997) "*Identity differs from self-concept in that it is socially defined..... self-concept is wholly contained in the person's own mind, whereas identity is often created by the larger society*".

According to Burke & Stets (2009) "*identity is the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him or her as a unique person*". This definition clearly shows the interconnection of individual and society when conceptualizing identity.

Self-identity can be analyzed as consisting of (Hogg, 2003):



- Social identity: individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain groups and his knowledge about the similarities and differences of other groups (set of roles, relationships, values and priorities)
- Personal identity: self-conceptualization as distinct from other people or associations of group behaviors

Zhao et al. (2008) claim that identity construction is a public process which takes place when coincidence of "identity announcements" (individual claiming an identity) and "identity placements" (made by others who endorse the claimed identity) appears.

4.3.3 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to self-evaluation, in a positive or in a negative way. A positive or "healthy" self-esteem exists when this evaluation results to a degree of self-confidence that stimulates individual's abilities (Kendler & Kendler, 1971). Baumeister (1997) states that "*self-esteem refers to the evaluative dimension of the self-concept.... self-esteem is defined by the evaluative feedback the person receives from others and his direct experiences of efficacy and success (or failure)*".

Self-esteem is also interrelated with self-image, another self-concept component. Self-image refers to individual's self-portrait (body -height, weight, build-, likes/dislikes, past experience), while the self-esteem is the individual's internalization of social judgments and ideas about a trait's quality or worthiness (Hayes, 1996). In other words, self-image represents that part of the self-evaluation that is related to individual's *body image*, the perceptions he has about how his body, his voice, his face, and so on, look like (Kihlstrom et al., 2003).

Sirgy (1982) defines self-esteem as "*a conscious judgment regarding the relationship of one's actual self to the ideal or social self*" and notes that self-satisfaction



compromises its global self-attitude. All in all, self-esteem is the desire of being evaluated positively (Lyons, 1998).

4.3.4 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is all about a person's beliefs about his capabilities. Self-efficacy is an important part of the self-concept, while it can result in self-esteem in a direct way according to individual's beliefs (Maddux & Gosselin, 2003). Perceived self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1994) *"as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives"*. These beliefs refer to cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes. When people experience themselves as capable and in control only then they are able to achieve self-efficacy and act successfully (Bandura, 1997). In other words, self-efficacy refers not to an individual's skills and abilities but rather to his judgments of what he can do with these skills and abilities (Eysenck, 1998).

4.3.5 Self-Presentation

Goffman (cited in Papacharissi, 2002) conceptualizes self-presentation *"as an ongoing process of information management, whereby the individual is constantly trying to influence the impression others develop of him or her as a way of ultimately influencing others' attitudes and behaviors"*. Self-presentation is activated via *impression management*: people's willingness to shape audiences impressions about them (Schlenker, 2003). Expressing oneself is divided into what a person "gives" and what he "gives off". Self-presentation is described as the given off information via which an individual "talks" about himself and it is all about those theatrical, contextual and non-verbal expressions that given off by someone's behavior (Boyle & Johnson, 2010). Self-presentation it is also known as self-disclosure or identity presentation. According to Goffman's theory (Marwick, 2005), identity presentation consists of the "front stage" and "backstage" identity performance (given and given off performance). In social networking, "front stage" appears via profile information,



while “backstage” through private messaging or emailing. *Self-expression* is one of the components of self-presentation, along with the role-played response and the conformity to identity expectations (Schlenker, 2003).

4.3.6 Self-Congruity

Self-consistency is the individual’s need to behave in ways which retain its internal consistency (Litvina et al., 2002). In marketing self-congruity refers to the maintaining relationship between consumer’s personality and brand’s personality. More precisely, it is about the level of congruity between an individual’s perception of a brand, product or service and the perception he has of himself. The theory of self-congruity supports that when the two concepts are matching then the preference for the particular brand is higher (Boksberger et al., 2011).

Table 4.2 Self-congruity and Purchase Motivation

Self-image/product-image congruity	Comparison	Purchase motivation
Positive self-congruity	between a positive product-image perception and a positive self-image belief	Approach purchase motivation
Positive self-incongruity	between a positive product-image perception and a negative self-image belief	Conflict
Negative self-congruity	between a negative product-image perception and a negative self-image belief	Conflict
Negative self-incongruity	between a negative product-image perception and a positive self-image belief	Avoidance purchase motivation

Source: adopted by Sirgy, 1982



Sirgy (1982) describes, in detail, this relationship in four pairs (positive or negative) and the types of motivations this relationship formulates (Table 4.2).

Boksberger (2011) argues that “*Self-congruity theory is based on the assumption that consumers prefer brands they associate with a set of personality traits congruent with their own self-congruity is defined as the match between a brand image and an individual’s self-concept*”. Given its direct relation with self-concept, self-congruity is also taken the following forms:

- actual self-congruity – between the actual self-image and the product image
- ideal self-congruity – between the ideal self-image and product image
- social self-congruity – between the social self-image and the product image
- ideal social self-congruity – between the ideal social self-image and the product image.

According to Hosany et al. (2012) self-congruity is also defined as “*the cognitive match between consumers’ self-concept and destination image or user image of a given product/brand/service*” with user image to be “*a stereotyped perception of a generalized user of a particular product/brand*”. This definition stresses that even congruence between consumers’ perceptions can affect brand or destination selection.



4.4 Personality Theories and Measurements

Below are described the basic personality theories and measurements and their evolution. They include the Psychoanalytical Approach, the Trait Personality Approach and other such as the biological, the humanistic and the cognitive-social approaches.

4.4.1 Psychoanalytical Approach

- **Freud**

Freud's personality theory is based on his division of mental life into two levels, the unconscious (further divided into unconscious proper and preconscious) and the conscious (Feist et al., 2006). He distinguished these three levels of mind into three structures of personality: the id, the ego and the superego. The ego (or I) is the only part of the mind that it is in contact with reality. The Id is unconscious and serves as the pleasure principle of mind, while superego (or above-I) is guided by the moralistic and idealistic principles of the person. Freud applied psychotherapeutic techniques to patients in order to gain the insight into human personality. The main criticism about Freud's theory of psychoanalysis is its lack of verifiability given its difficulty to provide a definitive personality measurement test. Table 4.3 synthesizes Freud's theory.

Table 4.3 Freud's theory of mind

	Id	Ego	Superego
Conscious		Primary level of <i>Ego</i> functioning	Important level of <i>Superego</i> functioning
Preconscious		Important level of <i>Ego</i> functioning	Important level of <i>Superego</i> functioning
Unconscious	Primary level of <i>Id</i> functioning	Primary level of <i>Ego</i> functioning	Important level of <i>Superego</i> functioning

Source: Eysenck, 1998



- **Jung**

Jung is one of the researchers who have been influenced by the Hippocrates personality typologies. Jung was the first who introduced the concepts of introversion and extroversion with respect to psychodynamic approaches. Chamoro-Premuzic et al. (2005) report that for Jung introversion characterizes those who have *“a tendency to direct their instinctual energies or libido toward their mental self”*, while extroversion characterizes those who are *“identified by their tendencies to transfer these energies to real-world objects (notable individuals) other than the self”*. The Myers–Briggs type indicator (MBTI) has been widely accepted as the most valid and reliable method of assessing Jung’s personality traits. The MBTI use four categories of personality traits: Intuitive, Thinking, Extrovert, and Perceptive. These traits are measured on scales as follows (Wilde, 2011; Barkhi et al., 2007):

- Sensing/Intuitive: sensation seekers perceive the world with senses, while intuitive people perceive information by means of unconscious
- Thinking/Feeling: thinking refers to cognition and a logic perception of the world, while feeling to subjective evaluations
- Introvert/Extrovert: introverts draw psychic energy inward to the interior world, while extroverts flow psychic energy outward to the exterior world
- Judging/Perceptive: judging refers to quick and based on personal perceptions decisions, while the perceptive individual needs others opinion in order to conclude with a choice.

- **Adler**

Adler put emphasis on the importance of feelings of inferiority in personality’s development. He argued that children face these feeling of inferiority because of their small size and physical weakness and that personality is built along to our efforts to overcome these obstacles as we grow up. Adler termed this procedure as



striving to superiority. He also emphasized the role of social factors in personality formulation (Baron, 1998). Figure 4.1 describes the development of personality according to Adler. The figure illustrates that the feelings of inferiority can be either normal or exaggerated and can result into normal or neurotic life style, respectively (Feist et al., 2006).

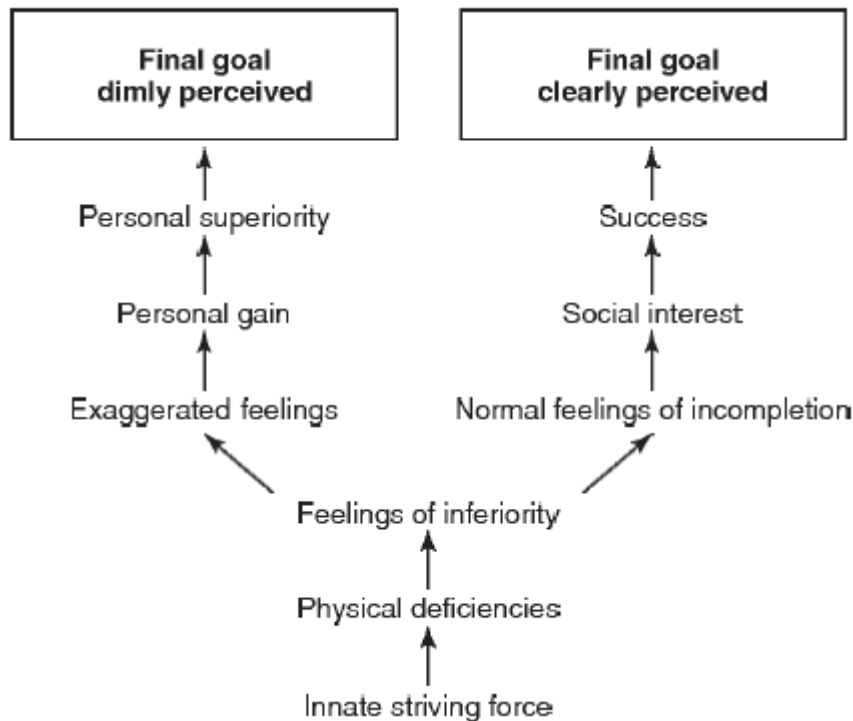


Figure 4.1 Two Basic Methods of Striving toward the Final Goal

Source: Feist et al., 2006

- **Erikson**

Erikson described personality as a dynamic system which is evolved via eight stages: (1) infancy, (2) early childhood, (3) play age, (4) school age, (5) adolescence, (6) young adulthood, (7) adulthood and (8) old age (Dumont, 2010). He emphasized the role of psychosocial factors influence of personality deemphasizing the role of Freud's unconscious. His theory is in accordance of Jung's theory in terms of polarization (opposites in personality description) (Allen, 2000).

- **Horney**

Karen Horney developed the psychoanalytic social theory which put emphasis on the social and cultural influences on personality. She argued that human personality is motivated by social forces such as dependency, cooperation, interpersonal anxiety, hostility, love, jealousy, greed, competitiveness and inferiority (Allen, 2000).

4.4.2 Trait Theories of Personality

Gordon Allport, Raymond Cattell and Hans Eysenck are considered the fathers of the trait psychology (Boyle et al., 2008). Allport approached personality from an idiographic point of view, while Cattell and Eysenck are nomothetic theorists.

- **Gordon Allport**

The idiographic approach of Allport's study on personality it is focused on uniqueness and individuality. His purpose was not to find a common place of a small number of trait dimensions. However, he made a substantial work on trait terms taxonomy. Based on English dictionary he developed a list of 18.000 terms into categories. The first of these categories is the "stable and enduring" characteristics on which is based the general trait concept (Pervin, 1996). For Allport, there are Common Traits, dispositions that can be profitably compared among people, and Personal Dispositions (PD), unique traits of each individual (Bischof, 1964). Allport defined trait (cited in Boyle et al., 2008) as "a generalized neuropsychic structure (peculiar to the individual), with the capacity to render many stimuli functionally equivalent, and to initiate and guide consistent (equivalent) forms of adaptive and stylistic behavior". What distinguishes a PD from a Common Trait is the "*peculiar to the individual*" character of PDs (Campbell, 2008). Allport believed that individuals can be better described on PDs than on common traits and, therefore, his work is focalized on Personal Dispositions.



According to Allport traits influence and existence varies among people and different traits might have different significance on different people. According to this he also distinguishes traits as follows (Pervin, 1996):

- Cardinal Traits - Express a disposition that is so pervasive that virtually every act is traceable to its influence.
- Central Traits - Express dispositions that cover a more limited range of situations than cardinal traits but still represent broad consistencies in behavior.
- Secondary Dispositions - Represent tendencies that are the least conspicuous, generalized and consistent.

Additionally, Allport de-emphasized the unconscious Freudian concept. He believed that psychologists must recognize and “read” the open and obvious motivations before going further to the unconscious stimuli of individuals’ personality (Allen, 2000).

- **Raymond Cattell**

Cattell applied the *lexical criterion* of importance to further investigate Allport’s initial categorization of trait terms (Carver et al., 2000; 2008). The *lexical criterion* of importance refers to the fact that the more words a language has to describe a personality trait the more, probably, the specific trait matters in describing human quality (Carver et al., 2000; 2008). Cattell started to reduce the number of traits by eliminating synonyms and by applying factor analysis to several studies of personality. He first came up with 4.500 terms, then with 171 and finally, he concluded that a set of 16 dimensions/factors are those that describe human personality (Table 4.4).



Table 4.4 Psychological Sense of 16 Factors

Reserved	versus	Warm
Concrete-reasoning	versus	Abstract-reasoning
Reactive	versus	Emotionally stable
Deferential	versus	Dominant
Serious	versus	Lively
Expedient	versus	Rule-conscientious
Shy	versus	Socially bold
Utilitarian	versus	Sensitive
Trusting	versus	Vigilant
Practical	versus	Imaginative
Forthright	versus	Private
Self-assured	versus	Apprehensive
Traditional	versus	Open to change
Group-oriented	versus	Self-reliant
Tolerates disorder	versus	Perfectionist
Relaxed	versus	Tense

Source: Carver et al., 2000

Cattell distinguished traits to common and unique, too. According to him “*common trait is a trait which can be measured for all people by the same battery (of tests) and on which (the people) differ in degree rather in form*”, while “*a unique trait is so specific to individual that no one else could be scored on (its dimension)*” (cited in Allen, 2000).

Based on the 16 dimensions of personality, Cattell formed the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) to measure personality according to quantitative methods of factor analysis (Cattell et al., 2008). Table 4.5 presents the 16PF, as well as, the low and high descriptors of each factor. The 16PF was further analyzed with second-order factor analysis and the sixteen factors reduced to five global scales: Extraversion, Anxiety Neuroticism, Tough-Mindedness, Independence and Self-Control.



Table 4.5 16PF Scale Names and Descriptors

Descriptors of Low Range	Primary Scales	Descriptors of High Range
Reserved, Impersonal, Distant	Warmth (A)	Warm-hearted, Caring, Attentive to Others
Concrete, Lower Mental Capacity	Reasoning (B)	Abstract, Bright, Fast- learner
Reactive, Affected by Feelings	Emotional Stability (C)	Emotionally stable, Adaptive, Mature
Deferential, Cooperative, Avoids Conflict	Dominance (E)	Dominant, Forceful, Assertive
Serious, Restrained, Careful	Liveliness (F)	Enthusiastic, Animated, Spontaneous
Expedient, Nonconforming	Rule-Consciousness (G)	Rule-conscious, Dutiful
Shy, Timid, Threat- Sensitive	Social Boldness (H)	Socially bold, Venturesome, Thick- Skinned
Tough, Objective, Unsentimental	Sensitivity (I)	Sensitive, Aesthetic, Tender-Minded
Trusting, Unsuspecting, Accepting	Vigilance (L)	Vigilant, Suspicious, Skeptical, Wary
Practical, Grounded, Down-to-Earth	Abstractedness (M)	Abstracted, Imaginative, Idea-Oriented
Forthright, Genuine, Artless	Privateness (N)	Private, Discreet, Non- disclosing
Self-assured, Unworried, Complacent	Apprehension (O)	Apprehensive, Self- doubting, Worried
Traditional, Attached to Familiar	Openness to Change (Q1)	Open to Change, Experimenting
Group-Orientated, Affiliative	Self-Reliance (Q2)	Self-reliant, Solitary, Individualistic
Tolerates Disorder, Unexacting, Flexible	Perfectionism (Q3)	Perfectionistic, Organized, Self-disciplined
Relaxed, Placid, Patient	Tension (Q4)	Tense, High Energy, Driven
Global Scales		
Introverted, Socially Inhibited	Extraversion	Extraverted, Socially Participating
Low anxiety, Unperturbable	Anxiety Neuroticism	High Anxiety, Perturbable
Receptive, Open-minded, Intuitive	Tough-Mindedness	Tough-Minded, Resolute, Unempathic
Accommodating, Aggreable, Selfless	Independence	Independent, Persuasive, Willful
Unrestrained, Follows Urges	Self-Control	Self-controlled, Inhibits Urges

Source: Cattell et al., 2008



The associations between the 16PF global and primary factors are given in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 16PF global factors and the primary trait' make-up

Global Factors	Primary Factors
Extraversion/Introversion	(A) Warm-Reversed (F) Lively-Serious (H) Bold-Shy (N) Private-Forthright (Q2) Self-Reliant-Group-oriented
High Anxiety/Low Anxiety	(C) Emotionally Stable-Reactive (L) Vigilant-Trusting (O) Apprehensive-Self-assured (Q4) Tense-Relaxed
Tough-Mindedness/Receptivity	(A) Warm-Reserved (I) Sensitive-Unsentimental (M) Abstracted-Practical (Q1) Open-to-Change-Traditional
Independence/Accommodation	(E) Dominant-Deferential (H) Bold-Shy (L) Vigilant-Trusting (Q1) Open-to-Change-Traditional
Self-Control/Lack of Restraint	(F) Lively-Serious (G) Rule-conscious-Expedient (M) Abstracted-Practical (Q3) Perfectionistic-Tolerated Disorder

Source: Cattell et al., 2008

- **Eysenck**

According to Eysenck the differences among individuals' personalities are biological and are based on three major dimensions: Neuroticism, Extraversion and Psychoticism (Cloninger, 2000). Neuroticism is all about emotional stability or instability. Extraversion (opposed to introversion) refers to individual's differences in excitation and inhibition. Psychoticism is related to nonconformity or social deviance. Table 4.7 gives Eysenck's personality traits which result when combining different levels of the two supertraits of neuroticism (emotionality-stability) and extraversion/introversion (Carver, 2008). The Table also provides the correspondence between Eysenck's and Hippocrates personality traits and types.



Table 4.7 Neuroticism - Extraversion: Eysenck's personality traits

	Emotionally Stable	Emotionally Unstable
Introvert	Passive Careful Thoughtful Peaceful Controlled Reliable Even tempered Calm Phlegmatic	Quiet Pessimistic Unsociable Sober Rigid Moody Anxious Reserved <i>Melancholic</i>
Extravert	Sociable Outgoing Talkative Responsive Easygoing Lively Carefree Leaderly <i>Sanguine</i>	Active Optimistic Impulsive Changeable Excitable Aggressive Restless Touchy <i>Choleric</i>

Source: Carver, 2008

Comparing Eysenck's theory with Cattell's second order traits it is evident that both theories converge into similar personality traits. There are five major Eysenckian measures of personality (Furnham et al., 2008):

- Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPQ)
- Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI)
- Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ)
- Eysenck Personality Questionnaire-Revised (EPQ-R)
- Eysenck Personality Profiler (EPPI)



- ***The Five-Factor Theory of Personality***

The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, widely known as Big Five, has its roots to Allport's and Cattell's theories (Dumont, 2010). However, those who put it on the map are McCrae and Costa (McCrae & Costa, 2003). The concept behind the FFM or Big Five Model is that the basic structure of personality incorporates five superordinate factors, opposed to Eysenks's three factors. These factors are (1) neuroticism or emotional stability, (2) extraversion, (3) openness-to-experience, (4) agreeableness and (5) conscientiousness (Scheier, 2008). These factors are often referred with the acronym OCEAN (Kowalski & Westen, 2009).

OCEAN traits are described as follows (Kumar & Bakhshi, 2010; Comer & Gould, 2011; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2012):

- **Neuroticism** (versus emotional stability): refers to the individuals' ability to handle stressful situations and sustain their emotional stability. This trait measures differences in person's tendencies to withstand with stress and negative emotions. High neuroticism implies insecure, worried and depressed individuals, while low neuroticism calm, self-confident and secure individuals.
- **Extraversion** (versus introversion): refers to the individual's predisposition of experiencing positive emotions and convenience in building relations. Those high in extraversion are more sociable, talkative, assertive, active and gregarious, while those high in introversion are quite, reserved and timid.
- **Openness-to-experience** (or imaginativeness versus unimaginativeness): is related to fascination, novelty, creativity, divergent thinking, curiosity, sensitivity in artistic topics and political liberalism. Individuals who are open-to-experience are broad-minded, intelligent, imaginative, original, foresighted and cultured. Low openness-to-experience is individuals are conventional and find comfort in the familiar.



- **Agreeableness** (versus disagreeableness): refers to individuals who easily trusts others and usually assumes the best about anyone they meets. In general agreeableness identifies an individual's propensity to defer to others. High agreeableness individuals are compassionate, cooperative, warm, trusting, generous, forgiving and helpful, while those low in agreeableness are cold, disagreeable and antagonistic.
- **Conscientiousness** (or dependability versus irresponsibility): shows tendencies of self-discipline and dutifully act. Conscientiousness is related to reliable, organized, persevering, hard-working, hard-working responsible and careful individuals, whereby a low conscientious person is easily distracted, disorganized, and unreliable.

A number of instruments have been developed to measure the Big Five Factors (Gosling et al., 2003; Kuo et al., 2011; Paunonen & Jackson, 2000):

- The most comprehensive is the NEO Personality Inventory (240-item) of Costa and McCrae. The model revised later taking the acronym NEO-PI-R (Revised).
- The 44-item Big-Five Inventory (BFI)
- The 60-item NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI)
- The Goldberg's instrument comprised of 100 trait descriptive adjectives
- The 40-item instrument developed by Saucier and derived from Goldberg's 100-item set
- The 10-item personality inventory (TIPI) scales developed by Gosling et al. (2003). The 10-item is suitable for situations when the primary focus of a research is on relationship between personality traits and other constructs.

The above Big Five measurements are usually asking the respondents to adjust the extent of their agreement with each statement on Likert scales. Responses are then coded and summed to obtain the personality of the individual (Furnham, 1996).



However, the 10-item personality inventory (TIPI) is somehow differently calculates personality according to Figure 4.2.

Disagree strongly	Disagree moderately	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>I see myself as:</i>						
1. _____ Extraverted, enthusiastic.						
2. _____ Critical, quarrelsome.						
3. _____ Dependable, self-disciplined.						
4. _____ Anxious, easily upset.						
5. _____ Open to new experiences, complex.						
6. _____ Reserved, quiet.						
7. _____ Sympathetic, warm.						
8. _____ Disorganized, careless.						
9. _____ Calm, emotionally stable.						
10. _____ Conventional, uncreative.						

TIPI scale scoring ("R" denotes reverse-scored items): Extraversion: 1, 6R; Agreeableness: 2R, 7; Conscientiousness; 3, 8R; Emotional Stability: 4R, 9; Openness to Experiences: 5, 10R.

Figure 4.2 The 10-item personality inventory (TIPI)

Source: Gosling et al. (2003)

Table 4.9 gives a more extent description of the Big Five traits and their illustrative measurement scales, while Figure 4.8 presents the associations of the OCEAN factors to Cattell's and Goldberg's categorizations.

Table 4.8 Alignments among the three main five-factor models

16PF (Cattell)	NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae)	Big Five (Goldberg)
Extraversion/Introversion	Extraversion	Surgency
High Anxiety/Low Anxiety	Neuroticism	Emotional stability
Tough-Mindedness/Receptivity	Openness	Intellect or culture
Independence/Accommodation	Agreeableness	Agreeableness
Self-Control/Lack of Restraint	Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness or dependability

Source: Cattell et al., 2008



Table 4.9 The Big Five Trait Factors and Illustrative Scales

Characteristics of the High Scorer	Trait Scales	Characteristics of the Low Scorer
NEUROTICISM (N)		
Worrying, nervous, emotional, insecure, inadequate, hypochondriacal	Assesses adjustment vs. emotional instability. Identifies individuals prone to psychological distress, unrealistic ideas, excessive cravings or urges, and maladaptive coping responses.	Calm, relaxed, unemotional, hardy, secure, self-satisfied
EXTRAVERSION (E)		
Sociable, active, talkative, person-oriented, optimistic, fun-loving, affectionate	Assesses quantity and intensity of interpersonal interaction; activity level; need for stimulation; and capacity for joy.	Reserved, sober, unexuberant, aloof, task-oriented, retiring, quiet
OPENNESS-TO-EXPERIENCE (O)		
Curious, broad interests, creative, original, imaginative, untraditional	Assesse proactive seeking and appreciation of experience for its own sake; toleration for and exploration of the unfamiliar.	Conventional, down-to-earth, narrow interests, unartistic, unanalytical
AGGREABLENESS (A)		
Soft-hearted, good-natured, trusting, helpful, forgiving, gullible, straightforward	Assesses the quality of one's interpersonal orientation along a continuum from compassion to antagonism in thoughts, feelings, and actions.	Cynical, rude, suspicious, uncooperative, vengeful, ruthless, irritable manipulative
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS (C)		
Organized, reliable, hard-working, self-disciplined, punctual, scrupulous, neat, ambitious, persevering	Assesses the individual's degree of organization, persistence, and motivation in goal-directed behavior. Contrasts dependable, fastidious people with those who are lackadaisical and sloppy.	Aimless, unreliable, lazy, careless, lax, negligent, weak-willed, hedonistic
NEO-PI-R Facet Scales Associated with the Big Five Trait Factors		
Neuroticism:	anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, vulnerability	
Extraversion:	Warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement, seeking, positive emotions	
Openness-to-Experience:	Fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, excitement seeking, positive emotions	
Agreeableness:	trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, tendermindedness	
Conscientiousness:	Competence, order, dutifulness, achievement, striving, self-discipline, deliberation	

Source: Pervin, 1996



4.4.3 Other Approaches to Personality

- ***The biological approach***

The biological theories support that personality is programmed in individual's genes. In other words, they sustain that personality is biologically determined. The main obstacle in this approach is the rejection of the ways that people lead their lives in different environments and situations, independently of their genetic characteristics (Dweck, 2000).

- ***The humanistic approach***

The humanistic approach refers to theories that focalize on distinct human characteristics of personality that are not observed in other animals behavior, such as be true to oneself or find the meaning in life (Kowalski et al., 2009). Humanistic psychologists tended to study the "healthy" people, in contrast to Freud theory of studying the "sick" people, and the whole persons, in contrast to the numerous personality aspects of the trait theory (Myers, 1995). Representative theorists of this approach are Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Rogers' *person-centered approach* explains personality by applying empathy on the phenomenal experience of individuals. The main weaknesses of the humanistic approach are the phenomenological way of approximating personality and the lack of substantially testable hypotheses and research (Eysenck, 1998; Kowalski et al., 2009).

- ***The cognitive – social approaches***

These approaches include theories such as the *social learning theory*, the *cognitive-social learning theory* and the *social-cognitive theory*. They constitute the first remarkable alternative to psychodynamic theories (Kowalski et al., 2009). Cognitive-social theories endorse that personality is shaped by learning, beliefs, expectations and information processing. They focus more on how individuals interact with the



environment rather than how the environment control them (Myers, 1995). The problem with the cognitive - social theories is that they oversimplify things. It is highly criticized that personality does not purely formed by the situation (Eysenck, 1998).



4.5 Conclusions: chapter's significance and contribution to the study

The Five-Factor Theory and the Big Five Model (Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1997) have been selected as the personality measurement instruments of the current study. The reasons are multifarious. The Big Five trait taxonomy lays among the influential midlevel theories that personality psychologists focused the last 30 years (McAdams et al., 2007). These theories based on more systematic empirical observation than the classic grand theories. FFT as a theory of personality (McCrae & Costa, 2003):

- attributes in good way the origin and the development of personality traits
- associates personality traits with the majority of the other aspects of personality that psychologists pay attention, such as attitudes, relationships, identity, and other variables.
- recognizes the process of the dynamic procedures - learning, defense, long-range planning, and so on - that directly produce the stream of experience and behavior
- declares how the environment may or not impact personality traits development.

Apart from these, the Five Factor Model (Big Five) received in recent years, considerable empirical support and is now the most widely accepted taxonomy of human personality and the most well-researched, well-regarded and used model of measuring personality dimensions (Whelan et al., 2006; Booker et al., 2007; Wehrli, 2008; Golbeck et al., 2011). Additionally, there is a large amount of literature referring to the link between internet usage and exploitation and the Big Five traits (Guadagno et al., 2008). Moreover, the FFM has been applied in a number of recent studies assessing social media with the Big Five personality factors (Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Yarkoni, 2010; Back et al., 2010; Kalmus et al., 2011; Yee et al., 2011; Dunn & Guadagno, 2012; Moore et al., 2012). In the tourism field the review of Leung & Law (2010) describes Big Five as the most popular method



applied by researchers in the disposal domain, the domain that approaches personality via individuals' traits. Therefore, Big Five Model seems to be an appropriate structure for measuring consumer's personality in travel decision-making in social media. Moreover, personality is also used to predict self-congruity, since self-concept is considered as a component of personality (Webb et al., 2006). Therefore, Big Five can be further utilized to measure self-congruity.

According to the emphasized role that personality plays on travel decision-making the next chapter presents the review of personality research on the five stages of the EBM model, as well as the review of personality research on internet (Web 1.0) and social media (Web 2.0).



Chapter 5

Personality Research on Web and Travel Decision-Making

5.1 Introduction

Hughes et al. (2012) argue that personality is *“an influential factor in determining whether a person will seek or distribute information, using either Facebook or Twitter”*. Moreover, Parra-Lopez et al. (2011) support that travel products suppliers *“it is necessary to ‘listen’ constantly to the tourists’ contributions in the social media, in order to participate and respond immediately to suggestions, needs and queries.... favoring the tourists’ use of these tools in relation to the product or service offered by the firm or destination”*. According to Dunne et al. (2011) travel decision-making research has been mainly based on two prospects: on the emotional aspects of decision-making (attitudes, beliefs, involvement, risk perception, traits, and personality), and (2) on the decision-making models (mainly grand models and, therefore, the funneling pattern of decision-making process). As reported by Milano et al. (2011), this funneling pattern follows three steps or phases, when refers to the travel decision-making in social media:

- The pre-experience phase – this is the before travelling phase and it is largely affected by other people’s travel experiences and stories on the web
- The experience during travel or stay phase – this phase takes in social media the form of shared real-time via computer or mobile applications
- The post-experience phase – this phase refers to the point where tourists share online their travel evaluations, emotions, comments and experiences.

The current chapter reviews the personality research on Web and travel decision-making. The first part of the chapter examines the research in the area of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, with respect to internet users’ personality. The second part reviews



the research of personality related to the five stages of the travel decision-making process, as well as the impact of internet and social media on the EBM model's stages. The review reveals a number of literature research gaps, for each of the five decision-making stages, which lead to the research questions of the dissertation.



5.2 Personality Research in the Web

Amichai-Hamburger (2002) critically assesses the need of investigating the relationship between internet and personality. He strongly argues that if the personality of the individual internet users is defined, it will be possible for the marketers to place users in the appropriate website that suits their personality's needs and preferences. Below is given a review of personality research on the internet and social media.

5.2.1 Personality Research in Web 1.0

Literature review of the personality research on Internet revealed four segments: Content Creation & Personality, Sites Interactivity & Personality, Internet Usage & Personality, and Internet Services & Personality.

Internet Services & Personality

People with different personalities tend to use different internet services (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2000). In their study utilized Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) to investigate the role of extraversion and neuroticism on university students' use of internet. The use of internet included items related to informational, social and leisure services of internet. Extraversion motivated the use of leisure services, while neuroticism discouraged the use of information services (work-related information, studies-related information). Referring to gender, extraverted men tend to use leisure services with extraverted women not to be interested in social services (chat, discussion groups, etc.). On the other hand, neurotic women tended to use social services, while neurotic men were not interested in information services.

Another investigation of the relationship between Web 1.0 and personality has been undertaken by Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2002). The authors researched the indicator of "real me" (the degree of ability to express fully the real self in a social



environment). Results have been shown that locating “real me” on the Internet shows an introvert and neurotic personality, while an extrovert and non-neurotic personality locates “real me” through traditional social interactions. Extroversion and neuroticism as personality tendencies related to loneliness were also associated with internet use (Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi, 2003). Loneliness as a well-being indicator, in combination with neuroticism drove women to use social internet services. Information and leisure services were mostly prevalent among extravert men.

Hills & Argyle (2003) investigated the extent to which the use of different Internet services is related to extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism and loneliness, self-esteem and satisfaction with life. No significant correlation has been found even for the investigation of different uses of internet: Work, Social, Use at home and Leisure, except extraversion. For the authors internet use seems to be a form of displacement activity for its users.

Internet Usage & Personality

Swickert et al. (2002) examined the relationship of personality, internet use (technical, information exchange and leisure activities) and social support. No significant results found for the relationships of internet use and social support, as well as personality and technical internet use. However, personality shown significant correlations with information exchange (neuroticism and agreeableness), and leisure activities (neuroticism, conscientiousness, and marginally extraversion). Social support is enhanced by neuroticism, extraversion and openness (technical internet use and information exchange), as well as by neuroticism, extraversion and agreeableness (leisure internet use).

Internet use and its relation with Big Five personality traits and the narrower traits of Optimism, Tough-Mindedness, and Work Drive investigated by Landers & Lounsbury (2006). Agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion found to not



inspire internet usage. On the contrary, the narrow trait of Work Drive seems to be the main motivation personality trait for internet usage above and beyond the Big Five traits. Additionally, conscientiousness was the main internet usage drive for academic purposes.

Extroversion, neuroticism and self-concept examined by Nithya & Julius (2007) with respect to heavy and light users of Internet in India. For heavy Internet users neuroticism and self-concept were negatively correlated. For light Internet users extroversion and self-concept were positively correlated, while neuroticism and self-concept correlated negatively. In general, heavy users scored highly in self-concept, while extraversion didn't show to play a significant role for the type of internet user (heavy or light).

Sites Interactivity & Personality

The effects of user's personality on the level of sites interactivity (number of external and internal hyperlinks) in combination of time pressure has been examined by Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2004). The examination has been hold according to the Need of Closure theory of handling information on internet. A "high need for closure" implies that the user avoids uncertainties on a judgmental topic, while a "low need for closure" that the user tests as many implications as possible to ensure that the information he holds is valid. "High need for closure" showed a preference to websites with fewer hyperlinks, while "low need for closure" a preference to Websites containing more hyperlinks. When time pressure existed "high need for closure" resulted in interactive sites and "low need for closure" in flat sites.

Sites interactivity has been also examined with respect to "Need for Cognition" (NFC). NFC refers to people's tendency towards information acquisition. In information search, "Low NFC" characterized those who prefer to avoid intensive



cognitive efforts, while “High NFC” characterized people who enjoy undertaking cognitive efforts and seeking for knowledge (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2007).

Content Creation & Personality

Uses and gratifications (U&G) theory, a psychological perspective of how people use media, was employed by Papacharissi (2002) for the investigation of how people create content on internet personal home pages. She found that self-expression is one of the motives of holding a personal home page on internet and that people with low social capabilities and less life satisfaction are more willing to hold such a page. In general, the level of expressiveness on personal web pages is consistently depending on high self-expression and social interactivity, and low life satisfaction.

Owners of personal web pages were also compared by Marcus et al. (2006) to the general population. They found that web pages owners were less extroverted, agreeable and conscientious, and more open to experience. When a stranger visited such a page the only personality trait that he was able to identify about the owner was his openness-to-experience, and slightly his extraversion. Referring to the page’s content, a stranger was more able to determine the owner’s openness-to-experience, and less able to define his agreeableness, compared to the rest of the traits.



5.2.2 Personality Research on Web 2.0

With the evolution of Web 2.0, research of personality implications on internet use turned to the role of social media and its tools. Literature review on the personality research in social media revealed six segments: SNS Acceptance & Personality, SNS Usage & Personality, SNS & Personality Prediction, Blogs & Personality, Virtual Words & Personality, and Content Creation & Personality.

SNS Acceptance & Personality

Rosen & Kluemper (2008) investigated the role that Big Five plays on SNS acceptance by university students. The study looked at how personality traits affect Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) for Facebook. Only extroversion and conscientiousness gave significant results. Extroversion was both correlated to perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, while conscientiousness influenced the perceived ease of use.

Gangadharbatla (2008) researched the links between users' personality and their attitude toward SNS. They examined four factors: Internet self-efficacy, need for cognition, need to belong, and collective self-esteem (social identity) and their influence on college students' willingness to join SNS. Except NFC who had no effect on attitudes or behavior against SNS, all the other factors were positively related to the attitudes toward SNS, as well as the willingness to join them.

SNS Usage & Personality

Wehrli (2008) studied how Big Five traits affect users' behavior (participation, adoption, number of friends) concerning SNS. Participants were university students who owned a profile on the SNS of StudiVZ. Personality found to be a predictive mode of the number of friends, of the position the user takes in the network, but not of friends' personality the person had (no "need of homophily"). However,



openness-to-experience (Openness-Openness) was the only trait that affected (though slightly) friends' selection with similar personality. Extraverts tended to join SNS more easily, had more friends online and a central role in the network. Conscientiousness resulted in less frequent use of SNS and for shorter periods of time. Neuroticism resulted in more frequent use of SNS and for longer periods of time. Agreeableness positively affected the social interactions within the SNS, as well as new friendships.

Orr et al. (2009) researched the personality trait of shyness on Facebook's communication approach. Undergraduate university students were surveyed and the results indicated that shyness is positively correlated with the time spend online and with the attitudes toward Facebook as communication tool and negatively with the number of friends individuals' hold online.

Ross et al. (2009) investigated how university students use Facebook for socializing according to the Big Five personality traits. NEO-PI-R utilized to measure participants personality. The study took place for Facebook features use such as use of the Wall, photos posting, groups participation, status changes, use of comments, "poke" function, etc. Extraverts participated in more groups than introverts. However, extraversion didn't have any significant relation with time spend online, number of friends and use of Facebook features. Neuroticism was not related to personal information posting, as well as with Facebook's communicative features. Nevertheless, exploratory analysis revealed that high Neuroticism results in Facebook Wall use preference and low Neuroticism in posting photos preference. Agreeableness and Openness-to-Experience saw no relation with Facebook features use. Openness-to-Experience was associated with Facebook use for socializing. Importantly, results did not indicate a large number of significance (as they approached Facebook as an offline-to-online communication). Authors suggest that Big Five might be too broad and maybe lower personality facets must be utilized to understand SNS users' behavior and personality. However, the study was interested in Facebook features use and not the UG content utilization.



The relationship between personality traits, SNS use and personal information disclosure on Facebook was investigated by Schrammel et al. (2009). The study contacted online to internet users. Personality found to have no influence on personal information disclosure. Openness-to-experience was related to more friends and more time-spend online. Extraversion was related to more friends, and more time-spend online. Time spent online was related to the amount of information disclosure (more time – more info both to friends and strangers), number of friends was positively correlated to the information disclosure.

Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky (2010) replicated the study of Ross et al. (2009) researching the profiles of Facebook users than the self-report questionnaire of the previous study. Results indicated that personality is a strong and robust way to illustrate Facebook use. Extroversion was related to the number of friends but not to the number of groups that the user participates. Introverts provided more personal information than extraverts. High neuroticism was related to more personal information posting (more photos post). Openness-to-experience was associated with the use of more Facebook features and the intention to communicate via Facebook. High conscientiousness was related to more friends online. Picture upload was related to low conscientiousness. Personality was linked to Facebook use, overall.

Correa et al. (2010) investigated the role of extraversion; emotional stability and openness in social media use frequency (instant messaging and social networks). Data were collected by an online panel and examined US adults. They found that extraverts use social media more frequently. People with low emotional stability tend to use social media more, as well. High level of openness-to-experience is also related to frequent use of social media. Extraversion found to be the strongest predictor of social media use. Differences by age and gender were found. Extravert and anxious men tended to use social media more. Extraversion and openness increased the use of social media for women and older people (over 30 years old). For younger users, the frequency of social media use was defined by extraversion,



while it should be noted that for this group was explained the highest rate of variance. Harbaugh (2010) also reveals that extroverts' university students use social media more. They are heavier users and most importantly even others perceive them as outgoing and extrovert.

Kalmus et al. (2011) used a representative sample of Estonian population in order to examine how people use internet according to their personality. Internet use was defined as social media and entertainment (SME) use and Work and information (WI) use. Men, younger and older people use internet for SME, while women and middle aged (around 38) people for WI reasons. Social media and entertainment use of the internet was related to open-to-experience and neurotic people but low in conscientiousness. Work and Information use was correlated with high openness and conscientiousness.

Narcissism and SNS use was also investigated by Bergman et al. (2011) for the Millennial generation. Results were in accordant with Buffardi et al. (2008) with respect to narcissists' social interaction and main photo attractiveness and self-promotion. Narcissism found to be related with the number of friends but not to the time spent online, frequency of status updates, posting picture of others or checking up on SNS friends.

The lower personality traits of need for cognition (NFC) and information and communication technology (ICT) innovativeness and SNS use researched by Zhong et al. (2011). SNS use was measured by the time a student sample spent on an average day on various SNS (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). SNS use found to be positively affected by ICT innovativeness and negatively by NFC.

Moore & McElroy (2012) examined the role of Big Five on Facebook usage (frequency of use, time spent, number of friends and post, etc.) of university students. Importantly they investigated the role of regret in Facebook use. Extraverts have more friends and lower regrets of content they have posted.



Agreeable persons posit more regrets with respect to the content they post on Facebook. Conscientious also regret about their posts, while they spent less time and effort on Facebook. Neuroticism was related to regret and use of Facebook for sociability.

Hughes et al. (2012) also investigated lower facets of personality such as sociability and need for cognition, apart from Big Five on Twitter and Facebook use (social and informational). Those higher in sociability, extraversion and neuroticism but lower in NFC preferred to use Facebook than Twitter, while those higher in NFC preferred Twitter than Facebook. Facebook social use was explained by sociability and neuroticism, as well as younger ages. Twitter social use was related to higher openness, sociability and lower conscientiousness. Facebook information use was positively correlated with neuroticism, extraversion, openness and sociability but was negatively correlated with conscientiousness and NFC. Twitter informational use was positively correlated with conscientiousness and Need for Cognition and negatively with neuroticism, extraversion and sociability. Twitter was used for informational purposes more by older people low in sociability. It is interesting that the lower facets showed a better fitting in explaining personality and social media use. However, the study investigates social media use and not UGC utilization. The differences among Twitter and Facebook users personalities it might also be an indicator of how personality affects UGC utilization.

SNS & Personality Prediction

Gosling et al. (2007) researched how impressions of Facebook profiles express profile owners' personality. They utilized university students as both targets and observers of the profiles. Findings showed that the impressions others get from a user's profile can predict his personality. All Big Five traits hold a level of congruity with the Facebook-based personality impressions, while extraversion is the strongest among them. Back et al. (2010) also confirm that personality can be predicted via SNS profiles. Their study based on Big Five personality traits and run



for university students Facebook users in USA and StudiVZ and SchuelerVZ users in Germany. They revealed that individuals present themselves online with an actual and not an idealized way. They found that extraversion and openness are easier to be predicted.

University students utilized by Zywicki & Danowski (2008) to check the Social Enhancement (“Rich Get Richer”) and the “Social Compensation” (“Poor Get Richer”) hypothesis on Facebook. Self-esteem, sociability (extraverts-introverts), and popularity (online and offline) were the indicators of the study. Extroverts and higher in self-esteem users were more popular both on Facebook and offline. Introverts and with low self-esteem were more popular online than offline. These users also revealed more information about them online, including things that they find it difficult to express offline. They also adopted behaviors in order to be more attractive on Facebook.

An online survey on StudiVZ users undertaken by Krämer & Winter (2008) in order to investigate how people present themselves online according to extraversion, self-esteem and self-efficacy of self-presentation on SNS. Extraversion (except profile picture) and self-esteem did not find to play a role on the way people present themselves on SNS. Self-efficacy influences the level of profile detail, the extent of the contact list, and the style of the profile picture.

Buffardi & Campbell (2008) examined the role of narcissism on SNS, selecting Facebook as a representative social network. They examined Facebook profiles, owned by undergraduate students. Participants accepted to save their Facebook *profile* page on labs computers in order to be viewed and analyzed by the researchers. Additionally, they provided access to their photos. The four objective criteria were (a) number of friends, (b) number of wall-posts, (c) number of groups and (d) number of lines of text in the About Me section. Then, a group of rater participants viewed and characterize the Facebook pages (5 pages per participant) according to 37 different personality traits. From these ratings, three impression



composites arose: the agentic, the communion and the narcissistic. Observes did predict the narcissism of the Facebook profile owners. Narcissism found to be correlated with (a) the quantity of social interaction, (b) the main photo attractiveness, and (c) the main photo self-promotion for both participants and raters. Narcissism was associated with a greater amount of social activity but it was not associated with self-promotion in text and pictures.

Identity construction on Facebook was measured by Zhao et al. (2008). University students have been used as sample. Results indicated that self-presentation on Facebook was related to the desirable identity of users that they didn't yet embody in their social offline interactions. However, self-identity online and offline were not so different to support that users do not present themselves on Facebook as they really are.

Golbeck et al. (2011) examined the personality of Facebook users according to their published personal information. They examined Facebook users who have reached via a Facebook application. They found that personality can be predicted through user's online interfaces. Conscientiousness can be predicted by the text people post on their profiles on Facebook and that conscientious people are more likely to discuss other people than to describe things they saw or heard. Extraverts had more friends but their network is sparse. Sparse is also the network of friends of open-to-experience individuals. Extraverts and open-to-experience demonstrate more information about their activities and interests. The level of friendship congruity on Facebook had been examined via (1) the number of user's friends and (2) network density. However, congruity between the personalities of friends on Facebook is something that considers investigation.

Quercia et al. (2011) researched how personality is reflected and can be predicted from Twitter accounts. They research 335 Twitter users and they concluded that personality can be easily and effectively predicted through the published data of: following, followers, and listed counts (number of times the user has been listed in



others' reading lists) on their profiles. Yet openness was the easiest trait to predict, while extraversion the most difficult. Additionally, those who are popular and influential on Twitter had an extrovert and emotional stable personality. Popular were also high in openness and influential high in conscientiousness. The role of extroversion in building a large Facebook network was also affirmed by Quercia et al. (2012). They examined the number of Facebook contacts and users' personality Big Five traits. Extraversion found to be the decisive factor which determines the number of a person's friends both online and offline.

Ryan & Xenos (2011) compared the personalities of Australian Facebook users and nonusers. Apart from Big Five traits they searched for differences according to lower personality traits such as shyness, narcissism and loneliness. The scale of Facebook use was adopted by Ross et al. (2009). The results showed that Facebook use was related to extraversion, narcissism and family loneliness. Facebook nonuse was related to conscientiousness, shyness and social loneliness. Some results were contradicted to earlier studies findings, indicating the need of personality investigation in social media in bigger and more variant populations than university students.

Blogs & Personality

Guadagno et al. (2008) examined the personality of bloggers. Participants (89 people) were university students and asked to demonstrate whether they write or read blogs and about what subjects. Personality determined by the Big Five Inventory-Short Form. Openness-to-experience was the only personality trait that predicted blogging. They then replicated the study to a larger sample (278 participants). This time, openness-to-experience and neuroticism found to be the blogging predictors. Women high in neuroticism are more likely to blog than those low in neuroticism, while for men the level of their neuroticism does not play any role in their intention of maintaining a blog. Blogging is also related to the



participation in online discussion groups. Authors underlined the need of the content based analysis with relation to personality traits in future work.

Virtual Words & Personality

Yee et al. (2011) tried to shed lights on how users' personality (according to Big Five model) is expressed in Virtual Words (VW). Second Life and a sample of under graduate students mobilized for the needs of the study. Results indicated a low correlation between personality traits and linguistic and behavioral metrics of SL use. Another linguistic approach to personality and social media use is provided by Yarkoni (2010). He investigated Google bloggers personality according to Big Five, as well as lower personality facets. Results suggest that bloggers online and offline self-presentation converge. Personality can be predicted via the language bloggers use, while openness-to-experience is the most expressed personality trait when users write online.

Big Five traits have also shown implications on how users present themselves in virtual worlds (Dunn & Guadagno, 2012). In their study they asked university students to "built" avatars and they investigated how avatars looked according to the user's personality. Openness-to-experience was the most influential factor, while except neuroticism all the other Big Five traits found to be significant predictors of avatars' selection. Self-esteem was also investigated and found to be related with avatar preference.

Lee et al. (2012) researched self-concept with respect to self-presentation, social identity and self-efficacy on SNS and Virtual Worlds. SNS represented by Facebook, while Virtual Worlds represented by Second Life. The aim was the examination of the three elements of self-concept on user's perceived social value and loyalty on the social media pages. Social value examined as an antecedent of the loyalty to the communities. Results showed a positive relationship between the three elements and social value, as well as the role of social value as moderator to users' loyalty to



social media communities. Furthermore, analysis revealed the differences between the two platforms on social value perception. Self-presentation and social identity have a greater impact on SNS than VW, while self-efficacy affects perceived social value more on VW than on SNS.

Content Creation & Personality

Nov & Kuk (2008) found that personality affects open source content contribution, such as Wikipedia content. The personality trait of fairness (people's attitudes toward gaining at the expense of others) was examined as a moderator to contributors' willingness to withdrawal their contributing effort. Individual's high in fairness tended to reduce their expected effort of content contribution when external appropriation was perceived as injustice, while individuals low in fairness did not follow this pattern.

Research Gaps related to Personality Research on Web 1.0 & Web 2.0

With the evolution of Web 2.0, research of the personality implications on internet use turned to the role of social media and its tools. The literature review showed that personality has implications on internet, and specifically, in social media use and utilization. Big Five traits are the most investigated personality traits, while show association with internet and social media use.

However, the research has tended to focus on how users utilize social media features rather than on the role of content. Of those studies which have looked directly at content the focus has been on the content's creation and not on its effects. The purpose of this research project is to investigate content's influences and impacts on consumer behavior.

Although considerable research has been devoted to student samples, rather less attention has been paid to consumer samples. Therefore, it is of great importance to



investigate how consumers' and travelers' personality influences the way individuals utilize social media. The purpose of this research project is to investigate travel consumers.

Most studies have been content to SNS use and mostly to Facebook, and have not explained the overall influence of the social media in the users' behavior. The present dissertation focuses in social media general exploitation for making travel decisions.

So far, investigations have been confined to user-created-content, leaving the question of the marketers' efforts in social media. The aim of the current research project is to examine both user-generated and marketing-generated content.

The literature review revealed a number of gaps in the research of the role of personality on internet and social media utilization. The present study aims to fill these gaps by examining how personality shapes the utilization of social media content for travel purposes.



5.3 Personality Research of EBM model: Web 1.0 & Web 2.0 Implications

In this part is reviewed the literature related to personality, internet and social media impact on the 5 stages of the EBM consumer decision-making model. The review of each stage concludes with the corresponding gaps in the research.

5.3.1 Travel Need Recognition

The impacts of personality, internet and social media on Travel Need Recognition are reviewed in this part, revealing the corresponding research gaps of this stage.

Impact of personality

Travel motives have studied by Jang et al. (2009) with respect to the psychological aspects of affect (emotions, moods, and feelings) and tourists' travel intentions to undertake a trip. Psychographics have been also utilized in order to segment travel markets. Hsu et al. (2002) segmented consumers according to their interest in niche leisure travel markets. The lifestyle and specifically the novelty-seeking of Singapore's tourists have been studied by Keng & Cheng (1999). Mehmetoglu et al. (2010) segmented travel market according to tourists' personal values. Novelty has been also examined according to destination selection (Lee et al., 1992). Thrane (1997) used travelers' values to segment tourism market of Norwegians according to their travel motivations. However, personality has not been included, so far, to segment travel markets.

Research on how personality traits affect the recognition of the need to travel is limited. An early work of Dann (1977) focused on the push motivations of anomie and ego-enhancement. He testified that push factors are a convenient way to find travel intentions and segment tourists. Self-congruity used by Hung & Petrick (2012) to find travel motivations. They applied the Motivation-Opportunity-Ability (MOA)



model to explain travel intentions. They also researched the role of functional congruity on travel intentions. Results showed a significant, though low, relationship between congruity and the intention to take a cruise vacation. Another study by Murphy et al. (2007) found that self-congruity is partially related to travel motives.

Even though personality and travel motivations have not been studied, there are studies that associate personality with human motives. In studies related to the role of personality (Big Five) in academic motives significant correlations found for all personality traits (Parks & Guay, 2009). Extroverts and open-to-experience show a correlation to the academic motive of “engagement”, conscientious, neurotic and open-to-experience are related to the “achievement” academic motive, while avoidance is better described by neurotics and extraverts with an inverse conscientiousness and openness-to-experience relationship (Komarraju & Karau, 2005). Clark & Schroth (2010) found that extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness-to-new experiences are related to intrinsic academic motives, while extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism are related to extrinsic academic motives.

Impact of Internet

Previous research on the internet, links travel motives with web use. Frias et al. (2008) attempted to explain how tourist’s pre-visit destination image is formed under internet influence, compared to the travel agencies influence. Results indicated that internet information overload has a negative influence on destinations’ image than in the case that tourists are getting information only by travel agencies. Ren et al. (2009) examined, with respect to travelling, three types of internet based activities (subsistence or work-related activities, maintenance activities – household, personal, physiological and biological needs – and leisure–social and recreational – activities). Results revealed that women are more likely to undertake a travel activity in the physical world influenced by maintenance internet use, while men by leisure internet use. A study by Abd Aziz et al. (2006) shown that



effective travel web sites can arouse imagination, stimulate curiosity and lead to exploration of travel related product/services. Furthermore, the intention to use travel sites is influenced by motives related to entertainment and sports travel activities, while destination familiarity is negatively associated with internet use intentions, indicating that *“prior knowledge alone is a stronger influence on the decision-making process”* (Abd Aziz et al., 2010).

Impact of social media

Gretzel et al. (2007) investigated the way that TripAdvisor users use UGC to plan their vacation. Results demonstrated the role of social media during the pre-trip stage of travel planning, especially for accommodation information. The use of social media after and during the purchase is lesser. The credibility and the usefulness of the UGC is related to the reviewer's travel experience, matching of his trip activities and his trip purpose with the reader's activities and purpose, his age, gender and marital status, as well as his politeness and friendliness. It is obvious that when consumers read other users reviews or content they are looking for similarities with their own preferences and profiles. Personality similarities can, therefore, be one of the matching points that might expand consumers UGC exploitation in all three stages of travel planning.

Research Gaps related to Travel Need Recognition

Research on psychological aspects affecting travel motives is limited to psychographics, novelty-seeking, anomie and ego-enhancement. Personality and Big Five traits have not been yet investigated. Big Five traits, though, have implications on human motivation configuration and performance (Parks et al., 2009; Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010). The current study aims to research Big Five traits associations with travel motives.



Previous research has shown that internet use is associated with travel motives, while UGC is broadly used during the pre-trip stage of travel planning. Whereas, no research found that links social media content with travel motives. The current investigation is designed to study the impact of not only UGC but also MGC on travel stimulation.

Early studies suggest that there exist self-congruity implications on travel motivation. However, no study has yet researched the role of self-congruity in social media, as well as on travel incentives when these are influenced by web content. Moreover, previous research has shown that social media users are looking for similarities when utilizing travel content. However, this research is concentrated on demographic and travel purposes/activities similarities, rather than personality. The present study focuses on the examination of self-congruity inferences in social media content (UGC and MGC), as well as on personality congruence implications, for travel stimulation.



5.3.2 Information Search

Personality, internet and social media impact research on Travel Information Search is studied next, revealing a number of research gaps related to this stage.

Impact of personality

Verplanken et al. (1992) investigated the role of Need for Cognition on external information search. High NC results to more effort and more information search and more task-related cognitive responses. Bosnjak (2010) researched the undesired congruity with the intention of searching information about a destination and he found a negative relationship. Research on how personality traits affect information seeking behavior (the way people search for and utilize information) is rare. A study by Heinström (2003) researched student and their information seeking behavior. He found that Big Five traits are all related to information behavior. Neuroticism is related to information seeking constraints (time pressure, information relevance and secure), extraversion is related to informal sources and to thought-provoking information, openness-to-experience is related to broader searches and critical judgment, while conscientiousness with devoted effort (put time, money and hard work) to achieve the goals of the search.

Another study by Halder et al. (2010) aimed to find how personality (Big Five) affects the information seeking behavior of university students during their studies. Results indicated that all five personality traits have a relationship with information seeking behavior of students. They found that neuroticism sets obstacles in successful information search. On the contrary, extraversion decreases the level of obstacles related to information search. Extraverted information search is linked to purposeful and wider search with more sources to be utilized. Obstacles are not an issue also for those who are open-to-experience. This personality trait inclines in active information search and acquisition which utilizes the maximum number of diverse information sources. Agreeableness was also shown diversity in search resources,



while conscientiousness is the most influential trait since it was correlated with all the aspects of information seeking behavior. Correlations between personality traits and information seeking behavior have also found in newcomers in organizations (Tidwell & Sias, 2005). However, the role of personality traits on information seeking behavior in the context of social media travel information search is still unknown.

Impact of internet

France et al. (2002) stresses the role of internet, and search engines, in the ongoing information search. Their research concluded that the Web provides all the necessary tools to cover consumer's information needs and sources (functional, hedonic, innovation, aesthetic and sign), people search information on internet for socializing, entertaining, creativity and visual reasons. Castaneda et al. (2009) found that internet, as an information source for travel purposes, is related to the perceived ease of use of the medium. Internet helps tourists to save time and cognitive effort. Additionally, internet enables searches closer to tourists' needs and enhances self-efficacy.

Beldona (2005) concluded that web travel information search is gradually increasing by both younger and older individuals (people around 60 years old) and that B2C internet communication must be targeted according to demographic segments. The demographical segmentation of travelers, with respect to gender this time, is also consistent with the conclusions of Kim et al. (2007). They discovered that women are more extended and exhaustive external information searchers and marketers must distinguish communication tools between genders. A study about the micro-level of online tourist information search procedures was undertaken by Pan & Fesenmaier (2006). They defined this micro-level according to tourists' mental models. The results indicated that tourists have different approaches (mental models) when searching online from those provided the related travel content (marketers). Consequently, consumers have different demographical and mental desires when looking for travel information on the web. More importantly,



according to Pan et al. (2006) travelers could not find on Web 1.0, approaches similar to their way of thinking.

Seabra et al. (2007) found that online information impacts on customers' expectations fulfillment about region's characteristics, infrastructure and entertainment assemblies. Furthermore, research revealed that information on the web can change the image of a destination. Li et al. (2009) detected that both affective and cognitive image development are changing when online information search about the destination increases. In addition, Fesenmaier et al. (2011) highlighted that heavy online searchers are also more actively involved in the travel decision-making process, they spend more time on searching and they utilize a variety of tools and websites in travel planning. Accordingly, online search affects consumers, but is also affected by individuals' characteristics and preferences. It is interesting to investigate how personality interferes in these relationships.

Impact of social media

Cox et al. (2009) investigated the role that UGC travel sites play on travel planning. More precisely, they analyzed the role of UGC during the information search stage of consumer decision-making process. Additionally, they searched for any differences among UGC users and nonusers. Their online research collected 12.544 valid answers from internet subscribers in the Tourism New South Wale's database. The respondents stated that the main reasons of visiting a UGC site is to search for destination and accommodation options. However, consumers tend to go on a social media search after they had already decided about their destination. According to the results the majority of the participants use social media travel sites during the information search stage, a smaller proportion during the alternatives evaluation stage, and a very small one for purchase decisions and post-purchase evaluations. Social media users are more positive to UGC than non-users. Participants consider user-generated-content less trustworthy than official marketing sites content. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents consider that consumers should



consult users' reviews than purely rely on the information provided on marketing pages. However, the study took place in 2007 when social media were just introduced. It is interesting to check how UGC considerations have been formulated by the spread of social media use. Although the study contributes to the knowledge of how social media affect travel planning, the survey participants were 97% Australians and therefore, the study does not capture the totality of social media users.

Burgess et al. (2009) explored consumers' view (likes and concerns) of UGC role in travel planning. The study revealed a miscellaneous opinion related to UGC trustworthiness. Consumers viewed UGC as a trustful source, since is independently driven from people who had real experiences, while UGC was also considered as a biased source due to vested interest comments and postings. However, the study underlines the importance of relevance between users, reflected by statements such as the UGC was helpful when was relevant with 'my own travel plans', was 'personalized to my own interests' or was posted by 'like-minded people'. Therefore, there are implications that self-congruity and personality might be among the aspects that enhance content's relevance and trustworthiness. Kim & Kim (2011) conducted an online study, using a sample of university students, to investigate how SNS use affects information search for tourism. Results revealed that when users share common interests (social life documenting and community forum participation) travel-related information seeking via SNSs use is increasing. This fact underlines the motive to study the antecedents of users' congruence, as well as personality implications, with respect to UGC travel info-seeking.

Ayeh et al. (2013) proposed a model for consumers' intentions to use UGC in travel planning. They applied TAM model (Technology Acceptance Model) in order to explain consumer behavior. They restricted their sample to consumers who are internet users and had undertaken a vacation trip in the last 12 months. Moreover, they applied their research on TripAdvisor content. TAM constructs included: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, perceived



trustworthiness and perceived similarity. All constructs were positively correlated to the attitude and/or intention of UGC use in travel planning. Additionally, among consumers planning vacations, younger people are those who engage more in UGC utilization. However, the study investigated UGC use from the point of view of technology acceptance. Other factors, such as personality, may also affect UGC engagement. Results justified also that UGC trustworthiness is increasing when consumers find congruence between their interests and the interests of the content's producers (need of homophily). Therefore, self-congruity and personality similarities might be one among the factors that increase UGC credibility and, eventually, use. Further, research to other UGC sites than TripAdvisor may also shed lights on how consumers perceive UGC usefulness on travel planning.

Parra-Lopez et al. (2011) investigated the role of benefits, costs and incentives in the intentions to use social media for travel planning (organizing and taking vacations). Social media included the use of blogs, photographs posting and comments sharing before, during and after trip. Sample consisted of regular internet users who had traveled in the last 12 months. Results indicated that benefits (social, functional, psychological and hedonic) are the main drivers in using social media. Among the incentives of social media exploitation in designing a trip is the trust on travel UGC. Referring to costs (loss of privacy, required effort and/or difficulty of using these technologies), no significant results found that affect social media use in vacation planning. Since, psychological benefits are among the main influences of deriving social media use in travel design, the investigation of personality appears extremely important.

Research Gaps related to Travel Information Search

Personality analysis, with respect to Information search behavior, is restricted to the study of Need for Cognition personality variable. No research was detected which links Big Five traits, of neither consumers nor travelers, with information searching



efforts. Nevertheless, personality, and more precisely Big Five, is linked to information-seeking behavior (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010; Tidwell & Sias, 2005). The present dissertation intends to cover this gap, by researching Big Five personality traits implications on travelers' information searching behavior.

Prior studies on internet exploitation for travel information search have shown that perceived ease of use of the medium increase its use, while saving time and cognitive effort for tourists. Additionally, internet enables searches closer to tourists' needs and enhances self-efficacy Social media use, and more precisely, SNSs use is increasing according to perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment and perceived trustworthiness of UGC received by readers. Nevertheless, studies related to the content's impact on information behavior did not found. This research aims to discover how UGC and MGC impact on tourists' information seeking selections.

Moreover, research on UGC travel information search gave conflicted results. Travelers exploit social media though the trustworthiness of the mean is debatable. UGC is viewed as a trustful source - independently driven -, while at the same time UGC is also considered as a biased source - vested interest comments and postings by fake businesses profiles. However, research has shown that trustworthiness increased when perceived similarities between content producers and consumers detected (Burgess et al., 2009; Ayeh et al., 2013). Nonetheless, the concept of self-congruity has not been explored, with respect to content's impact. On the other hand, Pan & Fesenmaier (2006) argued that consumers could not find, on Web 1.0, content similar to their way of thinking. The present dissertation is designed to investigate self-congruity between users and UGC/MGC characteristics, aiming to capture how social media content affects the above notions and relations.



5.3.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

The ways that the evaluation of travel alternatives is shaped under personality, internet and social media impacts is reviewed below. Several research gaps arose and reported.

Impact of personality

Destinations compete in order to be listed in consumers' consideration sets. In this manner, destinations try to build strong brand names in order tourists to be aware of them (Tasci & Kozak, 2006). Cai (Murphy, 2007) defines destination brand as *"perceptions about a place as reflected by the associations held in tourist memory"*. Related to the destination branding are also the concepts of destination personality and destination image (Pike et al., 2010). Aaker (1997) defines brand personality as *"the set of human characteristics associated with a brand"*. According to Hunt (Hallab et al., 2011) destination image is *"the impressions that individuals hold about a state in which they do not reside"*. Sirgy (2000) states that attitude toward a destination is influenced by the matching of the destination's image with the consumer's self-concept. In other words, in order a destination to be included in the tourist consideration set it must hold some kind of matching with tourist's self-concept, referring as self-congruity. This assumption researched by Beerli et al. (2007). They concluded that when self-concept congruity (real and ideal) with the image of the destination is strong, this results in greater visitation tendencies. However, these tendencies are less powerful when the destination has been visited before. Additionally, in the cases where tourists are highly involved in the decision making, self-congruity falls among the vast determinants of destination selection. On the contrary, Ahn et al. (2013) suggest that functional, and not self-congruity is the one that determines destination's choice. A study by Ranjbarian (2010) investigated the role of personality traits (Big Five) on consideration set size of a commercial product (shampoo). His research population consisted by university



students. Findings didn't reveal any significant relation between personality and shampoo choice set.

Impact of internet

Parra & Ruiz (2009) investigated the ways internet affects the formation of stereo systems consideration sets. They researched the size, dynamism, variety and preference dispersion of the consideration sets and concluded that the information load and search tools of the web help to a better (more equal) evaluation of the alternatives and lead to smaller, more stable and more homogenous consideration sets. Punj & Moore (2009) researched the online renting of apartments by undergraduate students. They found that internet has implications on the consideration sets size according to the number of alternatives provided online and consumer's time availability.

Impact of social media

A study by Vermeulen & Seegers (2009) proved that customer hotel reviews improve the awareness of less-known enterprises and increase the possibility the hotel to be included in consumer's consideration set. Moreover, reviews increased hotels' awareness, regardless their positive or negative character. Even though negative reviews lessen the attitude against the enterprise, they enhanced the familiarity with the hotel. Additionally, though professional reviews affects choice sets size, the analysis shown that experts' opinions did not affect consumers' attitude about hotels more than the non-expert reviews. Remarkably, the authenticity of the review, regardless the marketing or non-marketing incentive of the post, appears to be the valuation criterion of online reviews. In other words, consumers consider the validity of the review upon its originality. Therefore, it is interesting to see if personality influences these validations.



Tuominen (2011) proved that UGC and travelers' reviews affect hotels profitability and occupancy rates. In his study about hotel reviews on TripAdvisor, he concluded that consumer reviews raise the popularity of the hotel and increase the probabilities of the hotel to be included in the consideration and choice sets of consumers.

Research Gaps related to Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

Treatment of the subject of evaluation has revolved around the formation of the early and late destination consideration sets. This is the central issue in the field along with the investigation of factors affecting consumers' awareness about travel alternatives. To date, no systematic investigation has considered of personality's inferences on the evaluation of travel alternatives. Moreover, the study by Ranjbarian (2010) showed that Big Five traits are not related to choice set of commercial goods. Nevertheless, no research on service sector has been detected. The aim of this research project is to examine whether Big Five traits play a role on the evaluation of travel services and products.

Many recent studies shown that internet affects the formation of the consideration sets. Internet use impacts the size of consideration sets and assists consumers to a better (more equal) evaluation of the alternatives. Nonetheless, these studies are not related to tourism. The current research focuses on web's influence on the travel sector. The study by Vermeulen et al. (2009) showed that consumer reviews increase consumer's awareness of hotels and, consequently, the possibility to include them in their accommodation choice sets. Moreover, content affects consumers' attitudes against the hotels, while professional reviews also affect the size of hotel consideration sets. However, research on destination selection, as well as other travel products or services, except hotels, did not detected. The present research intends to further contribute to the travel consideration set survey, by



investigating whether UGC and MGC have implications on consumers' validations of travel destinations, services and suppliers.

Self-congruity, on the other side, has been studied with regard to congruence with destinations' characteristics. To now, no research detected the congruence with content characteristics. However, Vermeulen et al. (2009) cite that consumers validate content by examining the incentives of the reviewers. This study aims to investigate whether self-congruity, between content consumers and content producers, affect the evaluation of travel alternatives.

5.3.4 Purchase Decision

Following, the impacts of personality, internet and social media on Purchase Decision are reviewed, revealing to a number of research gaps related to this stage.

Impact of personality

Card et al. (2003) stressed the role of personal characteristics, when deciding to buy from an online tourist store. They found that the most popular travel products bought online are airline tickets and accommodation lodgings. Phelan et al. (2011) related online booking decisions with web sites' aesthetic appeal. Their findings, consistent to previous studies, address the individuals' need to be psychologically connected with the content of the travel site, in terms of images, photographs, hyperlinks, ease of use, colors and other features that affect site's appeal. Engel et al. (1995) also stresses the role of personality on purchase decisions.

Zhou et al. (2007), in their review about the factors affecting online shopping acceptance, recognized that *"the personality trait of innovativeness has both direct and indirect effects on online shopping intention, the indirect effects being mediated by attitude"*. Barkhi & Wallace (2007) looked at the ways personality traits affect the decision to buy online. They applied the Jung's theory of personality and the MBTI measurement of Intuitive, Thinking, Extrovert, and Perceptive individuals. Results



indicated that personality influences consumer's decision to purchase online. Intuitive individuals perceive purchases via virtual stores, easier than sensing individuals. Additionally, extroverts and perceptive individuals are those who consider more the peer influence. Bosnjak et al. (2007) analyzed how personality influences web purchases. Agreeableness, openness-to-experience and neuroticism directly affected the intention to shop online. Openness-to-experience had a positive influence, while the remaining traits a negative one.

Tsao & Chang (2010) wanted to catch on what personality traits implications are on hedonic and utilitarian motivation to shop on the internet. Their researched shown a significant relationship between Big Five traits and both hedonic and utilitarian motives to shop online. Utilitarian motivation is affected by neuroticism, agreeableness, openness-to-experience and conscientiousness. Hedonic motivation is affected by extraversion and openness-to-experience. Sahney et al. (2010) also found that extroversion/introversion trait affects the way people decide to reserve railway tickets online, in India. Chen (2011) also researched the 3 M motivation and personality model for web purchasing intentions. Two out of the five Big Five traits were significant in the model: openness-to-experience and conscientiousness. A research of user's psychological factors (innovativeness) Influence on the online purchase intention showed that individual's innovativeness with respect to information technology has a positive relation with online purchase intentions in rural tourism (San Martin & Herrero, 2012).

Impact of internet

Ahuja et al. (2003) argue that travel is the most favorite among online purchased products. Their study showed that buying online is motivated by convenience, time saving, better prices and availability, while is constrained by privacy and security obstacles. Wong et al. (2005) discussed three factors the affect the online purchase of a travel product, namely information quality, as well as time and content sensitivity. The quality of the information is the most influential factor. Abendroth



(2011) concluded that the existence of website buying options positively affect the purchase of souvenirs, after the departure of the destination. A study by Jayawardhena et al. (2007) showed that online purchase intentions have no big differences with these of traditional world purchases.

Impact of social media

Huang et al. (2010) investigated bloggers' intentions of purchasing online, travel products. The results demonstrated that intentions are positively influenced by the ad effect on blogs, while incentives are stronger when bloggers hold a high-involvement attitude. Purchasing intentions in social media, have broadly examined by several studies. Guo & Barnes (2011) researched the purchasing of virtual items in Second Life. Intrinsic motives (perceived enjoyment, advancement, customization), as well as extrinsic (effort expectancy, performance expectancy, perceived value) found to affect both purchase intentions, and the actual purchase of virtual products. Mäntymäki & Salo (2013) also researched users' intentions to buy travel products, within the context of virtual worlds. Findings revealed that extrinsic (perceived network size, perceived ease of use), as well as intrinsic (perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment) motives impact purchasing behavior on virtual worlds. The association of SNS use with online purchase intentions has been also investigated. Positive relationships between users' interactions, social media perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the main influence factors (Pookulangara et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2012; Kim, Gupta & Koh, 2011). Moreover, positive online reviews raise considerably hotel bookings, while reviews variation (WOM polarity) negatively affects online hotel sales (Ye et al., 2009).

Research Gaps related to Travel Purchase Decision

Many recent studies show that Big five traits have implications on web purchase behavior. However, this research has tended to focus on the intentions and motives



of the activity of shopping, rather than on behavioral incentives. The objective of the current dissertation is to analyze whether Big Five traits impact travel purchasing stimulation, online and offline.

Previous research indicates that internet and social media influence purchase behavior. Nevertheless, these studies offer a descriptive account of the features of an online transaction such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, and similar notions rather than on the content's impact in the purchase behavior. The current research aiming to analyze how content (UGC or/and MGC) can affect the intentions to buy, as well as the actual purchases.

So far, investigations have been confined to personality implications, leaving the question of congruence. The present study aims to investigate whether congruence with content providers affects the purchase behavior of travel decision-makers.

5.3.5 Post-Decision Behavior

Personality, internet and social media literature of Post-Decision Travel Behavior is reviewed in this part. The detected gaps in the literature are reported afterwards.

Impact of personality

Bosnjak et al. (2011) researched how self-congruity: functional, hedonic, leisure, economic, safety, and moral affect post-visit loyalty to a destination. They found that all these components affect loyalty, though with different relative contributions. Self-congruity, functional, hedonic, leisure, and safety congruity exert the greatest influence on post-visit behavior. Hosany et al. (2012) found that self-congruity shows an indirect but significant influence on consumer's satisfaction and on the intentions to recommend the trip to others. Faullant et al. (2011) investigated the role of extraversion and neuroticism as moderators to travel related satisfaction. Extraversion found to positively influence tourists' satisfaction, while



neuroticism negatively. Usakli et al. (2011) found that self-congruity theory within the context of tourism destinations, indicating that both actual congruity and ideal congruity have a positive impact on tourists' behavioral intentions to return and to recommend the destination. Bigne Alcaniz et al. (2009) also found that the psychological attributes of a destination affect tourists' willingness to revisit the destination and to recommend it to others.

Yoo & Gretzel (2011) were interested in how travelers' personality is related to travel UGC creation. The sample of the study included a large number of 1682 members of commercial online research panel in USA. Participants had undertaken a vacation trip in the last 12 months before the study. Results indicated that personality Big Five traits have implications on travel UGC creation. Extraverts and open-to-experience were more likely to produce UGC because of instinct motives (enjoyment/self-enhancement, helping others and venting). Agreeableness and conscientiousness also motivated travelers to produce content online. Barriers to create content were faced only by neurotic tourists, and slightly by agreeable ones due to lack of time or get forgotten to do so. Additionally, openness-to-experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness found to motivate the individual in posting his own travel reviews, while extroversion was related to responds to others' blogs or to contribute in discussion boards and forums related to traveling.

Impact of internet

Gounaris et al. (2010) found that e-service quality is positively related to e-satisfaction which in return affects directly and indirectly site revisit, WOM communication and repeat online purchases. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) suggest that the motives behind users contribution to Virtual Opinion Platforms are social benefits, economic incentives, concern for others, and extraversion/self-enhancement.



Impact of social media

Fotis et al. (2011) examined a sample of internet users from Russia and other FSU Republics, who had traveled within the last 12 months, regarding social media use in their vacation planning. “Before holidays” users searched for destination choices and for activities while on destination. “During holidays” users exploited social media to stay in touch with their friends, and secondly to search for activities or attractions at the destination. The use of social media to provide information about the holiday experience (pictures, comments, etc.) is the third preferable reason, with younger users to be more attached to this social media use. “After holidays” users mainly used social media to share their experiences with friends and other users (78%), and only a small percentage (29%) aimed to inspire other people. In contrast to Cox et al. (2009) the current study showed that users exploit social media mainly in post-purchase stage and not on information search stage.

Research Gaps related to Travel Post-Decision Behavior

The theme of psychology has been taken up in a variety of ways within the field of self-congruity. These include consumer’s satisfaction and intentions to return and/or to recommend destinations. The study by Faullant et al. (2011) showed that extraversion and neuroticism impact the satisfaction of a tourist experience. However, the impact of Big Five traits on expressing vacation satisfaction/dissatisfaction via UGC is limited. Only the research of Yoo & Gretzel (2011) approaches the role of Big Five traits on UGC contribution. However, UGC is all about social media, since without the contribution of the users social media cannot exist. This dissertation intends to research further how personality impacts on consumers’ willingness to express their post-decision attitudes of a travel experience with UGC production.



5.4 Conclusions: chapter's significance and contribution to the study

Literature review revealed a number of research gaps related to social media implications on travelers decision-making. These gaps include limitations in personality studying, as well as the distinct study of UGC and MGC influence. Congruence gaps were also detected. Notably, these gaps refer to all stages of the decision-making process. The present research project aims to fill these gaps by exploring the role of Big Five traits on tourist behavior, when travel decisions are shaped under the UGC and/or MGC impact. A number of research questions have been established and explored in order to cover these constraints of the literature.



Part III

METHODOLOGY – RESULTS REPORT & ANALYSIS

Chapter 6

Research Planning & Methodology

6.1 Introduction

A survey is “a systematic method of gathering information from a sample of entities for the purposes of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are member” (Groves et al., 2004). Survey methodology, from the Greek “ology” which means “the study of”, is the study of survey methods and seeks to identify principles about the design, collection, processing and analysis of the survey. The selection of the appropriate survey methodology is crucial for the efficiency of the overall study and requires the compromise of the survey’s objectives with the resources availability, as well as the time available (Richardson et al., 1995).

The current study follows the cross-sectional research principles, which Kumar (2008) defines as “the collection of various variables of the sample at one point of time in order to uncover relationships existing among these variables”. Concerning the current survey, these relationships are defined by the study’s Research Questions. A research question refers to an explicit statement of what the research aims to examine, and according to Denscombe (Bryman, 2012) can take various forms, such as:

- Predicting an outcome (does y happen under circumstances a and b ?)
- Explaining causes and consequences of a phenomenon (is y affected by x or is y a consequence of x ?)
- Evaluation a phenomenon (does y exhibit the benefits that it is claimed to have?)
- Describing a phenomenon (what is y like or what forms does y assume?)
- Developing good practice (how can we improve y ?)

- Empowerment (how can we enhance the lives of those we research?)

The research questions of the current dissertation have the form of the second type, and they try to shed light to causes and consequences of the personality phenomenon with respect to social media use for travel purposes. The study, also, adopts the inferential quantitative approach, where *“data are in quantitative form and can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in formal and rigid fashion ... and form a database from which to infer characteristics or relationships of a population”* (Kothari, 2004). The quantitative character of the study is given by the research tool, which is consisted of a quantitative questionnaire. Furthermore, the research is based on online survey, which reduces drastically and dramatically the probability of human errors, due to no human intervention during the questionnaires' complement process (Avasarikar et al., 2007).

Chapter six describes the research methods and the planning procedure of the dissertation. Below are given the study's research questions, the process of data collection and the design procedure of the questionnaire.

6.2 Research Questions

The literature review has revealed a number of research gaps, related to the five stages of travel planning process. To fill these gaps a number of research questions were constructed. More specifically, three general questions were built. The first two refer to the personality's influence on UGC/MGC impact on tourist decision-making. The third one is related to the role of the congruity theory in social media. This question also falls into two other research sub-questions: (a) the congruity between users and UGC and (B) the congruity between users and MGC. Accordingly, and for each stage, three general research questions were built, which are followed by more detailed and specialized questions.

6.2.1 General Research Question

RQ (G1): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on tourist decision-making process?

RQ (G2): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on tourist decision-making process?

RQ (G3): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to tourist decision-making?

RQ (G3.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the tourist decision-making?

RQ (G3.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the tourist decision-making?



6.2.2 Research Questions on Tourist Decision-Making Process

Need Recognition

RQ (1a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1a.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1a.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b.2): Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

RQ (1b.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel need recognition?



Information Search

RQ (2a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2a.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2a.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b.2): Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel information search?

RQ (2b.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel information search?



Evaluation of Alternatives

RQ (3a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3a.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3a.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b.2): Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (3b.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?



Purchase Decision

RQ (4a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4a.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4a.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b.2): Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

RQ (4b.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?



Post-decision behavior

RQ (5a): Is there an association between personality and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?

RQ (5a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC contribution during evaluation?

RQ (5a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?

RQ (5a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?

RQ (5a.4): Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?

RQ (5a.5): Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC contribution during evaluation?

6.2.3 Research Questions on Self-Congruity

Need Recognition

RQ (6a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel need recognition?

RQ (6a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel need recognition?

RQ (6a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel need recognition?



Information Search

RQ (7a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel information search?

RQ (7a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel information search?

RQ (7a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel information search?

Evaluation of Alternatives

RQ (8a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (8a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel evaluation of alternatives?

RQ (8a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel evaluation of alternatives?

Purchase Decision

RQ (9a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel purchase decision?

RQ (9a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel purchase decision?

RQ (9a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel purchase decision?



Self-congruity research questions were not built in the post-decision behavior stage, since the study does not include the concepts of satisfaction/dissatisfaction and intention to revisit or to recommend to others travel options, but rather the intention to post or not information, namely the intentions to produce travel UGC.



6.3 Methods of Data Collection

Next, are given the population characteristics, the sample design, the study procedure, and the description of the pilot test of the survey.

Population

The population of the study refers to individuals who use social media, and, more precisely, refers to individuals who use social media for leisure travel purposes. However, to our knowledge, statistics about social media use for travel are not available and, therefore, in order to be described the survey's population, were used statistics about the general utilization of internet and social media. At the end of 2013, the number of internet users was around to 2.8 billion people, worldwide (Internet World Stats, 2014). The corresponding number of users in social networking sites was 1.7 billion individuals (eMarketer, 2013).

In May 2013, 81% of the internet users' were also social networks sites users. SNSs was the third most popular online activity, after the Search/Navigation (90%) and the Multimedia use (83%). Moreover, SNS use is not only one of the most popular online activities, but also the most popular one with respect to social media (Statista, 2013). An in-depth analysis of more than 50 SNSs, worldwide, showed that social networks are used by individuals who are mostly women, aged between 25-44, with an income up to 50.000\$, holding a bachelor degree, and are located mainly in the Asia Pacific region, and then in Europe (Chappell, 2012).

Sample design

The sample design involved the following steps (Malhotra et al., 2006):

- *Target population:* travelers aged 18 years and over which use social media, worldwide



- *Sampling frame*: two tourist e-mail databases
- *Sampling unit*: individual leisure travelers - social media users
- *Sampling technique*: snowball sampling
- *Sample size*: above 500 – according to Malhorta (2006, pp. 361) this is an accepted sample size for marketing research studies with non-probability sampling
- *Execution*: e-mailing survey's URL (questionnaire)
- *Validation*: sample characteristics compared with population statistics

Study Procedure

In order to achieve a sample according to the population's specifications, an online travel consumer's research was conducted aiming to gather social media users. The questionnaire was distributed in online form (URL) and via email, to two travel newsletter consumer databases (one of a hotel and another one of a travel agent, both operated in Greece, but with international customers). First, the fact that consumers are owning an email account ensures that they are internet users. Secondly, since they have submitted their email address in a travel newsletter database assures that they are interested in consuming travel products. Hence, it was supposed that these databases could produce an appropriate sample.

The questionnaire forwarded directly to the databases and without the interference of the researchers, due to the privacy of personal data. Participants were asked to forward the link to other travelers (snowball sampling). Initially, 5375 questionnaires were sent, while the total number of the forwarded questionnaires cannot be defined due to the snowball effect. The online survey was conducted between 4/11/2013 – 22/1/2014 and 1637 questionnaires were returned, with 582 of them to be fully completed and were utilized to the study. The only prerequisite was the consumer to be social media user. Participants were informed that the purpose of the questionnaire was to serve a doctoral dissertation. An introductory text was added to the email informing email owners about the purpose of the study: "A



doctoral dissertation, about social media use in travel, is conducted by the University of the Aegean. If you are user of social media please follow the link to provide us with your valuable opinions. We kindly ask you to further forward the questionnaire's link to other travelers-social media users of your knowledge".

Pilot test

A pilot test was undertaken, previous to the main research, in order to detect if there were any obscure points. Twenty questionnaires, in hardcopy, were distributed to university students with the prerequisite that they use social media for travel purposes. As a result, brief modifications required, such as the elimination of some statements and the rewording of some others in order to clarify questionnaire's content. For example the statement *"I am inspired to travel because of users' travel posts in social media"* modified to *"Reading in social media users' travel posts inspires me to travel"* or the statement *"I add destinations/accommodations among my travel choices when I see companies' travel posts in social media"* eliminated and replaced by the statement *"Reading in social media sponsored/commercial travel posts leads me to expand my consideration set"*.



6.4 Design of Research Instrument

The research tool that designed for the requirements of the study includes four parts: the personality measurement, the travel decision-making measurement, the self-congruity and the demographics. The parts of the travel decision-making and the self-congruity were made in a comparative form between UGC and MGC. Questionnaire's online form is given in the Appendix.

6.4.1 Personality Measurement

Personality was measured according to the Yoo & Gretzel (2011) measurement. In this work, the authors adopted from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), the scale and the sentence items for measuring the Five Personality Factors (5 self-descriptive sentence items for each factor). The resultant personality scale model showed strong validity in social media. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree. Below are given the sentences related to extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness and openness-to-experience, respectively:

- Neuroticism (I get stressed out easily, I worry about things, I fear for the worst, I am filled with doubts about things, I panic easily)
- Extraversion (I talk a lot to different people at parties, I feel comfortable around people, I start conversations, I make friends easily, I don't mind being the center of attention)
- Openness-to-experience (I get excited by new ideas, I enjoy thinking about things, I enjoy hearing new ideas, I enjoy looking for a deeper meaning in things, I have a vivid imagination)
- Agreeableness (I sympathize with others' feelings, I am concerned about others, I respect others, I believe that others have good intentions, I trust what people say)



- Conscientiousness (I carry out my plans, I pay attention to details, I am always prepared, I make plans and stick to them, I am exacting in my work)

6.4.2 Travel Planning Measurement

Below is described the development procedure of the questionnaire questions related to the measurement of the travel planning process in social media.

Travel Need Recognition

Travel Need Recognition refers to the incentives that make people travel. These motives are influenced by both push and pull factors. Social media fall in the external (pull) factors that influence tourists. Personality, on the other hand, is an internal (push) factor that stimulates traveling (Epperson, 1983). The current dissertation is examining the recognition of travel needs, as the motivation created by the intrinsic factor of personality and the extrinsic factors of UGC and MGC. The questions related to the Travel Need Recognition are presented below.

Reading in social media users' travel posts:

1. Inspires me to travel
2. Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before

Reading in social media sponsored/commercial travel posts:

3. Inspires me to travel
4. Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before

All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.



Information search

Information search incorporates internal and external sources. The current dissertation focuses on external search, since social media constitute an external travel information source. Moreover, external search can be either goal-directed or exploratory (Tsao et al., 2010). The questions five and eight aim to investigate the usefulness of social media as a goal-directed travel information source. According to Castaneda et al. (2009) when tourists search for information, internet helps them to save time and cognitive effort. Questions six and nine investigate whether social media assists tourist in saving time and effort. The trustworthiness of the social media content is debatable (Cox et al., 2009; Burgess et al., 2009; Ayeh et al., 2013). The last questions (seven and ten) refer to this issue, by examining the quality of social media content as an information source.

Reading in social media users' travel posts:

- 5. Helps me find travel information when I need it*
- 6. Reduces my effort to find travel information*
- 7. Increases the quality of travel information*

Reading in social media sponsored/commercial travel posts:

- 8. Helps me find travel information when I need it*
- 9. Reduces my effort to find travel information*
- 10. Increases the quality of travel information*

All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

Evaluation of Alternatives

This part investigates the role of social media in the formation of user's consideration or evoked sets, as well as in evaluating travel destinations, services



and suppliers. Literature review demonstrated that social media are exploited by users to determine their accommodation and destination choices (Cox et al., 2009; Fotis et al., 2011, Gretzel et al., 2007). Furthermore, research revealed that information on the web, changes destinations' image in consumer mind (Li et al., 2009). Additionally, users' hotel reviews increase consumers' awareness, and, consequently, the possibility of a hotel to be included in the travelers' consideration set (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Accordingly, questions 11, 13, and 14, 16 refer to the evaluation of travel alternatives, while questions 12 and 15 refer to the formation of travelers' choice sets.

Reading in social media users' travel posts:

- 11. Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers*
- 12. Leads me to expand my consideration set*
- 13. Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections*

Reading in social media sponsored/commercial travel posts:

- 14. Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers*
- 15. Leads me to expand my consideration set*
- 16. Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections*

All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

Purchase Decision

Questions 17 and 20 were built in order to examine whether social media affect booking choices. Furthermore, questions 18, and 21 are related to travel attributes, such as what to do, eat, see, and so on, at the destination. Questions 19 and 21 refer to the choice and purchase of complementary travel products.

Reading in social media users' travel posts:



- 17. *Helps me to book travel services/suppliers*
- 18. *Influences what to do/see at destinations*
- 19. *Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience*

Reading in social media sponsored/commercial travel posts:

- 20. *Helps me to book travel services/suppliers*
- 21. *Influences what to do/see at destinations*
- 22. *Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience*

All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree.

Post-decision behavior

Referring to the post-decision stage, travelers use social media mainly to share their experiences with others (Fotis et al., 2011; 2012). Hence, in this stage, questions are related to content's production by users, aiming to discover which type of personality mainly produces content and what is the type of this content. Question 23 detects whether participants post, or not, information. Those who answered that they post reviews, they had to clarify whether they write about destination or accommodation experiences in the questions 24 and 25, respectively. Furthermore, they had to illustrate the reasons which motivate them to post reviews (Question 26). On the other hand, those who do not post reviews had to clarify the reasons on Question 27. Questions 26 and 27 were adopted by Gretzel (2007) and adjusted to the study's requirements.

23. After my travel I post information in social media about my experiences

- Yes
- No



24. I write comments/reviews about the destination

25. I write comments/reviews about the accommodation

26. Reasons that I post online reviews:

- *To help other people take decisions*
- *To share experiences on consumer reviews*
- *Because people rely on consumer reviews and posting reviews*
- *To reward a company that has done right by you*
- *To motivate companies make improvements in their products and services*
- *To assist retailers make better decisions about their product and services*
- *Because giving public feedback is the best way to get companies listen*
- *To correct the record after you see someone else's unfair review*
- *Because it's fun*
- *Communication among like-minded people is a nice thing*
- *Relive my trips*
- *I meet nice people this way*
- *If a company harms me, I will harm the company*
- *Incentives are offered*

27. Reasons that I do not post online reviews:

- *Time constraints*
- *Not interested*
- *Lack of confidence in writing*
- *Lazy*
- *Haven't thought about posting*
- *Forget*
- *Plan on starting*
- *Security/privacy*
- *Others do it*
- *No incentives*



- *Want to keep great places secret*
- *Embarrassed to share my experience*

Questions 24 and 25 were measured by a 4-point Likert scale taking the form: 1- Rarely, 2-Sometimes, 3-Very Often, 4-Always. On Questions 26 and 27, participants could mark more than one options.

6.4.3 Self-Congruity Measurement

Self-congruity was approached as congruence among social media users, as well as users' congruence with travel companies. Congruity questions were adopted by Bosnjak et al. (2011) and adjusted to the study's requirements. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree. Below are given the corresponding questions of each stage.

Travel Need Recognition

28. Reading in social media travel posts inspires me to travel when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

29. Reading in social media travel posts makes me seriously consider going on a vacation even though I had no intention before when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

Information search

30. Reading in social media travel posts helps me find travel information when I need it when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*



- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

31. Reading in social media travel posts reduces my effort to find travel information when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

32. Reading in social media travel posts increases the quality of travel information when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

Evaluation of Alternatives

33. Reading in social media travel posts helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

34. Reading in social media travel posts leads me to expand my consideration set when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

35. Reading in social media travel posts helps me to reconfirm my travel selections when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

Purchase Decision



36. Reading in social media travel posts helps me to book travel services/suppliers when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

37. Reading in social media travel posts influences what to do/see at destinations when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

38. Reading in social media travel posts helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience when:

- *users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am*
- *corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am*

6.4.4 Demographics

The last part of the questionnaire is dedicated to tourists' demographics, such as Nationality (defined by the participant), Gender (Male – Female), Age (18-25, 26-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55>), Marital Status (Single, Married, Widow, Divorced), Level of Education (High School, Bachelor, Post Studies), Employment Status (Employee, Self-employed, Retired, Student, Unemployed, Other), Household income (0-10.000€, 10.001-20.000€, 20.001-30.000€, 30.001-40.000€, 40.001-50.000€, >50.000€), Time spend in social media per day (< 1 hour, 1 hour, > 1 hour, > 2 hours, > 3 hours), as well as whether they undertook a trip within the last 12 months (Yes – No).



6.5 Conclusions: chapter's significance and contribution to the study

Based on the literature review and the revealed research gaps, a number of research questions were built to fulfill dissertation's needs and objectives. Taking the form of *"is traveler's decision-making, in social media, affected by personality"* or *"is traveler's decision-making, in social media, a consequence of personality"*, survey's questions wish to explain the causes and consequences of the phenomenon of Big Five personality traits, in social media use for travel planning. To achieve this goal a questionnaire developed and distributed, in digital form and via e-mail, to participants of two travel databases. The questionnaire includes four parts: personality measurement, travel planning measurement, self-congruity measurement, and participants' characteristics measurement. Travel planning and self-congruity measurements were developed in a comparative form, between UGC and MGC utilization and impact. The data collected include 582 valid answers, which utilized in the following analysis of the thesis results.



Chapter 7

Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

7.1 Introduction

The role of personality and self-congruity, on the social media travel decision-making, is investigated in the current chapter. The answers, collected by the online research, are analyzed and discussed in this part of the thesis. At first are presented the data referred to the sample's profile, namely the demographics of the participants. Next, are given the variables of the study. The initial elements were factor analyzed, and the variables which resulted were incorporated in the analysis of the collected data. The final components include: personality, travel planning, self-congruity and posting variables.

Paired-sample and independent-sample t tests were incorporated in the analysis of the Travel Planning Process, and the results are given in the corresponding part. Self-congruity examined via regression tests and outcomes are given part. Results were further examined for gender and age implications. Several studies indicate the role of gender and age differences on internet and social media usage, as well as differences in personality implications (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2000; 2010; Guadagno et al. 2008; Correa et al., 2010; Dunn et al. 2012; Kalmus et al., 2011; Moore et al., 2012; Muscanell et al., 2012).

The outcomes that revealed from the analysis, are summarized and presented in chapter conclusions.

7.2 Participants Profile

Participants were mainly Europeans (73.7%). Men represented 41.6% of the sample, while women the 58.4%. The majority of the participants were single (60.7%), aged between 25-34 (44.8%), hold at least undergraduate education (52.2%), employees (46.4%), and with income up to 10.000€ (42.6%). They travel up to 3 times per year (75.8%), with the 88.3% of them to have traveled within the last 12 months, while they pass at least one hour per day in social media (74.4%). Participants' demographics are presented in details in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Participants' Demographics

	Frequency	%
Origin		
<i>Asia Pacific</i>	39	6,7
<i>Europe</i>	429	73,7
<i>Latin America</i>	30	5,2
<i>Middle East and Africa</i>	11	1,9
<i>North America</i>	73	12,5
Gender		
<i>Men</i>	242	41,6
<i>Women</i>	340	58,4
Age		
<i>18-24</i>	122	21
<i>25-34</i>	261	44,8
<i>35-44</i>	174	29,9
<i>45-54</i>	21	3,6
<i>55></i>	4	,7
Marital Status		
<i>Single</i>	353	60,7
<i>Married</i>	217	37,3
<i>Widow</i>	2	,3
<i>Divorced</i>	10	1,7
Education		
<i>High School</i>	227	39
<i>Undergraduate</i>	304	52,2
<i>Post-graduate</i>	51	8,8

Employment Status		
<i>Employee</i>	311	53,4
<i>Self-employed</i>	171	29,4
<i>Retired</i>	2	0,3
<i>Student</i>	75	12,9
<i>Unemployed</i>	21	3,6
<i>Other</i>	2	0,3
Household income		
<i>0-10.000€</i>	124	21,3
<i>10.001-20.000€</i>	208	35,7
<i>20.001-30.000€</i>	116	19,9
<i>30.001-40.000€</i>	75	12,9
<i>40.001-50.000€</i>	27	4,6
<i>>50.000€</i>	32	5,5
Time spend in social media per day		
<i><1 hour</i>	149	25,6
<i>1 hour</i>	90	15,5
<i>>1 hour</i>	113	19,4
<i>>2 hours</i>	110	18,9
<i>>3 hours</i>	120	20,6
How many times do you travel per year?		
<i>0-3</i>	441	75,8
<i>4-6</i>	91	15,6
<i>7></i>	50	8,6
Traveled within the last 12 months		
<i>Yes</i>	514	88,3
<i>No</i>	68	11,7



7.3 Descriptive and Factor Analysis of the Key Research Variables

The next sections are dedicated to the description of the variables' transformation of the personality, the travel planning, the self-congruity and the posting/non-posting factors. The initial questions were transformed in order to receive the final variables, which incorporated in data analysis.

7.3.1 Personality Variables

Exploratory factor analysis with principal components and varimax rotation was applied on the 25 items of personality questions, since this is the recommended method for personality measurement (Laher, 2010; Tsao, 2010). The value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (0.88) and the significance of Bartlett's test of Sphericity (.000) indicate that the items were appropriate for factor analysis. Reliability analysis was also conducted, in order to test the robustness of personality constructs. All Alphas were above the required score of 0.7, which confirms the internal consistency of each construct. Results are presented in Table 7.2. The resulted factors constitute the five components of the Big Five Model. Neuroticism is Factor 1, Openness-to-experience is Factor 2, Extraversion is Factor 3, Agreeableness is Factor 4, and Conscientiousness is Factor 5. The five factors explain 56.8 per cent of the total variance.

Next, the personality items (five statements), which reflect each of the five personality constructs, were added, transforming the ordinal variables of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness-to-experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness into scale variables. The mean values of the scale variables were used as the cut-off values of each variable, and the constructs were divided into groups with low and high personality impact. Table 7.3 shows the mean values and the frequencies of the personality's low and high constructs. These are the personality variables which utilized in the analysis of data.



Table 7.2 Factor Analysis – Personality

Personality items	Factor loading				
	1	2	3	4	5
Neuroticism					
I get stressed out easily	.816				
I worry about things	.788				
I fear for the worst	.831				
I am filled with doubts about things	.761				
I panic easily	.731				
Extraversion					
I talk a lot to different people at parties		.783			
I feel comfortable around people		.820			
I start conversations		.873			
I make friends easily		.841			
I don't mind being the center of attention		.725			
Openness-to-experience					
I get excited by new ideas			.791		
I enjoy thinking about things			.736		
I enjoy hearing new ideas			.835		
I enjoy looking for a deeper meaning in things			.646		
I have a vivid imagination			.663		
Agreeableness					
I sympathize with others' feelings				.676	
I am concerned about others				.740	
I respect others				.687	
I believe that others have good intentions				.844	
I trust what people say				.741	
Conscientiousness					
I carry out my plans					.633
I pay attention to details					.692
I am always prepared					.789
I make plans and stick to them					.757
I am exacting in my work					.688
Eigenvalue	3.090	2.953	2.721	2.281	2.515
% of Variance – 56,8%	61.791	59.056	54.430	45.624	50.303
Cronbach's Alpha	.844	.784	.812	.812	.758



Table 7.3 Personality Variables

Personality items	Mean	Frequency	%
Neuroticism	2.91		
<i>Low (non-neurotic)</i>		275	47,3
<i>High (neurotic)</i>		307	52,7
Extraversion	3.46		
<i>Low (introvert)</i>		275	47,3
<i>High (extravert)</i>		307	52,7
Openness-to-experience	4.26		
<i>Low (non-open)</i>		295	50,7
<i>High (open)</i>		287	49,3
Agreeableness	3.82		
<i>Low (non-agreeable)</i>		316	54,3
<i>High (agreeable)</i>		266	45,7
Conscientiousness	3.63		
<i>Low (non-conscientious)</i>		320	55
<i>High (conscientious)</i>		262	45



7.3.2 Travel Planning Variables

Exploratory factor analysis was also performed for the questions related to the travel planning variables. Table 7.4 and 7.5 present the factor analysis of the corresponding questions of UGC and MGC impact, respectively. The resultant factors the four stages of Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives and Purchase Decision.

Table 7.4 Factor Analysis – Travel Planning (UGC)

Users' travel posts – UGC	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
Travel Need Recognition (Need UGC)				
Inspires me to travel				.834
Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before				.837
Information Search (Info UGC)				
Helps me find travel information when I need it			.759	
Reduces my effort to find travel information			.813	
Increases the quality of travel information			.639	
Evaluation of Alternatives (Evaluation UGC)				
Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers	.646			
Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)	.825			
Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections	.605			
Purchase Decision (Purchase UGC)				
Helps me to book travel services/suppliers		.660		
Influences what to do/see at destinations		.675		
Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience		.799		
KMO – 0.896				
Eigenvalue	2.260	2.045	1.850	1.810
% of Variance – 72,4%	20.542	18.592	16.818	16.455
Cronbach's Alpha	.795	.749	.720	.767



Table 7.5 Factor Analysis – Travel Planning (MGC)

Sponsored/commercial travel posts – MGC	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
Travel Need Recognition (Need MGC)				
Inspires me to travel				.852
Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before				.816
Information Search (Info MGC)				
Helps me find travel information when I need it		.728		
Reduces my effort to find travel information		.867		
Increases the quality of travel information		.611		
Evaluation of Alternatives (Evaluation MGC)				
Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers	.534			
Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)	.740			
Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections	.767			
Purchase Decision (Purchase MGC)				
Helps me to book travel services/suppliers			.556	
Influences what to do/see at destinations			.696	
Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience			.870	
KMO – 0.891				
Eigenvalue	2.326	1.971	1.930	1.728
% of Variance – 72,3%	21.144	17.921	17.544	15.711
Cronbach's Alpha	.729	.722	.796	.744

The final travel planning variables were computed by taking the average values of the respective questions of each stage.



7.3.3 Self-Congruity Variables

Accordingly, the self-congruity questions were also factor analyzed (Table 7.6 and 7.7, respectively). The final self-congruity variables were calculated as the average of the corresponding questions related to each stage (Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives and Purchase Decision).

Table 7.6 Factor Analysis – Self-congruity Variables (Users' profiles)

Self-congruity users' profiles – SCU	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
Travel Need Recognition (Need SCU)				
Inspires me to travel				.742
Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before				.873
Information Search (Info SCU)				
Helps me find travel information when I need it			.524	
Reduces my effort to find travel information			.738	
Increases the quality of travel information			.608	
Evaluation of Alternatives (Evaluation SCU)				
Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers		.706		
Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)		.727		
Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections		.817		
Purchase Decision (Purchase SCU)				
Helps me to book travel services/suppliers	.721			
Influences what to do/see at destinations	.692			
Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience	.618			
KMO – 0.945				
Eigenvalue	2.943	2.191	2.090	1.327
% of Variance – 77,7%	26.756	19.923	18.997	12.063
Cronbach's Alpha	.813	.837	.832	.767



Table 7.7 Factor Analysis Self-congruity Variables (Corporate/brand image)

Self-congruity corporate/brand image – SCC	Factor loading			
	1	2	3	4
Travel Need Recognition (Need SCC)				
Inspires me to travel				.615
Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before				.879
Information Search (Info SCC)				
Helps me find travel information when I need it	.683			
Reduces my effort to find travel information	.665			
Increases the quality of travel information	.728			
Evaluation of Alternatives (Evaluation SCC)				
Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers			.667	
Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)			.769	
Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections			.734	
Purchase Decision (Purchase SCC)				
Helps me to book travel services/suppliers		.705		
Influences what to do/see at destinations		.722		
Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience		.750		
KMO – 0.938				
Eigenvalue	2.784	2.455	1.883	1.651
% of Variance – 79,8%	25.310	22.322	17.114	15.006
Cronbach's Alpha	.848	.862	.867	.722



7.3.4 Posting Variables

The questions related to posting and non-posting reasons were factor loaded and the generated factors are presented in Tables 7.8 and 7.9, respectively. Three factors were produced with respect to reasons which motivate individuals to post content (Company, Emotional and Consumer Reasons). Analogous, three factors were produced (No incentives/interest, Constraints/Obstacles, and Privacy/Secrecy) that refer to the reasons that travelers do not post content.

Table 7.8 Factor Analysis – Posting Reasons

Reasons that I post	Factor loading		
	1	2	3
Company reasons			
To reward a company that has done right by you	.731		
To motivate companies make improvements in their products and services	.776		
To assist retailers make better decisions about their product and services	.811		
Because giving public feedback is the best way to get companies listen	.682		
To correct the record after you see someone else’s unfair review	.447		
If a company harms me, I will harm the company	.465		
Emotional reasons			
Because it’s fun		.795	
Communication among like-minded people is a nice thing		.709	
Relive my trips		.836	
I meet nice people this way		.788	
Incentives are offered		.554	
Consumer reasons			
To help other people take decisions			.711
To share experiences on consumer reviews			.789
Because people rely on consumer reviews and posting reviews			.565
KMO – 0.799			
Eigenvalue	3.895	2.795	1.732
% of Variance – 60,2%	27.818	19.967	12.370
Cronbach’s Alpha	.764	.812	.781



Table 7.9 Factor Analysis – Non-posting Reasons

Reasons that I do not post	Factor loading		
	1	2	3
No incentives/interest			
Not interested	.652		
Lazy	.699		
Haven't thought about posting	.595		
Others do it	.559		
No incentives	.667		
Constraints/Obstacles			
Time constraints		.402	
Lack of confidence in writing		.517	
Forget		.725	
Plan on starting		.763	
Privacy/Secrecy			
Security/privacy			.614
Want to keep great places secret			.787
Embarrassed to share my experience			.677
KMO – 0.713			
Eigenvalue	3.004	1.641	1.445
% of Variance – 51%	25.033	13.676	12.040
Cronbach's Alpha	.786	.738	.778



7.4 Travel Planning Process

The current part of the dissertation presents the data analysis and the results that related to the Travel Planning Process. In order to examine if the Big Five personality traits influence the travel planning behavior, a series of independent-sample t tests were undertaken. Moreover, paired-sample t tests examined whether travel content's impact differs between UGC and MGC use and utilization. Results are presented according to the five stages of the CDM.

7.4.1 Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

A paired-sample t test was conducted to evaluate whether a statistically significant difference exists between Need Recognition defined by UGC and Need Recognition defined by MGC (Table 7.10). Results [$t(581) = 17.854, p < .00$] indicating that there is a significant difference between the two means. More precisely, the Need UGC mean ($M = 3.4, SD = .86, N = 582$) is higher than the Need MGC mean ($M = 2.73, SD = .85, N = 582$). The mean increase was 0.67, with 95% confidence interval, while the difference between the means ranged from .59 to .74. Hence, User-Generated-Content motivates people to travel more than Marketing-Generated-Content.

Table 7.10 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition

Outcome	Need UGC		Need MGC		n	95% CI for Mean Difference		r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD						
	3.40	.86	2.73	.85	582	.59	.74	.45*	17.854*	581

* $p < .000$

Independent-sample t tests performed to examine the role of personality on travel need recognition. Referring to the UGC impact (Table 7.11) neuroticism, extraversion, openness, and agreeableness gave significant results. More precisely,



neurotic group ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .84$, $N = 307$) scored higher than non-neurotic individuals ($M = 3.3$, $SD = .88$, $N = 275$), as well as extraverts ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .83$, $N = 275$) against introverts ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .88$, $N = 316$), open ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .91$, $N = 287$) against non-open ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .82$, $N = 295$) and agreeable individuals ($M = 3.49$, $SD = .92$, $N = 266$) against non-agreeable one ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .81$, $N = 316$).

Table 7.11 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition - UGC

Need Recognition UGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.30	.88	275	-.329 -			
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.49	.84	307	.049	-2.653*	580	.008
<i>Introvert</i>	3.26	.88	275	-.400 -			
<i>Extravert</i>	3.52	.83	307	.122	-3.690*	580	.000
<i>Non-open</i>	3.33	.82	295	-.266 .014	-1.966	580	.048
<i>Open</i>	3.46	.91	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.32	.81	316	-.307 -			
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.49	.91	266	.027	-2.340*	580	.020
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.40	.82	320	-.136 .147	.074	580	.941
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.39	.91	262				

Table 7.12 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition - MGC

Need Recognition MGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.62	.84	275	-.351 -			
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.83	.86	307	.074	-3.017*	580	.003
<i>Introvert</i>	2.70	.82	275	-.200 .078	-.857	580	.392
<i>Extravert</i>	2.76	.89	307				
<i>Non-open</i>	2.74	.82	295	-.114 .164	.347	580	.729
<i>Open</i>	2.72	.89	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.71	.77	316	-.176 .103	-.512	580	.609
<i>Agreeable</i>	2.75	.95	266				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.67	.79	320	-.279 -			
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.81	.92	262	.001	-1.974*	580	.049



On the other hand, personality's impact on MGC showed significance for neuroticism and conscientiousness (Table 7.12). Results from the independent-samples t tests showed that neurotic individuals ($M = 2.83$, $SD = .86$, $N = 275$) scored higher than non-neurotic ($M = 2.62$, $SD = .84$, $N = 307$), as well as conscientious ones ($M = 2.81$, $SD = .92$, $N = 262$) scored higher than non-conscientious ($M = 2.67$, $SD = .79$, $N = 320$).

Gender Implications of Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

In order to examine if any differences exist between the two genders independent-sample t tests were run. Table 7.13 presents the results of differences between men and women with respect to UGC and MGC impact on Travel Need Recognition. In both cases results were significant, while women scored higher than the men.

Women ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .82$, $N = 340$) are influenced by UGC more than men do ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .901$, $N = 242$). The same stands for the impact of MGC, where men ($M = 2.64$, $SD = .88$, $N = 242$) show to be less influenced than women ($M = 2.79$, $SD = .83$, $N = 340$). Interestingly, women scored higher than the total sample mean values (Table 7.13).

Table 7.13 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
Need UGC							
<i>Men</i>	3.25	.90	242	-.397 -.110	-3.471	486	.001
<i>Women</i>	3.50	.82	340				
Need MGC							
<i>Men</i>	2.64	.88	242	-.291 -.091	-2.096	580	.037
<i>Women</i>	2.79	.83	340				



Table 7.14 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
MEN							
Need UGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.13	.94	128	-.472 -.017	-2.116	240	.035
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.38	.84	114				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.11	.84	125	-.499 -.046	-2.371	240	.019
<i>Extravert</i>	3.41	.94	117				
Need MGC							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.53	.92	130	-.449 -.007	-2.033	240	.043
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.76	.83	112				
WOMEN							
Need UGC							
<i>Non-open</i>	3.41	.84	171	-.401 -.031	-2.298	338	.036
<i>Open</i>	3.59	.79	169				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.37	.89	166	-.397 -.049	-2.523	338	.012
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.60	.74	174				
Need MGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.69	.75	147	-.358 -.002	-1.991	338	.047
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.87	.87	193				

Considering, the personality's effect on the genders' behavior, neuroticism [$t(240) = -2.116, p < .05$] and extraversion [$t(240) = -2.371, p < .05$] drive men behavior under the UGC impact. Conscientious men [$t(240) = -2.033, p < .05$], on the other hand, are more likely to be influenced by MGC (Table 7.14). Women are influenced by UGC when are more open ($t(338) = -2.298, p < .05$) and agreeable [$t(338) = -2.528, p < .05$]. Referring to the MGC impact on Need Recognition, neurotic women [$t(338) = -1.991, p < .05$] are more likely to be influenced.



Age Implications of Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of age on the UGC and MGC impact on Need Recognition. No significant results reported for the MGC's effect. On the contrary, UGC revealed significant differences. The age group of 35-44 (Table 7.15) shows different behavior compared to the younger groups ($F(2, 554) = 3.811, p < .05$). Levene's Statistic shown homogeneity of variances (Levene's St. = .548, $p = .578$). Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the group of 35-44 ($M = 3.27, SD = .85$) was significantly different than the age groups of 18-24 ($M = 3.51, SD = .81$), and 25-34 ($M = 3.48, SD = .86$).

Table 7.15 ANOVA test, Descriptive Statistics & Post Hoc Results of Need Recognition by Age

Group	M	SD	n	Mean Difference			F	df	Sig.
				18-24	25-34	35-44			
Need UGC									
18-24	3.51	.81	122	-	ns	.236*	3.811	2, 554	.023
25-34	3.48	.86	261	ns	-	.201*			
35-44	3.28	.85	174	-.236*	-.201*	-			

* $p < .05$

From the point of view of personality, the group of 18-25 when affected by UGC includes more extravert [$t(103) = -5.046, p < .00$] and open [$t(120) = -3.259, p < .00$] (Table 7.16). On the other hand, the MGC affects neurotic [$t(78) = -2.895, p < .05$] and conscientious [$t(116) = -2.821, p < .00$] individuals, aged between 18-25. individuals aged between 26-34, are motivated to travel under the UGC impact, when having a neurotic personality [$t(259) = -1.987, p < .05$]. The age group of 35-44 is affected by UGC when individuals are more agreeable and by MGC when individuals are more neurotic and less open.



Table 7.16 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Need Recognition by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
Need UGC							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.17	.87	60				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.85	.58	62	-.947 -.413	-5.046	103	.000
<i>Non-open</i>	3.32	.78	71				
<i>Open</i>	3.78	.78	51	-.751 -.183	-3.259	120	.001
Need MGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.51	.59	32				
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.91	.85	90	-.675 -.125	-2.895	120	.015
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.64	.85	73				
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.03	.69	49	-.670 -.117	-2.821	116	.006
25-34							
Need UGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.36	.91	119				
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.57	.82	142	-.423 -.002	-1.987	259	.048
35-44							
Need UGC							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.13	.89	80				
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.41	.80	94	-.532 -.026	-2.181	172	.031
Need MGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.54	.91	105				
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.86	.91	69	-.591 -.034	-2.213	172	.028
<i>Non-open</i>	2.83	.87	76				
<i>Open</i>	2.54	.94	98	.013 -.563	2.067	172	.040

7.4.2 Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

Relatively to the Information Search stage, the results of the paired-sample t test are presented in Table 7.17. The impact of the UGC ($M = 3.56$, $SD = .7$, $N = 582$) is higher than the impact of the MGC ($M = 3.22$, $SD = .74$, $N = 582$), [$t(581) = 10.916$, $p < .00$,



two-tailed]. Therefore, UGC is more effective than MGC, when people search for travel information.

Table 7.17 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search

Outcome	Info UGC		Info MGC		n	95% CI for Mean Difference		r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD						
	3.56	.71	3.22	.74	582	.27	.39	.50*	10.916*	581

* $p < .000$

Table 7.18 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search - UGC

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.46	.69	275	-.291 -	-3.042*	580	.002
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.64	.71	307	.063			
<i>Introvert</i>	3.48	.78	275	-.243 -	-2.205*	580	.028
<i>Extravert</i>	3.61	.63	307	.014			
<i>Non-open</i>	3.52	.66	295	-.172 .057	-.984	580	.326
<i>Open</i>	3.58	.75	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.49	.61	316	-.241 -	-2.163*	580	.031
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.62	.81	266	.012			
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.61	.66	320	.020 .250	2.312	580	.021
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.48	.75	262				

Almost, all the personality traits interfere on the information search through the UGC (Table 7.18). Neuroticism [$t(580) = -3.042$, $p < .005$], extraversion [$t(580) = -2.205$, $p < .05$], agreeableness [$t(580) = -2.163$, $p < .05$], and conscientiousness [$t(580) = 2.312$, $p < .05$], all play role on information search through the UGC. More precisely, the individuals who influenced by the UGC, during travel information search, are neurotic, extravert, and agreeable, and non-conscientious. However, the MGC's impact on the information seeking is only influenced by neuroticism [$t(580) = -3.324$, $p < .005$] (Table 7.19).



Table 7.19 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search - MGC

MGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.12	.78	275	-.323 - .083	-3.324*	580	.001
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.32	.69	307				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.22	.75	275	-.135 .106	-.234	580	.815
<i>Extravert</i>	3.23	.74	307				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.20	.69	295	-.159 .082	-.621	580	.535
<i>Open</i>	3.24	.78	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.21	.68	316	-.146 .096	-.402	580	.688
<i>agreeable</i>	3.24	.81	266				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.19	.71	320	-.187 - .055	1.065	580	.287
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.26	.98	262				

Gender Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

The independent-sample t tests gave significant differences between the two genders. Women influenced by social media content more than men, both under the impact of the UGC [$t(580) = -2.049, p < .05$] and the MGC's impact [$t(464) = -2.295, p < .05$] (Table 7.20), when searching for travel information.

Concerning the personality traits that drive the behavior of men and women, extravert [$t(234) = -2.422, p < .05$] and neurotic [$t(338) = -2.424, p < .05$] men, as well as non-conscientious women [$t(338) = 3.982, p < .00$] are those who are affected by UGC when searching for travel information (Table 7.21). On the other side, neurotic [$t(239) = -2.211, p < .05$] and conscientious [$t(240) = -2.237, p < .05$] men, and neurotic [$t(338) = -2.218, p < .05$] women are more likely to be influenced by the MGC during the search stage.



Table 7.20 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
Info UGC								
<i>Men</i>	3.48	.74	242	-.239	-.003	-2.049	580	.041
<i>Women</i>	3.61	.67	340					
Info MGC								
<i>Men</i>	3.14	.81	242	-.272	-.021	-2.295	464	.022
<i>Women</i>	3.28	.68	340					

Table 7.21 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
MEN								
Info UGC								
<i>Introvert</i>	3.37	.81	125	-.413	-.042	-2.422	234	.016
<i>Extravert</i>	3.61	.65	117					
Info MGC								
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.03	.86	128	-.427	-.025	-2.211	239	.028
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.26	.72	114					
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.03	.84	130	-.434	-.027	-2.237	240	.026
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.26	.75	112					
WOMEN								
Info UGC								
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.51	.61	147	-.322	-.033	-2.424	338	.016
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.68	.71	193					
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.73	.59	190	.148	.439	3.982	338	.000
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.44	.73	150					
Info MGC								
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.19	.69	147	-.312	-.019	-2.218	338	.027
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.36	.67	193					



Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

A one-way ANOVA analysis did not reveal any significant differences among the age groups, with respect to the UGC's or MGC's impact, on the information search. However, the investigation of the personality traits that influence the behavior of different ages showed that extraversion, conscientiousness and openness drive the decisions of younger people, while neuroticism and agreeableness induce the behavior of older age groups (Table 7.22).

Table 7.22 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
Info UGC							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.45	.62	60	-.592 -.008	-2.579	120	.011
<i>Extravert</i>	3.73	.55	62				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.69	.60	73	.042 .475	2.362	120	.020
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.44	.58	49				
Info MGC							
<i>Non-open</i>	3.16	.74	71	-.674 -.169	-3.309	120	.001
<i>Open</i>	3.58	.62	51				
25-34							
Info UGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.43	.70	119	-.454 -.100	-3.087	259	.002
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.71	.74	142				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.44	.66	140	-.487 -.136	-3.493	259	.001
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.75	.78	121				
35-44							
Info UGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.13	.81	105	-.431 -.008	-2.045	169	.042
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.35	.60	69				



Individuals, between 18-24 years, are influenced by UGC, when they are extravert [$t(120) = -2.579, p < .05$] and non-conscientious [$t(120) = 2.362, p < .05$], while they are influenced by the MGC when they are open-to-experience [$t(120) = -3.309, p < .00$]. On the other hand, neuroticism [$t(259) = -3.087, p < .00$] and agreeableness [$t(259) = -3.493, p < .00$] govern the behavior of the 25-34 age group, relatively to the UGC's impact on information search. The neuroticism [$t(169) = -2.045, p < .05$] is also driving the decisions of the 35-44 age group, with respect to the UGC's impact on the social media travel information search.

Remarkably, although agreeableness is an influential factor in the total sample, relatively to the UGC's impact, it was not revealed as a significant trait in gender analysis. However, agreeableness affects the age group of 25-34. A further investigation showed that there exist differences between the two genders within this age group (Table 7.23). Furthermore, conscientiousness, which didn't appear in the total sample's analysis relatively to the MGC's impact, characterizes men between 18-24 years old. Conscientious men of 18-24 ($M = 3.42, SD = .55, N = 22$) are more likely to be influenced by MGC than non-conscientious men of the same age ($M = 2.87, SD = 1.0, N = 26$) when searching for travel information [$t(40) = -2.418, p < .05$].

Table 7.23 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Information Search by Gender & Age

Group Info UGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
25-34							
Men							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.41	.67	62	-.613 -.010	-2.051	105	.043
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.73	.89	45				
Women							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.46	.65	78	-.522 -.089	-2.792	152	.006
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.77	.71	76				



7.4.3 Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

With respect to the stage of the Evaluation of Alternatives, individuals influenced more by the UGC (M= 3.70, SD= .74) than by MGC (M= 3.21, SD= .74), [t(581) = 14.652, $p < .00$] (Table 7.24). Openness [t(580) = -2.137, $p < .05$], and agreeableness [t(581) = -2.411, $p < .05$] are the indicators of the UGC's impact on Evaluation of Alternatives (Table 7.25), while none of the personality traits had significant influence on the MGC's impact in this stage (Table 7.26).

Table 7.24 Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives

Outcome	Evaluation UGC		Evaluation MGC		n	95% CI for Mean Difference	r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD					
	3.70	.74	3.21	.74	582	.43 .56	.40*	14.652*	581

* $p < .000$

Table 7.25 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives - UGC

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.72	.76	307	-.173 .067	-.862	580	.389
<i>Introvert</i>	3.66	.77	275				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.73	.71	307	-.191 .049	-1.163	580	.245
<i>Non-open</i>	3.63	.70	295	-.250 -			
<i>Open</i>	3.76	.77	287	.010	-2.137	580	.033
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.63	.66	316	-.267 -			
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.78	.82	266	.027	-2.411	580	.016
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.70	.66	320				
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.69	.83	262	-.114 .127	.104	580	.917



Table 7.26 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives - MGC

MGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.18	.73	275	-.178 .062	-.942*	580	.346
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.23	.75	307				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.20	.77	275	-.134 .106	-.229	580	.819
<i>Extravert</i>	3.21	.71	307				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.16	.72	295	-.215 .025	-1.557	580	.120
<i>Open</i>	3.25	.75	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.19	.67	316	-.149 .092	-.469	580	.639
<i>agreeable</i>	3.22	.81	266				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.16	.68	320	-.229 .011	-1.772	580	.077
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.27	.79	262				

Gender Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

Findings didn't show that there exist significant differences between genders, relatively to the UGC's impact on travel alternatives evaluation. On the contrary, significant differences between women and men appeared with respect to the MGC impact with women to be influenced more [$t(474) = -1.964, p < .05$] (Table 7.27).

Table 7.27 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
Evaluation MGC							
<i>Men</i>	3.13	.79	242	-.248 .000	-1.964	474	.045
<i>Women</i>	3.26	.69	340				



Considering the personality's influence on the evaluation of travel alternatives, open [$t(240) = -2.081, p < .05$] and agreeable [$t(240) = -2.066, p < .05$] men are influenced by UGC, while women did not show, in this case, any significant influence by the personality traits (Table 7.28). In contrast, both genders are driven by conscientiousness relatively to the MGC's impact. However, men and women again have differences, since those who are affected by MGC when examining diverse travel choices are conscientious men [$t(240) = -2.566, p < .05$] and non-conscientious women [$t(338) = 2.167, p < .05$].

Table 7.28 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
MEN							
Evaluation UGC							
<i>Non-open</i>	3.52	.67	124	-.344 -.009	-2.081	240	.022
<i>Open</i>	3.74	.79	118				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.55	.66	150	-.391 -.009	-2.066	240	.040
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.75	.84	92				
Evaluation MGC							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.52	.67	130	-.426 -.056	-2.566	240	.011
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.76	.79	112				
WOMEN							
Evaluation MGC							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.83	.61	190	.016 .343	2.167	338	.031
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.65	.85	150				

Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The one-way ANOVA analysis of the age factor didn't show any significant differences among the groups. Concerning the personality's influence, on the other hand, results have detected a few differences among the three groups. First,



participants between 18-24 are influenced by the UGC when they are extraverts [$t(120) = -3.593$, $p < .00$] and open [$t(120) = 2.149$, $p < .05$], while when they are conscientious [$t(120) = -2.935$, $p < .00$] are affected by the MGC. Conversely, individuals between 25-34 years old are influenced by the UGC when they are agreeable [$t(259) = -3.850$, $p < .00$], while older participants didn't show any significant personality influence (Table 7.29).

Table 7.29 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
Evaluation UGC							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.48	.71	60	-.651 -.188	-3.593	120	.000
<i>Extravert</i>	3.90	.58	62				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.59	.63	71	-.505 -.021	-2.149	120	.034
<i>Open</i>	3.85	.71	51				
Evaluation MGC							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.06	.74	73	-.661 -.128	-2.935	120	.004
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.45	.72	49				
25-34							
Evaluation UGC							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.62	.61	140	-.506 -.163	-3.850	259	.000
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.96	.79	121				

A general look of the evaluation results with respect to the personality, shows that conscientiousness is an effective trait for both men and women relatively to the MGC's impact. However, conscientiousness is not significant when the whole sample is under consideration. moreover, conscientiousness influences also the age group of 18-24. Given these, additional independent-sample t tests were undertaken, combining the gender and the age groups in the analysis. Results revealed that men, between 18-24, and women, between 35-44, are those who influenced by



conscientiousness when evaluating travel alternatives in social media (Table 7.30). Additionally, extravert women, between 18-24, ($M = 4.01$, $SD = .59$, $N = 45$) are more sensitive to the UGC's impact than introverts of the same age ($M = 3.66$, $SD = .595$, $N = 29$), [$t(72) = -2.530$, $p < .05$].

Table 7.30 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Evaluation of Alternatives by Age & Gender

Group Evaluation MGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
Men / 18-24							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.79	.92	26	-1.11 -.055	-2.222	46	.031
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.38	.89	22				
Women / 35-44							
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.13	.73	49	-.652 -.063	-2.410	99	.018
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.49	.76	52				

7.4.4 Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

In the stage of the Purchase Decision, the paired sample t-tests, gave significant difference between the scores of UGC ($M = 3.64$, $SD = .72$) and MGC ($M = 3.34$, $SD = .80$); [$t(581) = 8.943$, $p < .00$]. Therefore, UGC is once again the dominant parameter in decision-making (Table 7.31).

Table 7.31 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision

Outcome	Purchase UGC		Purchase MGC		n	95% CI for Mean Difference	r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD					
	3.64	.72	3.34	.80	582	.23 .36	.44*	8.943*	581

* $p < .000$



Table 7.32 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision - UGC

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.57	.70	275	-.250 - .016	-2.233*	580	.026
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.70	.73	307				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.61	.71	275	-.163 .072	-.765	580	.445
<i>Extravert</i>	3.66	.73	307				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.63	.66	295	-.134 .101	-.274	580	.784
<i>Open</i>	3.65	.77	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.55	.65	316	-.313 - .080	-3.315*	580	.001
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.74	.78	266				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.68	.67	320	-.032 .203	1.430	580	.153
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.59	.78	262				

Table 7.33 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision - MGC

MGC	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.26	.79	275	-.273 - .013	-2.158*	580	.031
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.41	.80	307				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.33	.83	275	-.140 .121	-.145	580	.885
<i>Extravert</i>	3.34	.78	307				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.36	.77	295	-.093 .168	.567	580	.571
<i>Open</i>	3.32	.83	287				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.34	.78	316	-.119 .142	.174	580	.862
<i>agreeable</i>	3.33	.83	266				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.29	.74	320	-.237 .024	-1.600	580	.110
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.40	.86	262				

In order to test the influence of personality on the impact of UGC and MGC on Purchase Decision, independent samples t-tests were conducted. Referring to the UGC's impact, statistical significance was reported about the neuroticism [$t(580) = -2.233, p < .05$], and the agreeableness [$t(580) = -3.315, p < .05$] traits (Table 7.32).



with respect to the MGC's impact, results point that the neuroticism is the only indicator of personality [$t(580) = -2.158, p < .05$] (Table 7.33).

Gender Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

As shown in Table 7.34, women are more sensitive to social media content than men concerning the purchasing decisions. With regard to the UGC's impact, the difference of the two mean values is equal to MD = .22 [$t(580) = -3.651, p < .00$], while in the case of the MGC's impact the means' difference is MD = .29 [$t(462) = -4.344, p < .00$], with women to overtake men in both cases.

Table 7.34 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
Purchase UGC							
<i>Men</i>	3.51	.74	242	-.336 -.101	-3.651	580	.000
<i>Women</i>	3.73	.69	340				
Purchase C							
<i>Men</i>	3.17	.86	242	-.430 -.162	-4.344	462	.000
<i>Women</i>	3.46	.73	340				

From the point of view of the personality's influence, those who are affected by the UGC are the agreeable men [$t(240) = -2.880, p < .00$] and non-neurotic women [$t(580) = 2.450, p < .05$]. Neurotic men, are also affected by the MGC, when making purchase decisions in social media [$t(240) = -2.256, p < .05$] (Table 7.35).



Table 7.35 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
MEN							
Purchase UGC							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.40	.68	150	-.466 -.087	-2.880	240	.004
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.68	.79	92				
Purchase MGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.05	.88	128	-.467 -.032	-2.256	240	.025
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.30	.83	114				
WOMEN							
Purchase UGC							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.81	.61	147	.037 .343	2.450	338	.015
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.62	.78	193				

Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

The one-way ANOVA didn't show any significant differences among the age groups about purchasing behavior. However, participants vary, according to their age, on the personality's traits that influence them (Table 7.36). The UGC affects agreeable people in the age groups of 18-24 and 25-34, while the MGC affects neurotic individuals aged between 25 and 34.

Table 7.36 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Decision by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
Purchase UGC							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.52	.52	81	-.524 -.113	-3.075	120	.003
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.84	.58	41				



25-34								
Purchase UGC								
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.59	.68	140					
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.88	.72	121	-.470	-.127	-3.438	259	.001
Purchase MGC								
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.28	.80	119					
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.71	.76	142	-.702	-.133	-2.907	259	.004

7.4.5 Personality Association with UGC contribution during Travel Post-Decision Behavior

Concerning the post-decision behavior of the travelers, with respect to social media use and exploitation, the research focused on whether users posting content about their holiday experiences. To the question “*Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?*” 274 of the respondents (47%) answered that post content, while 308 (53%) of them stated that do not post. Referring to the type of information (destination or accommodation) provided by the tourists, participants' answers are given, in percentages, in Table 7.37.

Table 7.37 Type of travel content provided by users

Frequency	I write comments/reviews about the destination	I write comments/reviews about the accommodation
Rarely	20,1%	34,8%
Sometimes	54,9%	41%
Very Often	20,5%	15,4%
Always	4,4%	8,8%

Table 7.38 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Type of Content

Outcome	I write comments/reviews about the destination		I write comments/reviews about the accommodation		n	95% CI for Mean Difference		r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD						
	2.09	.76	1.98	.92	274	.01	.21	.51*	2.157*	272

* $p < .05$



A paired-sample t test between the types of content, resulted in a significant difference between destination and accommodation postings, with the destination's posts to slightly exceed the posts related to tourists' accommodation (Table 7.38). Comparing the three factors (Consumers, Companies, and Emotions) that motivate people to publish travel content, the Consumers factor ($M = 3.73$, $SD = .78$) found to be the most influential one, followed by factors of Companies ($M = 3.51$, $SD = .72$) and Emotions ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .79$). Regarding factors that discourage people to post online the lack of Interest/Incentives is the dominant reason ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .70$), other Constraints/Obstacles is the next discouraging reason ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .72$) followed by the Privacy/Secrecy factor ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .85$).

Table 7.39 Results of Chi-square Test & Descriptive Statistics for “Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?” by Personality

Group	Do you post		χ^2	phi
	Yes	No		
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	117 (20.1%)	158 (27.1%)	4.301 (.038)	-.086 (.038)
<i>Neurotic</i>	157 (27%)	150 (25.8%)		
<i>Non-open</i>	112 (19.2%)	183 (31.4%)	19.940 (.000)	-.185 (.000)
<i>Open</i>	162 (27.8%)	125 (21.5%)		
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	135 (23.2%)	181 (31.1%)	5.269 (.022)	-.095 (.022)
<i>Agreeable</i>	139 (23.9%)	127 (21.8%)		

Chi-square tests examined whether personality influences the posting behavior. Table 7.39 reports the significant results. Personality's influence on posting behavior is determined by neuroticism ($\chi^2 = 4.301$, $p < .05$), openness ($\chi^2 = 19.940$, $p < .000$), and agreeableness ($\chi^2 = 5.269$, $p < .05$). All phi-coefficients are negative, hence, neurotic, open and agreeable individuals are those who post online, and non-neurotic, non-open and non-agreeable individuals are those who do not post. Posting behavior, related to the destination information, is influenced by extraversion [$t(271) = -2.007$, $p < .05$], while posting about accommodation is influenced by extraversion [$t(271) = -3.168$, $p < .00$], and conscientiousness [$t(271) = -3.383$, $p < .00$] (Tables 7.40 and 7.41, respectively).



Table 7.40 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Destination

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.05	.82	117				
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.12	.71	157	-.253 .112	-.759	271	.449
<i>Introvert</i>	1.99	.72	124				
<i>Extravert</i>	2.17	.79	150	-.363 - .002	-2.007	271	.046
<i>Non-open</i>	2.20	.75	112				
<i>Open</i>	2.02	.76	162	-.004 .363	1.931	271	.055
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.07	.75	135				
<i>Agreeable</i>	2.11	.77	139	-.216 .147	-.376	271	.707
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.11	.74	148				
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.07	.79	126	-.146 .218	.391	271	.696

Table 7.41 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Accommodation

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	1.99	.99	117				
<i>Neurotic</i>	1.97	.89	157	-.206 .240	.151	271	.880
<i>Introvert</i>	1.79	.86	124				
<i>Extravert</i>	2.14	.95	150	-.568 - .133	-3.168	271	.002
<i>Non-open</i>	1.90	.75	112				
<i>Open</i>	2.04	.76	162	-.360 .088	-1.195	271	.233
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	1.99	.95	135				
<i>Agreeable</i>	1.98	.77	139	-.214 .228	.062	271	.951
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	1.81	.84	148				
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.18	.98	126	-.590 - .156	-3.383	271	.001

Relatively to the personality's impact on posting behavior, the Companies factor is influenced by neuroticism [$t(272) = -2.378, p < .05$] and extraversion [$t(272) = -2.466, p < .05$] (Table 7.42), the Emotions factor by neuroticism [$t(272) = -2.691, p < .00$], extraversion [$t(272) = -2.249, p < .05$] and non-openness [$t(272) = 2.068, p < .05$]



(Table 7.43), while the Consumers factor by extraversion [$t(272) = -2.046, p < .05$] (Table 7.44).

Table 7.42 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Companies

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.39	.72	117	-.379 - .036	-2.378	272	.018
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.60	.71	157				
<i>Introvert</i>	3.41	.75	124	-.384 - .043	-2.466	272	.014
<i>Extravert</i>	3.61	.69	150				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.51	.52	112	-.169 .154	-.092	270	.927
<i>Open</i>	3.52	.83	162				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.50	.71	135	-.195 .148	-.275	272	.784
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.53	.73	139				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.44	.63	148	-.329 .021	-1.737	235	.084
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.61	.81	126				

Table 7.43 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Emotions

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.87	.85	117	-.442 - .069	-2.691	272	.008
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.12	.74	157				
<i>Introvert</i>	2.90	.83	124	-.399 - .026	-2.249	272	.025
<i>Extravert</i>	3.11	.74	150				
<i>Non-open</i>	3.14	.74	112	.009 .388	2.068	272	.040
<i>Open</i>	2.94	.81	162				
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.01	.71	135	-.202 .171	-.164	265	.870
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.03	.86	139				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.97	.82	148	-.301 .074	-1.188	272	.236
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.08	.75	126				

On the other hand, the non-posting behavior is influenced by non-neuroticism [$t(306) = 2.654, p < .00$] and introversion [$t(306) = 2.146, p < .05$] relatively to the no



Incentives/Interest factor (Table 7.46), by non-openness [$t(225) = 2.830, p < .00$] relatively to the Constraints/Obstacles factor (Table 7.46), and by non-openness [$t(306) = 2.959, p < .00$] and non-agreeableness [$t(306) = 2.181, p < .05$] relatively to the Privacy/Secrecy factor (Table 7.47).

Table 7.44 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Consumers

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.71	.76	117					
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.74	.79	157	-.215	.159	.768	272	.768
<i>Introvert</i>	3.63	.84	124	-.376				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.82	.71	150	.007		-2.046	272	.042
<i>Non-open</i>	3.74	.60	112					
<i>Open</i>	3.72	.88	162	-.166	.209	.245	272	.807
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.67	.78	135					
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.79	.77	139	-.302	.067	-1.254	272	.211
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.71	.73	148					
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.77	.82	126	-.262	.108	-.814	271	.416

Table 7.45 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of No Incentives/Interest

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.34	.72	158					
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.13	.68	150	.018	.055	2.654	306	.008
<i>Introvert</i>	3.43	.70	151					
<i>Extravert</i>	3.22	.69	157	.015	.047	2.146	306	.034
<i>Non-open</i>	3.26	.63	138					
<i>Open</i>	3.19	.80	125	-.302	.067	1.800	306	.387
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.23	.65	181	-.172				
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.24	.78	127	.159		-.074	240	.941
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.30	.69	172					
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.15	.71	136	-.013	.304	1.808	306	.072



Table 7.46 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Constraints/Obstacles

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.71	.72	158				
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.84	.71	150	-.215 .159	-1.534	306	.126
<i>Introvert</i>	2.79	.74	151				
<i>Extravert</i>	2.76	.69	157	-.124 .197	.450	306	.653
<i>Non-open</i>	2.83	.71	183				
<i>Open</i>	2.59	.71	125	.014 .311	2.830	225	.005
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.78	.75	181				
<i>Agreeable</i>	2.77	.66	127	-.155 .171	.096	306	.924
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.82	.70	172				
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.71	.74	136	-.048 .274	1.377	306	.170

Table 7.47 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Privacy/Secrecy

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.58	.85	158				
<i>Neurotic</i>	2.72	.84	150	-.336 .043	-1.519	306	.130
<i>Introvert</i>	2.79	.83	151				
<i>Extravert</i>	2.76	.86	157	-.099 .280	.934	306	.351
<i>Non-open</i>	2.83	.80	183				
<i>Open</i>	2.53	.89	125	.001 .384	2.959	306	.003
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.73	.81	181				
<i>Agreeable</i>	2.52	.88	127	.021 .404	2.181	306	.030
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	2.66	.88	172				
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.63	.81	136	-.156 .227	.363	306	.717

Gender Implications of Personality Association with UGC contribution during Travel Post-Decision Behavior

The 45,9% of men (111) and the 47,9% of women (163) answered that they post content, while the 54,1% of men (131) and the 52,1% of women (177) answered that



they don't post. The answers about the type of content, are given in Table 7.48.

Table 7.48 Type of travel content provided by users by Gender

Frequency	I write comments/reviews about the destination	I write comments/reviews about the accommodation
MEN		
Rarely	16,2%	33,3%
Sometimes	64,9%	41,4%
Very Often	15,3%	18,0%
Always	3,6%	7,2%
WOMEN		
Rarely	22,7%	35,6%
Sometimes	47,9%	40,5%
Very Often	24,5%	13,5%
Always	4,9%	10,4%

Table 7.49 Results of t-test & Descriptive Statistics of Type of Content by Gender

Outcome	I write comments/reviews about the destination		I write comments/reviews about the accommodation		n	95% CI for Mean Difference		r	t	df
	M	SD	M	SD						
WOMEN										
	2.12	.81	1.99	.96	163	.01	.25	.65*	2.179*	272

* $p < .05$

As shown in Table 7.49, only women present significant differences between destination and accommodation content posts [$t(272) = 2.179, p < .05$]. The independent-sample t tests for content's type didn't reveal any significant results between men and women. Regarding the personality traits which affect men' and women' willingness to publish travel content, these are neuroticism ($\chi^2 = 4.309, p < .05$ for women), openness [$\chi^2 = 18.971, p < .00$ for men) and ($\chi^2 = 4.695, p < .05$ for women)], and agreeableness ($\chi^2 = 4.299, p < .05$ for men). The negative sign of the



phi coefficient implies that all traits are positively correlated with the intention to post (Table 7.50).

Table 7.50 Results of Chi-square Test & Descriptive Statistics for “Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?” by Personality & Gender

Group	Do you post		χ^2	phi
	Yes	No		
MEN				
<i>Non-open</i>	40 (16.5%)	84 (34.7%)	18.971 (.000)	-.280 (.000)
<i>Open</i>	71 (29.3%)	47 (19.4%)		
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	61 (25.2%)	89 (36.8%)	4.299 (.038)	-.133 (.038)
<i>Agreeable</i>	50 (20.7%)	42 (17.4%)		
WOMEN				
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	61 (17.9%)	86 (25.3%)	4.309 (.038)	-.113 (.038)
<i>Neurotic</i>	102 (30%)	91 (26.8%)		
<i>Non-open</i>	72 (21.2%)	99 (29.1%)	4.695 (.030)	-.118 (.030)
<i>Open</i>	91 (26.8%)	78 (22.9%)		

Consumers is the most important posting stimulus for men ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .80$, $N = 111$), as well as for women ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .76$, $N = 163$), followed by Companies [($M = 3.58$, $SD = .68$, $N = 111$ for men) and ($M = 3.47$, $SD = .75$, $N = 163$ for women)] and Emotions [($M = 2.81$, $SD = .85$, $N = 111$ for men) and ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .71$, $N = 163$ for women)]. No incentives/interest is the most important non-posting factor for men ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .80$, $N = 131$) and women ($M = 2.71$, $SD = .62$, $N = 177$). For men second comes the factor of Privacy/Secrecy ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .80$, $N = 131$), followed by Constraints/Obstacles ($M = 2.64$, $SD = .74$, $N = 131$), while for women second comes the factor of Constraints/Obstacles ($M = 2.88$, $SD = .68$, $N = 177$) and last the Privacy/Secrecy ($M = 2.61$, $SD = .87$, $N = 177$). Table 7.51 presents the significant differences between the two genders relatively to the posting/non-posting factors. These differences refer to the posting factor of Emotions [$t(208) = -3.597$, $p < .00$], and the non-posting factor of Constraints/Obstacles [$t(306) = -2.970$, $p < .00$].



Table 7.51 Results of t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Posting/Non-Posting Factors by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
Emotions							
<i>Men</i>	2.81	.85	111	-.545 -.166	-3.597	208	.000
<i>Women</i>	3.16	.71	163				
Constraints/Obstacles							
<i>Men</i>	2.64	.74	131	-.402 -.082	-2.970	306	.003
<i>Women</i>	2.88	.68	177				

Table 7.52 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Destination/Accommodation by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
MEN							
Accommodation							
<i>Non-open</i>	1.70	.79	40	-.798 -.112	-2.626	109	.010
<i>Open</i>	2.15	.92	71				
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	1.71	.74	59	-.917 -.275	-3.675	109	.000
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.31	.96	52				
WOMEN							
Destination							
<i>Non-open</i>	2.26	.84	72	.014 .514	2.082	161	.039
<i>Open</i>	2.00	.78	91				
Accommodation							
<i>Introvert</i>	1.66	.79	67	-.850 -.274	-3.848	161	.000
<i>Extravert</i>	2.22	.99	96				

Personality traits was not found to influence men' willingness to publish content related to the destination, while accommodation content is influenced by openness [t(109) = -2.626, p < .05] and conscientiousness [t(109) = -3.675, p < .00]. Women,



who post destination content, are characterized by non-openness [$t(161) = 2.082, p < .05$] and extraversion [$t(161) = -3.848, p < .00$] (Table 7.52). Related to the posting incentives, extraversion [$t(109) = -2.066, p < .05$] and conscientiousness [$t(109) = -2.514, p < .05$] affect the Companies factor, neuroticism [$t(109) = -2.994, p < .00$] and non-openness [$t(109) = 3.706, p < .00$] the Emotions factor and extraversion [$t(99) = -2.339, p < .05$] the Consumers factor, for men. For women, neuroticism [$t(108) = -3.331, p < .00$] affects the Companies factor and extraversion [$t(161) = -2.499, p < .05$] the Emotions factor (Table 7.53).

Table 7.53 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Posting Factors by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	Df	Sig.
MEN							
Companies							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.44	.54	57				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.71	.79	54	-.514 -.011	-2.066	109	.041
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.43	.63	59				
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.74	.69	52	-.567 -.067	-2.514	109	.013
Emotions							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.58	.54	56				
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.04	.79	55	-.773 -.157	-2.994	109	.003
<i>Non-open</i>	3.18	.73	40				
<i>Open</i>	2.59	.84	71	.273 .902	3.706	109	.000
Consumers							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.52	.91	57				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.86	.62	54	-.635 -.052	-2.339	99	.021
WOMEN							
Companies							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.22	.81	61				
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.62	.66	102	-.651 -.165	-3.331	108	.001
Emotions							
<i>Introvert</i>	2.99	.71	67				
<i>Extravert</i>	3.28	.69	96	-.498 -.058	-2.499	161	.013



The non-posting factor of Constraints/Obstacles is related for men with non-openness [$t(129) = 2.138, p < .05$], while Privacy/Secrecy is related with non-agreeableness [$t(129) = 2.719, p < .00$]. Women are affected by neuroticism [$t(175) = -4.180, p < .00$]. and non-conscientiousness [$t(175) = -2.906, p < .00$] when they do not post because of no incentives or interest (Table 7.54).

Table 7.54 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Non-Posting Factors by Gender

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
MEN								
Constraints/Obstacles								
<i>Non-open</i>	2.74	.77	84	.021	.551	2.138	129	.034
<i>Open</i>	2.45	.67	47					
Privacy/Secrecy								
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.84	.77	89	.110	.702	2.716	129	.008
<i>Agreeable</i>	2.44	.85	42					
WOMEN								
No incentives/interest								
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.11	.62	86	-.544	-.195	-4.180	175	.000
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.48	.55	91					
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	3.42	.62	101	.085	.446	-2.906	175	.004
<i>Conscientious</i>	3.15	.58	76					

Age Implications of Personality Association with UGC contribution during Travel Post-Decision Behavior

To the question “Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?” 47,5% of the age group 18-24, 52,5% of the age group of 25-34, and 40,8% of the age group of 35-44 answered Yes, while 52,5% of the age group 18-24, 47,5% of the age group of 25-34, and 59,2% of the age group of 35-44 answered No. Table 7.55 presents analytically the answers of each group.



Table 7.55 Type of travel content provided by users by Age

Frequency	I write comments/reviews about the destination	I write comments/reviews about the accommodation
18-24		
Rarely	22,4%	34,5%
Sometimes	46,6%	34,5%
Very Often	27,6%	13,8%
Always	3,4%	17,2%
25-34		
Rarely	16,1%	37,2%
Sometimes	55,5%	37,2%
Very Often	25,5%	19,0%
Always	2,9%	6,6%
35-44		
Rarely	28,2%	28,2%
Sometimes	54,9%	54,9%
Very Often	8,5%	8,5%
Always	8,5%	8,5%

Chi-square test between posting behavior and age factor gave significant results ($\chi^2 = 10.066$, $p < .05$). The positive phi coefficient ($\phi = .132$, $p < .05$) demonstrates that the younger individuals are those who post most (Table 7.56). However, the one-way ANOVA analysis didn't reveal any differences among the groups, related to the accommodation and destination posts.

Table 7.56 Results of Chi-square Test and Descriptive Statistics for "Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?" by Age

Group	Do you post		χ^2	phi
	Yes	No		
18-24	58 (10.4%)	64 (11.5%)		
25-34	137 (24.6%)	124 (22.3%)	10.066 (.039)	.132 (.039)
35-44	71 (12.7%)	103 (18.5%)		

Consumers is the most important factor for all age groups [($M = 3.80$, $SD = .73$, $N = 58$ for 18-24), ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .75$, $N = 137$ for 25-34) and ($M = 3.56$, $SD = .72$, $N = 71$ for 35-44)], followed by Companies [($M = 3.49$, $SD = .82$, $N = 58$ for 18-24), ($M = 3.58$, $SD = .69$, $N = 137$ for 25-34) and ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .87$, $N = 71$ for 35-44)] and Emotions



[($M = 3.39$, $SD = .67$, $N = 58$ for 18-24), ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .77$, $N = 137$ for 25-34) and ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .75$, $N = 71$ for 35-44)]. No incentives/interest is the most important non-posting factor for all groups [($M = 3.36$, $SD = .64$, $N = 64$ for 18-24), ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .69$, $N = 124$ for 25-34) and ($M = 3.09$, $SD = .77$, $N = 103$ for 35-44)], followed by Constraints/Obstacles [($M = 2.99$, $SD = .62$, $N = 64$ for 18-24), ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .68$, $N = 124$ for 25-34) and ($M = 2.73$, $SD = .81$, $N = 103$ for 35-44)] and Privacy/Secrecy [($M = 2.79$, $SD = .95$, $N = 64$ for 18-24), ($M = 2.52$, $SD = .84$, $N = 124$ for 25-34) and ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .76$, $N = 103$ for 35-44)].

Table 7.57 ANOVA test, Descriptive Statistics & Post Hoc Results of Posting/Non-Posting Factors by Age

Group	M	SD	n	Mean Difference			F	df	Sig.
				18-24	25-34	35-44			
Emotions									
18-24	3.39	.67	58	-	.501*	.334*	9.307	2, 263	.000
25-34	2.89	.77	137	-.501*	-	ns			
35-44	3.06	.75	71	-.334*	ns	-			

* $p < .05$

Differences among the age groups were found only for the posting factor of Emotions (Table 7.57). The One-way ANOVA revealed significant differences for the Emotions at the $p < .05$ significant level, for the group of 18-24 with the groups of 25-34 and 35-44 [$F(2, 263) = 9.307$, $p = .00$]. Levene's Statistic showed homogeneity of variances (Levene's St. = .888, $p = .413$). Post hoc comparisons (Tukey HSD test) indicated that the mean score for the group of 18-24 ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .67$) was significantly different than the age group of 25-34 ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .77$), and 35-44 ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .75$).

The personality traits that affect individuals to post content are neuroticism ($\chi^2 = 4.616$, $p < .05$) and agreeableness ($\chi^2 = 8.304$, $p < .00$) for those between 18-24, openness ($\chi^2 = 17.494$, $p < .00$) for those between 25-34, and extraversion ($\chi^2 =$



4.787, $p < .05$) and agreeableness ($\chi^2 = 8.909$, $p < .00$) for those between 35-44 (Table 7.58).

Table 7.58 Results of Chi-square Test and Descriptive Statistics for “Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences?” by Personality & Age

Group	Do you post		χ^2	phi
	Yes	No		
18-24				
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	10 (8.2%)	22 (18.0%)	4.616 (.032)	-.195 (.032)
<i>Neurotic</i>	48 (39.3%)	42 (34.4%)		
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	31 (25.4%)	50 (41.0%)	8.304 (.004)	-.261 (.004)
<i>Agreeable</i>	27 (22.1%)	14 (11.5%)		
25-34				
<i>Non-open</i>	54 (20.7%)	81 (31.0%)	17.494 (.000)	-.259 (.000)
<i>Open</i>	83 (31.8%)	43 (16.5%)		
35-44				
<i>Introvert</i>	22 (12.6%)	49 (28.2%)	4.787 (.029)	-.166 (.029)
<i>Extravert</i>	22 (28.2%)	54 (31.0%)		
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	23 (13.2%)	57 (32.8%)	8.909 (.003)	-.226 (.003)
<i>Agreeable</i>	48 (27.6%)	46 (26.4%)		

Low agreeableness [$t(48) = 2.560$, $p < .05$] and high conscientiousness [$t(43) = -2.038$, $p < .05$] are the determinants of posting accommodation content, for the age group of 18-24. For individuals between 25-34, extraversion [$t(127) = -2.872$, $p < .00$] is the determinant of posting destination content, while extraversion [$t(135) = -3.610$, $p < .00$] and conscientiousness [$t(129) = -2.729$, $p < .00$] are the determinants for accommodation content. Extraversion [$t(69) = -2.311$, $p < .05$] is the trait that affects accommodation posting for the age of 35-44 (Table 7.59).



Table 7.59 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Destination/Accommodation by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df	Sig.
18-24								
Accommodation								
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	2.45	1.3	31	.144	1.20	2.560	48	.014
<i>Agreeable</i>	1.78	.70	27					
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	1.88	.87	32	-1.17	-.006	-2.038	43	.048
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.46	1.3	26					
25-34								
Destination								
<i>Introvert</i>	1.99	.63	70	-.580	-.106	-2.872	127	.005
<i>Extravert</i>	2.33	.77	67					
Accommodation								
<i>Introvert</i>	1.69	.81	70	-.833	-.243	-3.610	135	.000
<i>Extravert</i>	2.22	.94	67					
<i>Non-conscientious</i>	1.76	.89	79	-.719	-.115	-2.729	129	.007
<i>Conscientious</i>	2.18	.89	61					
35-44								
Accommodation								
<i>Introvert</i>	1.64	.49	22	-.906	-.066	-2.311	69	.024
<i>Extravert</i>	2.12	.93	49					

The posting factor of Emotions is influenced by non-neuroticism [$t(56) = 2.917, p < .00$], for the age of 18-24. Extraversion drives the behavior of 25-34 years old relatively to the factor of Companies [$t(122) = -3.434, p < .00$] and Consumers [$t(135) = -2.183, p < .05$]. Extraversion also guides the 35-44 age group, relatively to the factors of Companies [$t(69) = -2.641, p < .05$], Consumers [$t(69) = -2.759, p < .00$] and Emotions [$t(69) = -2.322, p < .05$] (Table 7.60).



Table 7.60 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Posting Factors by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
Emotions							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	3.92	.48	10	.199 1.07	2.917	56	.005
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.28	.65	48				
25-34							
Companies							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.38	.78	70	-.613 -.163	-3.434	122	.001
<i>Extravert</i>	3.77	.53	67				
Consumers							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.6	.80	70	-.529 -.026	-2.183	135	.031
<i>Extravert</i>	3.9	.68	67				
35-44							
Companies							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.11	.54	22	-.817 -.114	-2.641	69	.010
<i>Extravert</i>	3.57	.74	49				
Emotions							
<i>Introvert</i>	2.71	.76	22	-.874-.140	-2.759	69	.007
<i>Extravert</i>	3.22	.70	49				
Consumers							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.21	1.01	22	-.934-.071	-2.322	69	.023
<i>Extravert</i>	3.71	.76	49				

The non-posting factor of No incentives/interest is affected by introversion [$t(62) = 2.203, p < .05$], while Constraints/Obstacles by non-openness [$t(62) = 2.097, p < .05$] for those between 18-24. No incentives/interest is driven by agreeableness [$t(122) = -2.194, p < .05$], and Privacy/Secrecy by non-openness [$t(122) = 2.356, p < .05$], for the age of 25-34. No incentives/interest is affected by neuroticism [$t(101) = -2.062, p < .05$] for the group of 35-44 (Table 7.61).



Table 7.61 Personality t-tests & Descriptive Statistics of Non-posting Factors by Age

Group	M	SD	n	95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df	Sig.
18-24							
No incentives/interest							
<i>Introvert</i>	3.52	.65	34	.032 .657	2.203	62	.031
<i>Extravert</i>	3.17	.59	30				
Constraints/Obstacles							
<i>Non-open</i>	3.11	.64	42	.016 .653	2.097	62	.040
<i>Open</i>	2.77	.54	22				
25-34							
No incentives/interest							
<i>Non-agreeable</i>	3.14	.61	61	-.511 -.026	-2.194	122	.030
<i>Agreeable</i>	3.41	.74	63				
Privacy/Secrecy							
<i>Non-open</i>	2.65	.78	81	.059 .675	2.356	122	.020
<i>Open</i>	2.23	.89	43				
35-44							
No incentives/interest							
<i>Non-neurotic</i>	2.98	.71	78	-.634 -.012	-2.062	101	.042
<i>Neurotic</i>	3.31	.69	72				



7.5 Self- congruity

The role of congruity was examined by a series of regression analyses. For every step of the decision-making process two models were run. The personality model where the Big Five traits were the independent variables. The congruity model where along with the Big Five traits, the correspondent congruity variable was also added to the independent variables of the regression. Results for self-congruity are presented below for each of the four stages (except post-decision stage) of the travel planning process.

7.5.1 Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

The regression analysis for the UGC's impact on the Need Recognition (dependent variable) is presented in Table 7.62. The first model examines the personality traits as independent variables, while the second model also incorporates the corresponding self-congruity variable. Both personality and self-congruity models are significant ($F = 6.006$, $p < .00$, and $F = 33.711$, $p < .00$, respectively). However, when congruity ($t = 12.796$, $p < .00$) is entered in the regression, R^2 rises from .05 to .26 indicating a change of 21%. Therefore, congruity is a dominant factor in explaining UGC's impact on travel need recognition.

Three out of the five personality traits are significant in the self-congruity model: neuroticism ($t = 2.814$, $p < .00$), extraversion ($t = 2.772$, $p < .00$) and openness ($t = 2.362$, $p < .05$). Additionally, the beta coefficients of all the personality traits are reduced, compared to the first model. According to Kenny's methodology (2014) these results are indicating mediation. To confirm this another regression (Table 7.63) examined the relationship of self-congruity with personality traits. Results reveal a significant score ($F = 3.372$, $p < .00$), and therefore, self-congruity is a partial mediator in the relationship of personality with Travel Need Recognition.



Table 7.62 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition

Dependent Need UGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.239	3.360	.001	.177	2.814	.005
<i>Extraversion</i>	.260	3.594	.000	.178	2.772	.006
<i>Openness</i>	.155	1.429	.154	.106	2.362	.019
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.124	1.725	.085	.043	.682	.496
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.049	-.758	.496	-.076	-1.037	.300
<i>Need SCU</i>					12.79	
<i>Constant</i>	2.405	11.096	.000	.497	6	.000
<i>R</i>		.223			.510	
<i>R²</i>		.050			.260	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.041			.253	
<i>F</i>		6.006			33.711	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000			.000	

Table 7.63 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC impact on Need Recognition

Dependent Need SCU	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.124	1.844	.066
<i>Extraversion</i>	.165	2.409	.016
<i>Openness</i>	.098	1.402	.161
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.162	2.379	.018
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.054	.779	.436
<i>Constant</i>	2.855	13.908	.000
<i>R</i>		.169	
<i>R²</i>		.028	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.020	
<i>F</i>		3.372	
<i>Sig.</i>		.005	

Concerning the MGC's impact, the regression analysis is given in Table 7.64. The first model, of personality, is significant ($F = 2.877$, $p < .05$). The second model is also



significant ($F = 19.897$, $p < .00$), while neuroticism is the only significant variable of the personality traits ($t = 2.969$, $p < .00$). The congruity variable (Need SCC) is also significant ($F = 10.122$, $p < .00$), while the congruity model raises the value of R^2 from .024 to .415. This change of 39.1% shows that congruity is a major contributor in explaining how personality affects the formation of the Need Recognition via the travel MGC. However, the coefficients of the personality traits are not lower in the self-congruity model and, therefore, no mediation is implied.

Table 7.64 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition

Dependent Need MGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.213	2.989	.003	.195	2.969	.003
<i>Extraversion</i>	.072	.997	.319	.087	1.297	.195
<i>Openness</i>	-.052	-.694	.488	-.002	-.024	.981
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.036	.495	.621	.020	.297	.767
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.136	1.862	.063	.103	1.532	.126
<i>Need SCC</i>				.389	10.122	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.122	9.756	.000	1.003	4.381	.000
<i>R</i>		.156			.415	
<i>R²</i>		.024			.172	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.016			.163	
<i>F</i>		2.877			19.897	
<i>Sig.</i>		.014			.000	

Gender Implications on Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

The multiple regression analysis of men, for the UGC's impact, is given in Table 7.65. As shown both models, personality and congruity model, are significant ($F = 3.569$, $p < .00$, and $F = 17.218$, $p < .00$, respectively). Nevertheless, congruity model explains much more of the variance, with R^2 value to increase from .070 to .305. Moreover, the variables' coefficients indicate mediation. When running the regression analysis between personality traits and congruity (Table 7.66) the mediation is being



confirmed, since the regression is significant ($F = 3.717$, $p < .00$). Given that none of the personality traits is significant in the congruity model, perfect mediation is implied (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Table 7.65 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Men

Dependent Need UGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.332	2.833	.005	.150	1.449	.149
<i>Extraversion</i>	.300	2.484	.014	.199	1.888	.060
<i>Openness</i>	.064	.537	.592	-.063	-.602	.548
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.237	1.968	.050	.152	1.456	.147
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.095	.786	.432	.006	.054	.957
<i>Need SCU</i>				.536	8.918	.000
<i>Constant</i>	1.943	5.587	.000	.724	2.187	.030
<i>R</i>		.265			.553	
<i>R²</i>		.070			.305	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.051			.288	
<i>F</i>		3.569			17.218	
<i>Sig.</i>		.004			.000	

Table 7.66 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Men

Dependent Need SCU_MEN	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.339	3.088	.002
<i>Extraversion</i>	.189	1.667	.097
<i>Openness</i>	.236	2.115	.035
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.157	1.394	.165
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.167	1.471	.143
<i>Constant</i>	2.274	6.974	.000
<i>R</i>		.270	
<i>R²</i>		.073	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.053	
<i>F</i>		3.717	
<i>Sig.</i>		.003	



The impact of the MGC is analyzed in Table 7.67. Interestingly, the personality model is not significant, in contrast to the congruity model which is significant ($F = 11.454$, $p < .00$), and explains 22.6% of the variance. None of the big five traits is significant, indicating that congruity does not depend on the big five factors.

Table 7.67 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition for Men

Dependent Need MGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.261	2.238	.026	.179	1.707	.089
<i>Extraversion</i>	.088	.729	.466	.132	1.218	.224
<i>Openness</i>	.085	.713	.477	.183	1.708	.089
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.088	.731	.466	.120	1.117	.265
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.074	.613	.540	.002	.016	.987
<i>Need SCC</i>				.429	7.718	.000
<i>Constant</i>	1.773	5.112	.000	.568	1.635	.103
<i>R</i>		.174			.476	
<i>R²</i>		.030			.226	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.010			.207	
<i>F</i>		1.467			11.454	
<i>Sig.</i>		.202			.000	

Table 7.68 shows the two – UGC – models, referring to women behavior. The personality model is significant ($F = 3.506$, $p < .00$) explaining 5% of the variance. The congruity model is also significant ($F = 14.974$, $p < .00$) explaining 21,2% of the variance. Therefore, congruity ($t = 8.292$, $p < .00$) is an important factor of need recognition for women, with neuroticism ($t = 2.341$, $p < .05$) and openness ($t = 2.716$, $p < .00$) to be the significant traits in this model.

For women, the personality model of the MGC's impact is not significant, while the corresponding congruity model is significant ($F = 9.109$, $p < .00$). This shows that congruity explains women behavior even in this case (Table 7.69). The neuroticism is the only significant of the personality traits ($t = 2.258$, $p < .05$).



Table 7.68 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Women

Dependent Need UGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.166	1.861	.064	.191	2.341	.020
<i>Extraversion</i>	.199	2.205	.028	.150	1.819	.070
<i>Openness</i>	.224	2.413	.016	.230	2.716	.007
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.015	.164	.870	-.046	-.563	.574
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.205	-2.265	.024	-.117	-1.401	.162
<i>Need SCU</i>				.440	8.292	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.870	10.385	.000	1.363	4.386	.000
<i>R</i>		.223			.461	
<i>R²</i>		.050			.212	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.036			.198	
<i>F</i>		3.506			14.974	
<i>Sig.</i>		.004			.000	

Table 7.69 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Need Recognition for Women

Dependent Need MGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.154	1.680	.094	.195	2.258	.025
<i>Extraversion</i>	.065	.707	.480	.073	.839	.402
<i>Openness</i>	-.158	-1.656	.099	-.132	-1.465	.144
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.019	-.212	.832	-.049	-.573	.567
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.182	1.956	.051	.160	1.821	.069
<i>Need SCC</i>				.364	6.617	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.453	8.645	.000	1.330	4.203	.000
<i>R</i>		.167			.375	
<i>R²</i>		.028			.141	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.013			.126	
<i>F</i>		1.928			9.109	
<i>Sig.</i>		.089			.000	



Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Need Recognition

Table 7.70 presents the regression models of the age group 18-24 for the UGC's impact. The personality model ($F = 7.807$, $p < .00$) explains 25,2% of the variance, while the congruity model ($F = 8.683$, $p < .00$) explains 31,2% of the variance. Again congruity shows to impact the behavior, since there is a small, though positive change of 6% in the R^2 value. Neuroticism ($t = 2.436$, $p < .05$), extraversion ($t = 4.192$, $p < .00$), and openness ($t = 2.382$, $p < .05$) are significant in the congruity model.

Table 7.70 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 18-24

Dependent Need UGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.300	1.958	.053	.363	2.436	.016
<i>Extraversion</i>	.661	4.793	.000	.570	4.192	.000
<i>Openness</i>	.330	2.266	.025	.334	2.382	.019
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.097	.667	.506	.140	.990	.324
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.046	-.320	.749	-.080	-.571	.569
<i>Need SCU</i>				.328	3.167	.002
<i>Constant</i>	1.462	3.244	.002	.324	.574	.567
<i>R</i>		.502			.558	
<i>R²</i>		.252			.312	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.220			.276	
<i>F</i>		7.807			8.683	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000			.000	

The MGC regression model gave significant results for the personality ($F = 3.970$, $p < .00$; $R^2 = .146$) and the congruity ($F = 7.223$, $p < .00$; $R^2 = .274$). The 12,8% change in the variance's value shows that congruity is important, while the significance of neuroticism ($t = 2.945$, $p < .00$), extraversion ($t = 2.779$, $p < .00$) and conscientiousness ($t = 2.103$, $p < .05$) shows that congruity and personality are both influence the need recognition (Table 7.71).



Table 7.71 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 18-24

Dependent Need MGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.412	2.532	.013	.444	2.945	.004
<i>Extraversion</i>	.391	2.671	.009	.377	2.779	.006
<i>Openness</i>	.000	.001	.999	.045	.313	.755
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.131	-.843	.401	-.110	-.768	.444
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.371	2.408	.018	.302	2.103	.038
<i>Need SCC</i>				.344	4.495	.000
<i>Constant</i>	1.144	2.388	.019	.133	.267	.790
<i>R</i>		.382			.523	
<i>R²</i>		.146			.274	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.109			.236	
<i>F</i>		3.970			7.223	
<i>Sig.</i>		.002			.000	

The models of the UGC's impact on the Need Recognition, for the age group 25-34, are given in Table 7.72. The non-significant the personality model becomes significant when congruity is controlled ($F = 17.652, p < .00$), but the Big Five traits do not contribute to this model. Therefore, congruity is not related to the personality. The same pattern is followed even in the case of MGC impact. Only congruity model is significant ($F = 6.955, p < .00$), while the Big Five traits do not contribute to the model (Table 7.73).

For the age group of 35-44, the congruity model of the UGC's impact is the only significant model ($F = 7.307, p < .00$), and explains 20,8% of the variance (Table 7.74). However, Big Five traits do not contribute to the model. Results for the MGC's impact are different (Table 7.75). Both models are significant ($F = 3.317, p < .00$, and $F = 10.950, p < .00$, respectively). However, when congruity is controlled, the R^2 value changes positively, by 19,2%. Therefore, congruity influences the behavior of this age group, with neuroticism ($t = 2.846, p < .00$) and agreeableness ($t = 2.504, p < .05$) to be significant in the congruity model.



Table 7.72 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 25-34

Dependent Need UGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.228	2.118	.035	.156	1.684	.093
<i>Extraversion</i>	.191	1.765	.079	.120	1.282	.201
<i>Openness</i>	.109	.991	.322	.141	1.493	.137
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.157	1.468	.143	.021	.231	.818
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.095	-.858	.391	-.064	-.668	.505
<i>Need SCU</i>				.538	9.564	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.586	7.778	.000	1.122	3.460	.001
<i>R</i>		.200			.542	
<i>R²</i>		.040			.294	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.021			.278	
<i>F</i>		2.132			17.652	
<i>Sig.</i>		.062			.000	

Table 7.73 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 25-34

Dependent Need MGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.068	.640	.523	-.022	-.225	.822
<i>Extraversion</i>	.054	.507	.613	.132	1.322	.187
<i>Openness</i>	.110	1.020	.309	.119	1.183	.238
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.005	.045	.964	.008	.083	.934
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.048	.442	.659	.039	.380	.704
<i>Need SCC</i>				.377	6.252	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.352	7.202	.000	1.302	3.742	.000
<i>R</i>		.094			.376	
<i>R²</i>		.009			.141	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.011			.121	
<i>F</i>		.459			6.955	
<i>Sig.</i>		.807			.000	



Table 7.74 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 35-44

Dependent Need UGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.048	.357	.722	.043	.354	.724
<i>Extraversion</i>	.111	.778	.438	.092	.712	.477
<i>Openness</i>	.043	.298	.766	.077	.595	.553
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.230	1.625	.106	.055	.419	.676
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.046	.344	.731	.116	.946	.345
<i>Need SCU</i>				.425	6.066	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.542	6.437	.000	1.321	3.212	.002
<i>R</i>		.183			.456	
<i>R²</i>		.033			.208	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.005			.179	
<i>F</i>		1.162			7.307	
<i>Sig.</i>		.330			.000	

Table 7.75 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 35-44

Dependent Need MGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.277	1.956	.052	.361	2.846	.005
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.146	-.978	.330	-.205	-1.540	.125
<i>Openness</i>	-.354	-2.365	.019	-.205	-1.514	.132
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.413	2.775	.006	.333	2.504	.013
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.135	.956	.340	.119	.952	.343
<i>Need SCC</i>				.463	6.693	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.227	5.371	.000	.724	1.674	.096
<i>R</i>		.300			.531	
<i>R²</i>		.090			.282	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.063			.257	
<i>F</i>		3.317			10.950	
<i>Sig.</i>		.007			.000	



7.5.2 Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

The personality and self-congruity regression models of the Information Search stage, under the impact of the UGC, are given in Table 7.76. Both models are significant ($F = 2.575$, $p < .05$, and $F = 33.509$, $p < .00$, respectively). However, the congruity model explains much more of the variation (R^2 change is equal to 23,8%). Since beta values are not smaller for all the variables in the second regression model, mediation cannot be considered. Neuroticism ($t = 4.140$, $p < .00$), openness ($t = 2.197$, $p < .05$) and conscientiousness ($t = -3.569$, $p < .00$) are significant when congruity is controlled and, therefore, big five along with congruity define users' behavior during the information search procedure.

Table 7.76 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search

Dependent Info UGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.213	3.661	.000	.209	4.140	.000
<i>Extraversion</i>	.144	2.436	.015	.090	1.743	.082
<i>Openness</i>	.083	1.372	.171	.115	2.197	.028
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.109	1.862	.063	.093	1.827	.068
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.184	-3.093	.002	-.184	-3.569	.000
<i>Info SCU</i>				.446	13.843	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.990	16.861	.000	1.540	8.277	.000
<i>R</i>		.148			.509	
<i>R²</i>		.022			.259	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.013			.251	
<i>F</i>		2.575			33.509	
<i>Sig.</i>		.026			.000	

The corresponding models of the MGC's impact are presented in Table 7.77. The models are significant ($F = 9.943$, $p < .00$, and $F = 48.949$, $p < .00$, respectively). The personality model explains .049 of the variance, however, the self-congruity model



explains .253 of the variance. Therefore, congruity is a dominant factor in explaining information search for tourist products, under the impact of the MGC. Neuroticism is the only significant ($t = 3.328$, $p < .00$) trait in the congruity model.

Table 7.77 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Information Search

Dependent Info MGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.210	3.390	.001	.180	3.328	.001
<i>Extraversion</i>	.022	.353	.724	.038	.682	.495
<i>Openness</i>	.044	.676	.499	.068	1.203	.230
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.021	.340	.734	.042	.766	.444
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.046	.722	.471	.018	.331	.741
<i>Info SCC</i>					13.56	
<i>Constant</i>	2.706	14.310	.000	.437	8	.000
<i>R</i>		.222			.503	
<i>R²</i>		.049			.253	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.044			.248	
<i>F</i>		9.943			48.949	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000			.000	

Gender Implications on Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

Below are given the results of the regression models according to the two genders. Table 7.78 exhibits the personality and congruity models of the UGC's impact, for men. The congruity model is significant ($F = 14.772$, $p < .00$), with $R^2 = .274$, while the personality model is significant ($F = 2.278$, $p < .05$), with $R^2 = .046$. Moreover, beta coefficients are smaller in the congruity model, indicating mediation. Table 7.79 shows that the regression of the Info SCU variable, according to personality traits, is significant ($F = 2.421$, $p < .05$). Therefore, congruity is a mediator, when explaining men information search behavior under the impact of the UGC. Since, none of the



big five traits remains significant, when congruity is controlled, then the mediation is perfect.

Table 7.78 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search for Men

Dependent Info UGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.218	2.231	.027	.139	1.615	.108
<i>Extraversion</i>	.256	2.538	.012	.136	1.526	.128
<i>Openness</i>	.034	.394	.694	.032	.325	.745
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.086	.854	.394	.077	.881	.379
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.001	.011	.991	-.066	-.743	.458
<i>Info SCU</i>				.450	8.587	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.613	9.014	.000	1.509	5.309	.000
<i>R</i>		.215			.523	
<i>R²</i>		.046			.274	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.026			.255	
<i>F</i>		2.278			14.772	
<i>Sig.</i>		.048			.000	

Table 7.79 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC impact on Need Recognition for Men

Dependent Info SCU_MEN	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.176	1.659	.098
<i>Extraversion</i>	.266	2.429	.016
<i>Openness</i>	.004	.040	.969
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.019	.173	.863
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.149	1.357	.176
<i>Constant</i>	2.456	7.794	.000
<i>R</i>		.221	
<i>R²</i>		.049	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.029	
<i>F</i>		2.421	
<i>Sig.</i>		.036	



Table 7.80 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Information Search for Men

Dependent Info MGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.214	2.010	.046	.163	1.764	.079
<i>Extraversion</i>	.002	.015	.988	.084	.878	.381
<i>Openness</i>	.008	.075	.941	-.040	-.426	.671
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.059	-.541	.589	.005	.055	.956
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.232	2.108	.036	.114	1.190	.235
<i>Info SCC</i>				.465	8.968	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.551	8.069	.000	1.315	4.295	.000
<i>R</i>		.201			.534	
<i>R²</i>		.040			.285	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.020			.267	
<i>F</i>		1.986			15.616	
<i>Sig.</i>		.081			.000	

Table 7.81 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search for Women

Dependent Info UGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.211	2.918	.004	.261	4.142	.000
<i>Extraversion</i>	.025	.341	.733	.025	.393	.694
<i>Openness</i>	.132	1.758	.080	.187	2.845	.005
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.107	1.480	.140	.088	1.396	.164
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.334	-4.552	.000	-.281	-4.386	.000
<i>Info SCU</i>				.432	10.409	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.355	14.985	.000	1.661	6.543	.000
<i>R</i>		.291			.556	
<i>R²</i>		.085			.309	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.071			.297	
<i>F</i>		6.177			24.858	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000			.000	



For men, the model of personality under the impact of the MGC is not significant. However, when congruity is controlled the model is significant ($F = 15.616$, $p < .00$; $R^2 = .285$). Nevertheless, none of the personality traits are significant in the congruity model (Table 7.80). Congruence explains also women behavior, at the information search stage (Table 7.81). Both personality and self-congruity models, of the UGC's impact, are significant ($F = 6.177$, $p < .00$, and $F = 24.858$, $p < .00$, respectively). However, the congruity model explains much more of the model's variance (R^2 change is equal to 22,4%). Hence, congruity plays an important role in explaining women behavior, with personality to be related to congruence since neuroticism ($t = 4.142$, $p < .00$), openness ($t = 2.845$, $p < .00$), and conscientiousness ($t = -4.386$, $p < .00$) are significant in the second model.

Table 7.82 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Information Search for Women

Dependent Info MGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.179	2.351	.019	.200	2.967	.003
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.010	-.132	.895	-.011	-.160	.873
<i>Openness</i>	.075	.954	.341	.148	2.102	.036
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.041	.536	.592	.068	1.017	.310
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.072	-.931	.353	-.063	-.917	.360
<i>Info SCC</i>				.417	9.681	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.949	12.536	.000	1.422	5.445	.000
<i>R</i>		.141			.485	
<i>R²</i>		.020			.235	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.005			.221	
<i>F</i>		1.349			17.056	
<i>Sig.</i>		.243			.000	

The regression models, for the MGC's impact, are presented in Table 7.82. In contrast to the personality model, the congruity one is significant ($F = 17.056$, $p < .00$), and explains 23,5% of the model's variance. The two personality traits that give significant results in the congruity model, for women, are neuroticism ($t = 2.967$, $p < .00$) and openness ($t = 2.102$, $p < .05$).



Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Information Search

Concerning the differences among the age groups, Table 7.83 gives the regression analysis for those aged between 18-24, and for the UGC's impact. The personality's regression is significant ($F = 2.300$, $p < .05$) and explains 9% of the variance. The congruity model, on the other side, explains 24,5% of the variance ($F = 6.230$, $p < .00$). Therefore, congruity substantially contributes in explaining the behavior of these ages. The fact that the beta values are reduced in the second model implies mediation, which is confirmed in Table 7.85 (model 1), where congruity is regressed by the Big Five traits ($F = 6.230$, $p < .00$). However, congruity is a partial mediator, since conscientiousness remains significant ($t = 2.903$, $p < .05$) in the second model.

Table 7.83 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search for Age 18-24

Dependent Info UGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	-.020	-.171	.865	-.036	-.286	.775
<i>Extraversion</i>	.212	1.873	.064	.072	.671	.504
<i>Openness</i>	.215	1.924	.057	.097	.816	.416
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.017	.144	.885	-.029	-.266	.790
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.240	-2.014	.046	-.347	-3.124	.002
<i>Info SCU</i>				.359	4.862	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.508	9.481	.000	2.490	6.259	.000
<i>R</i>		.300			.495	
<i>R²</i>		.090			.245	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.051			.206	
<i>F</i>		2.300			6.230	
<i>Sig.</i>		.049			.000	

Mediation is also implied in the case of the MGC's impact. As shown in Table 7.84 all the beta values of the Big Five traits, in the personality model ($F = 3.318$, $p < .00$), are reduced in the congruity model ($F = 11.984$, $p < .00$). However, the regression of



the congruity by the Big Five traits is not significant (Table 7.85, model 2). Therefore, congruity is not a mediator, but still stands as a major contributor (R^2 change is equal to 26%) in explaining the behavior of 18-24 age group. Neuroticism ($t = 2.087$, $p < .05$) and openness ($t = 2.663$, $p < .00$) verify that this congruence is related with personality.

Table 7.84 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Information Search for Age 18-24

Dependent Info MGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.280	1.900	.060	.259	2.087	.039
<i>Extraversion</i>	.092	.693	.490	.062	.555	.580
<i>Openness</i>	.332	2.370	.019	.314	2.663	.009
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.170	1.211	.228	.160	1.348	.180
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.087	.625	.533	-.041	-.348	.728
<i>Info SCC</i>				.419	6.966	.000
<i>Constant</i>	1.890	4.355	.000	.879	2.236	.027
<i>R</i>		.354			.620	
<i>R²</i>		.125			.385	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.087			.353	
<i>F</i>		3.318			11.984	
<i>Sig.</i>		.008			.000	

For the age group of 25-34, both personality and self-congruity models (Table 7.86) are significant ($F = 5.470$, $p < .00$, and $F = 18.189$, $p < .00$, respectively), under the impact of the UGC. Although mediation is implied (beta coefficients are smaller in the congruity model) this is not confirmed by the regression in Table 7.87. Nevertheless, congruity explains 30,7% of the model's variance, in contrast to the personality that explains only 9,7%. Hence, self-congruity is important in the analysis of information search via social media, for the ages 25 to 34. Neuroticism ($t = 3.553$, $p < .00$), agreeableness ($t = 2.915$, $p < .00$), and conscientiousness ($t = -2.265$, $p < .05$) are significant in the congruity model. On the contrary, under the MGC's impact (Table 7.88), the personality model does not reveal significant results. The congruity model, on the other side, is significant ($F = 11.560$, $p < .00$) explaining 21,4% of the



variance, but is not related with personality, since none of the Big Five traits contributes to the model.

Table 7.85 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC/MGC impact on Information Search for Age 18-24

Dependent Info_18-24	Model 1 SCU			Model 2 SCC		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.045	.314	.754	.050	.259	.796
<i>Extraversion</i>	.389	2.993	.003	.071	.412	.681
<i>Openness</i>	.328	2.392	.018	.042	.233	.816
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.130	.942	.348	.025	.139	.890
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.298	2.182	.031	.307	1.692	.093
<i>Constant</i>	2.830	6.659	.000	2.415	4.276	.000
<i>R</i>		.333			.180	
<i>R²</i>		.111			.032	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.073			-.009	
<i>F</i>		2.903			.776	
<i>Sig.</i>		.017			.569	

Table 7.86 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search for Age 25-34

Dependent Info UGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.279	3.150	.002	.277	3.553	.000
<i>Extraversion</i>	.182	2.048	.042	.136	1.728	.085
<i>Openness</i>	.080	.883	.378	.060	.748	.455
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.293	3.336	.001	.227	2.915	.004
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.139	-1.523	.129	-.183	-2.265	.024
<i>Info SCU</i>				.455	8.600	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.536	9.276	.000	1.227	4.302	.000
<i>R</i>		.311			.548	
<i>R²</i>		.097			.307	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.079			.284	
<i>F</i>		5.470			18.189	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000			.000	



Table 7.87 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC impact on Information Search for Age 25-34

Dependent Info SCU_25-34	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.003	.036	.971
<i>Extraversion</i>	.102	1.095	.275
<i>Openness</i>	.044	.470	.639
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.145	1.586	.114
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.096	1.008	.314
<i>Constant</i>	2.878	10.086	.000
<i>R</i>		.154	
<i>R²</i>		.024	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.005	
<i>F</i>		1.235	
<i>Sig.</i>		.293	

Table 7.88 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Information Search for Age 25-34

Dependent Info MGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.086	.908	.365	.017	.204	.839
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.002	-.021	.983	.065	.757	.450
<i>Openness</i>	-.058	-.600	.549	-.043	-.501	.617
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.005	.056	.955	.055	.656	.513
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.026	-.263	.793	-.055	-.624	.533
<i>Info SCC</i>				.444	8.215	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.184	10.833	.000	1.767	5.637	.000
<i>R</i>		.076			.463	
<i>R²</i>		.006			.214	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.014			.196	
<i>F</i>		.297			11.560	
<i>Sig.</i>		.915			.000	



Table 7.89 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Information Search for Age 35-44

Dependent Info UGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.176	1.483	.140	.236	2.425	.016
<i>Extraversion</i>	.156	1.246	.214	.097	.945	.346
<i>Openness</i>	.184	1.464	.145	.235	2.293	.023
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.185	-1.480	.141	-.160	-1.573	.118
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.145	-1.230	.220	-.047	-.487	.627
<i>Info SCU</i>				.486	9.257	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.220	9.254	.000	1.381	3.985	.000
<i>R</i>		.201			.605	
<i>R²</i>		.040			.366	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.012			.343	
<i>F</i>		1.413			16.052	
<i>Sig.</i>		.222			.000	

Table 7.90 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Information Search for Age 35-44

Dependent Info MGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.233	1.994	.048	.316	3.199	.002
<i>Extraversion</i>	.092	.750	.454	.042	.401	.689
<i>Openness</i>	.068	.552	.582	.152	1.455	.148
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.087	-.707	.481	-.086	-.836	.404
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.144	1.238	.217	.174	1.779	.077
<i>Info SCC</i>				.456	8.391	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.559	7.485	.000	.987	2.875	.005
<i>R</i>		.201			.570	
<i>R²</i>		.040			.325	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.012			.301	
<i>F</i>		1.412			13.397	
<i>Sig.</i>		.222			.000	

Non-significant is the personality model even for the age group of 35-44 (UGC impact). However, the congruity model is significant ($F = 16.052$, $p < .00$). The model



explains 36,6% of the variance, and its related with personality, since neuroticism ($t = 2.425, p < .05$), and openness ($t = 2.293, p < .05$) contribute positively to the model (Table 7.89). The same pattern holds for the MGC's impact (Table 7.90), with 32,5% of the variance to be explained by the congruity model and neuroticism to be the significant Big Five trait ($t = 3.199, p < .00$).

7.5.3 Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The regression models for the Evaluation of Alternatives are presented in Table 7.91. The models give significant results ($F = 2.286, p < .05$, and $F = 51.261, p < .00$, respectively). The second model of congruity, though, explains 32,9% more of the variance. The openness ($t = 2.937, p < .00$), and the conscientiousness ($t = -2.051, p < .05$) are the significant personality traits in the self-congruity model.

Table 7.91 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives

Dependent Evaluation UGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.079	1.277	.202	.080	1.581	.115
<i>Extraversion</i>	.045	.714	.476	.052	1.018	.309
<i>Openness</i>	.123	1.920	.055	.154	2.937	.003
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.127	2.033	.043	.099	1.948	.052
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.050	-.793	.428	-.106	-2.051	.041
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.580	17.04	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.213	17.058	.000	1.234	6.406	.000
<i>R</i>		.140			.590	
<i>R²</i>		.019			.348	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.011			.342	
<i>F</i>		2.286			51.261	
<i>Sig.</i>		.045			.000	



On the contrary, the (MGC) personality model is not significant (Table 7.92). The self-congruity model, however, reveals significance ($F = 36.992$, $p < .00$) which explains 27,9% of the variance. Nevertheless, personality does not related with congruence, since none of the Big Five traits is significant in the second model.

Table 7.92 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives

Dependent Evaluation MGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.064	1.039	.299	.041	.780	.436
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.006	-.090	.928	.010	.180	.857
<i>Openness</i>	.080	1.238	.216	.068	1.232	.219
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.015	.247	.805	.028	.524	.600
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.088	1.376	.169	.062	1.146	.252
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.480	14.636	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.848	15.057	.000	1.406	7.432	.000
<i>R</i>		.099			.528	
<i>R²</i>		.010			.279	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.001			.271	
<i>F</i>		1.130			36.992	
<i>Sig.</i>		.343			.000	

Gender Implications on Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The analysis of the men behavior, under the impact of the UGC, is given in Table 7.93. Results indicate mediation, while the regression of congruity by the Big Five traits (Table 7.94) confirms it. Since, agreeableness ($t = 2.014$, $p < .05$) is significant in the congruity model, mediation is partial. Moreover, the model 2 ($F = 24.973$, $p < .00$) explains 38,9% of the variance, contrary to the personality model ($F = 3.137$, $p < .00$) which only explains 6,2%. Congruity is important even under the impact of the MGC (Table 7.95). The self-congruity model is the only significant ($F = 19.647$, $p <$



.00, $R^2 = 33,4\%$). The fact that none of the personality traits is significant in model 2 indicates that congruity is related to other reasons beyond Big Five.

Table 7.93 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Men

Dependent Evaluation UGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.172	1.798	.073	.049	.622	.535
<i>Extraversion</i>	.093	.940	.348	.021	.267	.790
<i>Openness</i>	.152	1.925	.055	.141	1.444	.150
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.167	1.691	.092	.161	2.014	.045
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.159	1.602	.111	.018	.221	.825
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.591	11.218	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.566	9.003	.000	1.018	3.791	.000
<i>R</i>		.250			.624	
<i>R²</i>		.062			.389	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.042			.374	
<i>F</i>		3.137			24.973	
<i>Sig.</i>		.009			.000	

Table 7.94 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Men

Dependent Info SCU_MEN	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.210	2.184	.030
<i>Extraversion</i>	.121	1.225	.222
<i>Openness</i>	.019	.191	.849
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.010	.105	.916
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.238	2.405	.017
<i>Constant</i>	2.620	9.195	.000
<i>R</i>		.236	
<i>R²</i>		.056	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.036	
<i>F</i>		2.796	
<i>Sig.</i>		.018	



Table 7.95 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Men

Dependent Evaluation MGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.079	.743	.458	.101	1.162	.246
<i>Extraversion</i>	.005	.045	.964	.157	1.726	.086
<i>Openness</i>	.054	.499	.619	-.006	-.069	.945
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.017	-.159	.874	.070	.781	.436
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.098	.893	.373	-.080	-.880	.380
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.546	10.720	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.811	8.920	.000	1.151	3.814	.000
<i>R</i>		.092			.578	
<i>R²</i>		.008			.334	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.013			.317	
<i>F</i>		.400			19.647	
<i>Sig.</i>		.849			.000	

Table 7.96 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Women

Dependent Evaluation UGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.004	.052	.958	.100	1.467	.143
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.023	-.280	.780	.050	.727	.468
<i>Openness</i>	.111	1.311	.191	.161	2.275	.024
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.080	.984	.326	.045	.660	.510
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.207	-2.497	.013	-.199	-2.885	.004
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.562	12.189	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.787	15.017	.000	1.476	5.219	.000
<i>R</i>		.154			.570	
<i>R²</i>		.024			.325	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.009			.313	
<i>F</i>		1.622			26.711	
<i>Sig.</i>		.154			.000	



Women analysis showed non-significant results for the personality models both under the UGC's and MGC's impact. Self-congruity models, though, are significant in both cases. Under the impact of the UGC congruity explains 24% of the variance ($F = 26.711$, $p < .00$), with openness ($t = 2.275$, $p < .05$) and conscientiousness ($t = -2.885$, $p < .00$) to contribute to the model (Table 7.96). Under the impact of the MGC congruity explains 24% of the variance ($F = 17.493$, $p < .00$), while the Big Five traits do not contribute to the model (Table 7.97).

Table 7.97 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Women

Dependent Evaluation MGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.033	.428	.669	.018	.268	.789
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.028	-.355	.723	-.056	-.821	.412
<i>Openness</i>	.097	1.216	.225	.110	1.558	.120
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.016	.213	.831	.023	.336	.737
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.087	1.112	.267	.123	1.784	.075
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.444	9.999	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.953	12.375	.000	1.526	6.020	.000
<i>R</i>		.107			.490	
<i>R²</i>		.011			.240	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.003			.226	
<i>F</i>		.769			17.493	
<i>Sig.</i>		.573			.000	

Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The UGC regression analysis of the Evaluation of Alternatives stage, for the 18-24 age group, implies mediation (Table 7.98). The beta values of the congruity model ($F = 11.860$, $p < .00$), are lower than those in the personality model ($F = 3.356$, $p < .00$). The regression given in Table 7.99 confirms the mediation, while the significance of



extraversion ($t = 2.518, p < .05$) and openness ($t = 2.519, p < .05$) indicate that this mediation is partial.

Table 7.98 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 18-24

Dependent Evaluation UGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.142	1.029	.306	.098	.839	.403
<i>Extraversion</i>	.362	2.915	.004	.266	2.518	.013
<i>Openness</i>	.280	1.425	.157	.187	2.513	.013
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.048	.367	.715	-.129	-1.134	.259
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.039	.297	.767	-.162	-1.420	.158
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.560	6.902	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.014	7.429	.000	1.431	3.470	.001
<i>R</i>		.356			.618	
<i>R²</i>		.126			.382	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.089			.350	
<i>F</i>		3.356			11.860	
<i>Sig.</i>		.007			.000	

Table 7.99 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 18-24

Dependent Evaluation SCU_18-24	Model SCU		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	-.078	-.589	.557
<i>Extraversion</i>	.171	1.423	.157
<i>Openness</i>	.167	1.318	.190
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.316	2.493	.014
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.358	2.839	.005
<i>Constant</i>	2.825	7.211	.000
<i>R</i>		.323	
<i>R²</i>		.104	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.066	
<i>F</i>		2.699	
<i>Sig.</i>		.024	



The MGC's impact is given in Table 7.100. Both models are significant ($F = 2.481$, $p < .05$, and $F = 17.651$, $p < .00$, respectively). However, the R^2 of the congruity model has a value of .479, while the corresponding value at the personality model is only .097. Therefore, self-congruity explains better the behavior of this age group, with neuroticism ($t = 2.319$, $p < .05$) and openness ($t = 2.489$, $p < .05$) to be significant in the congruity model.

Table 7.100 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 18-24

Dependent Evaluation MGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.283	1.806	.073	.277	2.319	.022
<i>Extraversion</i>	.034	.241	.810	.045	.418	.677
<i>Openness</i>	.344	2.312	.023	.283	2.489	.014
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.086	.573	.568	.050	.437	.663
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.048	.326	.745	-.104	-.907	.366
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.564	9.196	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.009	4.360	.000	.569	1.478	.142
<i>R</i>		.311			.692	
<i>R²</i>		.097			.479	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.058			.452	
<i>F</i>		2.481			17.651	
<i>Sig.</i>		.036			.000	

For the group of 25-34, personality ($F = 3.706$, $p < .00$) and congruity ($F = 22.950$, $p < .00$) models are significant (Table 7.101), under the impact of the UGC. Though, even in this case, the self-congruity model explains 28,4% more of the model's variance. Two of the personality traits are significant when congruity is controlled, the openness trait ($t = 2.288$, $p < .05$) and the agreeableness trait ($t = 3.748$, $p < .00$). On the other side, when MGC impacts on the evaluations, personality's regression is not significant (Table 7.102). However, the self-congruity model is significant ($F = 10.807$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .203$), while Big Five traits do not contribute to this model.



Table 7.101 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 25-34

Dependent Evaluation UGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.052	.595	.552	.074	1.007	.315
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.003	-.030	.976	.015	.201	.841
<i>Openness</i>	.157	1.753	.081	.172	2.288	.023
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.330	3.778	.000	.274	3.748	.000
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.019	.210	.834	-.081	-1.056	.292
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.535	10.543	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.955	10.869	.000	1.194	4.232	.000
<i>R</i>		.260			.593	
<i>R²</i>		.068			.352	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.049			.336	
<i>F</i>		3.706			22.950	
<i>Sig.</i>		.003			.000	

Table 7.102 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 25-34

Dependent Evaluation MGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.061	.694	.488	-.003	-.035	.972
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.123	-1.381	.168	-.074	-.925	.356
<i>Openness</i>	.056	.622	.534	.043	.531	.596
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.062	-.704	.482	-.027	-.341	.733
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.084	.918	.360	.051	.616	.539
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.388	7.740	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.156	11.552	.000	1.987	6.880	.000
<i>R</i>		.124			.451	
<i>R²</i>		.015			.203	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.004			.185	
<i>F</i>		.802			10.807	
<i>Sig.</i>		.549			.000	

The 35-44 age group follows the same pattern under the UGC's and the MGC's impact, with personality models to be non-significant in both cases (Tables 7.103 and 7.104). Nevertheless, the congruity models are significant ($F = 18.271$, $p < .00$,



and $F = 14.432$, $p < .00$, respectively), while the personality traits didn't show significance under the UGC's or the MGC's impact.

Table 7.103 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Evaluation of Alternatives for Age 35-44

Dependent Evaluation UGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.103	.799	.425	.162	1.589	.114
<i>Extraversion</i>	.013	.099	.921	.040	.370	.712
<i>Openness</i>	.156	1.143	.255	.158	1.469	.144
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.084	-.619	.537	-.058	-.542	.588
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.116	-.901	.369	-.069	-.686	.494
<i>Evaluation SCU</i>				.616	10.285	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.516	9.284	.000	1.180	3.155	.002
<i>R</i>		.118			.630	
<i>R²</i>		.014			.396	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.015			.375	
<i>F</i>		.474			18.271	
<i>Sig.</i>		.795			.000	

Table 7.104 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 35-44

Dependent Evaluation MGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	-.104	-.835	.405	-.184	-1.293	.199
<i>Extraversion</i>	.166	1.268	.206	.097	.902	.368
<i>Openness</i>	-.100	-.765	.445	-.053	-.487	.627
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.032	-.243	.808	-.054	-.498	.619
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.112	.906	.366	.166	1.634	.104
<i>Evaluation SCC</i>				.547	9.014	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.208	8.820	.000	1.386	3.838	.000
<i>R</i>		.145			.584	
<i>R²</i>		.021			.341	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.008			.318	
<i>F</i>		.722			14.432	
<i>Sig.</i>		.608			.000	



7.5.4 Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

With respect to the purchase decision stage, the two regression models of the UGC's impact are given in Table 7.105. Personality model is significant ($F = 4.072$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .034$). The second model of congruity is also significant ($F = 69.048$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .419$). Therefore, congruity among users substantially contributes to the purchase decision in social media. In the second model, agreeableness ($t = 3.470$, $p < .00$) and conscientiousness ($t = -2.856$, $p < .00$) are the personality traits which contribute to the relation.

Table 7.105 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision

Dependent Purchase UGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.152	2.540	.011	.088	1.892	.059
<i>Extraversion</i>	.042	.690	.490	.012	.262	.794
<i>Openness</i>	.021	.340	.734	.072	1.479	.140
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.199	3.295	.001	.163	3.470	.001
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.110	-1.794	.073	-.136	-2.856	.004
<i>Purchase SCU</i>				.584	19.507	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.179	17.426	.000	1.328	7.791	.000
<i>R</i>		.185			.647	
<i>R²</i>		.034			.419	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.026			.413	
<i>F</i>		4.072			69.048	
<i>Sig.</i>		.001			.000	

Regarding the MGC's impact (Table 7.106) on purchase decision, personality does not influence consumer behavior (personality model is not significant). However, when congruity is controlled the model is significant ($F = 44.081$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .253$). Therefore, congruity is a major factor of explaining purchasing decision under the



impact of the MGC, with neuroticism ($t = 2.029$, $p < .05$) to be the contributing personality factor, in this case.

Table 7.106 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Purchase Decision

Dependent Purchase MGC	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.081	1.445	.149	.136	2.029	.043
<i>Extraversion</i>	.022	.320	.749	.026	.463	.644
<i>Openness</i>	-.052	-.746	.456	-.053	-.913	.362
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.007	-.096	.923	.069	1.208	.228
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.113	1.642	.101	.063	1.088	.277
<i>Purchase SCC</i>				.565	15.920	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.021	14.740	.000	1.340	6.670	.000
<i>R</i>		.222			.503	
<i>R²</i>		.049			.253	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.044			.248	
<i>F</i>		1.535			44.081	
<i>Sig.</i>		.177			.000	

Gender Implications on Self-congruity Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

The personality and the congruity model of the purchase stage, under the impact of the UGC, for men, are presented in Table 7.107. The models are significant ($F = 3.522$, $p < .00$ and $F = 35.486$, $p < .00$, respectively). The betas in the congruity model are all lower than in the personality model, while the R^2 change is equal to 40,6%. The regression of the congruity variable with the personality (Table 7.108) is also significant ($F = 4.925$, $p < .00$), confirming the mediating character of congruity for men. This mediation is partial since agreeableness is significant in the congruity model. The MGC's impact is analyzed in Table 7.109. The first model is not significant. However, the self-congruity model is significant ($F = 19.432$, $p < .00$; $R^2 =$



.332), with neuroticism to be the significant personality trait ($t = 2.486$, $p < .05$) when congruity is controlled.

Table 7.107 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision for Men

Dependent Purchase UGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.247	2.581	.010	-.019	-.261	.794
<i>Extraversion</i>	.190	1.926	.055	.100	1.346	.180
<i>Openness</i>	-.060	-.615	.539	-.076	-1.043	.298
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.304	3.094	.002	.209	2.819	.005
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.008	-.078	.938	-.106	-1.419	.157
<i>Purchase SCU</i>				.628	13.484	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.546	8.973	.000	1.262	5.398	.000
<i>R</i>		.264			.689	
<i>R²</i>		.069			.475	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.050			.462	
<i>F</i>		3.522			35.486	
<i>Sig.</i>		.004			.000	

Table 7.108 Regression analysis: relationship between personality and self-congruity of Purchase Decision for Men

Dependent Purchase SCU_MEN	Model		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Constant</i>	2.044	6.852	.000
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.423	4.217	.000
<i>Extraversion</i>	.143	1.377	.170
<i>Openness</i>	.026	.258	.797
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.150	1.458	.146
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.156	1.508	.133
<i>R</i>		.307	
<i>R²</i>		.094	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.075	
<i>F</i>		4.925	
<i>Sig.</i>		.000	



Table 7.109 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Purchase Decision for Men

Dependent Purchase MGC MEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.174	1.525	.129	.292	2.486	.014
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.088	-.750	.454	-.033	-.338	.735
<i>Openness</i>	-.116	-1.006	.316	-.141	-1.461	.145
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.038	.322	.747	.086	.880	.380
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.067	.701	.484	.089	.887	.376
<i>Purchase SCC</i>				.587	10.116	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.736	8.091	.000	1.357	4.321	.000
<i>R</i>		.201			.576	
<i>R²</i>		.041			.332	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.020			.315	
<i>F</i>		1.996			19.432	
<i>Sig.</i>		.080			.000	

For women the UGC's regressions are presented in Table 7.110. The personality model is significant ($F = 2.250$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .033$), however, the congruity model ($F = 35.171$, $p < .00$) explains much more of the variance ($R^2 = .388$). Therefore, congruity is a necessary element, when trying to explain women' purchasing behavior. Neuroticism ($t = 2.588$, $p < .05$), openness ($t = 2.913$, $p < .00$) and conscientiousness ($t = -2.991$, $p < .00$) all contribute to the congruity model.

Congruity seems also to be an explanatory factor of women behavior when considering purchases, under the impact of the MGC (Table 7.111). The congruity model is the only significant ($F = 21.735$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .281$). However, personality traits are not significant, even when congruity is controlled, showing that for women the congruity with companies is based on other aspects and not on personality.



Table 7.110 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision for Women

Dependent Purchase UGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.086	1.121	.263	.159	2.588	.010
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.085	-1.101	.272	-.078	-1.260	.209
<i>Openness</i>	.078	.984	.326	.186	2.913	.004
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.106	1.382	.168	.105	1.719	.087
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.210	-2.702	.007	-.185	-2.991	.003
<i>Purchase SCU</i>				.558	13.903	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.752	15.821	.000	1.481	5.928	.000
<i>R</i>		.181			.623	
<i>R²</i>		.033			.388	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.018			.377	
<i>F</i>		2.250			35.171	
<i>Sig.</i>		.049			.000	

Table 7.111 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Purchase Decision for Women

Dependent Purchase MGC WOMEN	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.058	.709	.479	.061	.883	.378
<i>Extraversion</i>	.049	.592	.555	.049	.702	.483
<i>Openness</i>	-.011	-.131	.896	.006	.077	.939
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.103	-1.276	.203	.012	.172	.863
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.015	.179	.858	.052	.732	.465
<i>Purchase SCC</i>				.517	11.277	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.448	13.699	.000	1.567	5.767	.000
<i>R</i>		.084			.530	
<i>R²</i>		.007			.281	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.008			.268	
<i>F</i>		.471			21.735	
<i>Sig.</i>		.798			.000	



Age Implications on Personality Association with UGC/MGC Impact on Travel Purchase Decision

The regression results, for the age group of 18-24, showed that congruence affects their purchasing decision, under the impact of the UGC. The congruity model ($F = 5.689$, $p < .00$) explains 13,5% more variance, compared to the personality model ($F = 2.412$, $p < .05$). Moreover, agreeableness stays significant ($t = 2.012$, $p < .05$) when congruity is controlled (Table 7.112).

Table 7.112 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision for Age 18-24

Dependent Purchase UGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.067	.578	.564	.056	.516	.607
<i>Extraversion</i>	.131	1.254	.212	.053	.540	.590
<i>Openness</i>	-.011	-.096	.923	.044	.431	.667
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.290	2.617	.010	.210	2.012	.047
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.090	-.817	.416	-.196	-1.870	.064
<i>Purchase SCU</i>				.299	4.482	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.065	8.962	.000	2.342	6.587	.000
<i>R</i>		.307			.478	
<i>R²</i>		.094			.229	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.055			.189	
<i>F</i>		2.412			5.689	
<i>Sig.</i>		.040			.000	

On the other hand, when the MGC impacts on the 18-24 behavior, Big Five regression with the purchase decision is not significant (Table 7.113). Nevertheless, when congruity is controlled, the model is significant ($F = 13.259$, $p < .00$), as well as the trait of openness-to-experience ($t = 2.886$, $p < .00$).



Table 7.113 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and MGC impact on Purchase Decision for Age 18-24

Dependent Purchase MGC 18-24	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.136	.804	.423	.048	.351	.726
<i>Extraversion</i>	.036	.237	.813	-.064	-.519	.605
<i>Openness</i>	.437	2.731	.007	.373	2.886	.005
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.168	-1.044	.299	-.144	-1.115	.267
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.027	.169	.866	-.142	-1.089	.279
<i>Purchase SCC</i>				.553	7.976	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.733	5.509	.000	1.586	3.733	.000
<i>R</i>		.286			.639	
<i>R²</i>		.082			.409	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.042			.378	
<i>F</i>		2.069			13.259	
<i>Sig.</i>		.074			.000	

For the age group of 25-34, the results of the UGC's impact regression models are given in Table 7.114. Both models are significant ($F = 3.112$, $p < .05$ and $F = 38.575$, $p < .00$, respectively). The congruity model, however, explains 47,7% of the variance, while the personality model only 5,8%. Three out of the Big Five traits are significant in the congruity model: openness ($t = 2.036$, $p < .05$), agreeableness ($t = 3.740$, $p < .00$), and conscientiousness ($t = -2.461$, $p < .05$). The personality model of the MGC's impact is not significant (Table 7.115). Nevertheless, when congruity is controlled the model is significant ($F = 14.536$, $p < .00$, $R^2 = .256$), as well as neuroticism ($t = 2.552$, $p < .05$).

For the age group of 35-44, personality models are non-significant both under the UGC's and MGC's impact (Tables 7.116 and 7.117). The congruity models, however, are significant ($F = 29.602$, $p < .00$; $R^2 = .515$ and $F = 19.616$, $p < .00$; $R^2 = .413$, respectively). Moreover, while personality traits didn't show significance under the impact of the UGC, conscientiousness ($t = 2.260$, $p < .05$) is significant under the impact of the MGC.



Table 7.114 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision for Age 25-34

Dependent Purchase UGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.156	1.774	.077	.080	1.217	.225
<i>Extraversion</i>	.011	.119	.905	.001	.012	.990
<i>Openness</i>	.075	.835	.405	.137	2.036	.043
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.289	3.308	.001	.244	3.740	.000
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.045	-.499	.618	-.168	-2.461	.015
<i>Purchase SCU</i>				.613	14.266	.000
<i>Constant</i>	2.999	11.037	.000	1.139	4.724	.000
<i>R</i>		.240			.690	
<i>R²</i>		.058			.477	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.039			.464	
<i>F</i>		3.112			38.575	
<i>Sig.</i>		.010			.000	

Table 7.115 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Purchase Decision for Age 25-34

Dependent Purchase MGC 25-34	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.150	1.577	.116	.240	2.552	.011
<i>Extraversion</i>	-.090	-.940	.348	-.022	-.268	.789
<i>Openness</i>	-.126	-1.303	.194	-.126	-1.491	.137
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.048	-.506	.613	.043	.513	.608
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.048	.491	.624	-.024	-.283	.777
<i>Purchase SCC</i>				.491	8.903	.000
<i>Constant</i>	3.398	11.599	.000	1.947	6.411	.000
<i>R</i>		.153			.506	
<i>R²</i>		.023			.256	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.004			.238	
<i>F</i>		1.217			14.536	
<i>Sig.</i>		.302			.000	



Table 7.116 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and UGC impact on Purchase Decision for Age 35-44

Dependent Purchase UGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.115	.868	.386	.098	1.053	.294
<i>Extraversion</i>	.179	1.285	.200	.174	1.772	.078
<i>Openness</i>	.008	.056	.955	.051	.517	.606
<i>Agreeableness</i>	-.018	-.131	.896	-.037	-.380	.705
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	-.156	-1.189	.236	.024	.253	.801
<i>Purchase SCU</i>					13.07	
<i>Constant</i>	3.353	8.676	.000	.716	4	.000
<i>R</i>		.139			.718	
<i>R²</i>		.019			.515	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		-.010			.498	
<i>F</i>		.665			29.602	
<i>Sig.</i>		.650			.000	

Table 7.117 Regression analysis: relationship between personality, self-congruity, and of MGC impact on Need Recognition for Age 35-44

Dependent Purchase MGC 35-44	Model 1 Personality			Model 2 Self-congruity		
	Beta	t-value	Sig. t	Beta	t-value	Sig. t
<i>Neuroticism</i>	.007	.055	.956	.192	1.795	.074
<i>Extraversion</i>	.187	1.318	.189	.124	1.117	.266
<i>Openness</i>	-.258	-1.815	.071	-.098	-.873	.384
<i>Agreeableness</i>	.006	.045	.964	.056	.503	.616
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	.191	1.427	.156	.237	2.260	.025
<i>Purchase SCC</i>					10.35	
<i>Constant</i>	3.156	8.012	.000	.690	6	.000
<i>R</i>		.192			.643	
<i>R²</i>		.037			.413	
<i>Adjusted R²</i>		.008			.392	
<i>F</i>		1.280			19.616	
<i>Sig.</i>		.275			.000	



7.6 Conclusions

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the statistical analysis of the data, which were selected by the research's questionnaire. The chapter contains the description of the sample, the transformation of the variables, the analysis for the travel planning process, as well as the analysis of the self-congruity measurement.

The sample of the study contains individuals who are mainly women, aged between 25-44, with an income up to 50.000€, holding at least a graduate degree, mainly located in Europe. These characteristics are in accordance with the demographics of SNSs users given by Chappell (2012), except origin. However, respondents come from two databases with mainly European customers, and therefore, the sample can be considered as sufficiently representative of the study population.

The variables of the study were factor analyzed and the resultant variables are presented in Table 7.118:

Table 7.118 Study's Variables

Personality	Travel Planning UGC	Travel Planning MGC	Self-congruity UGC	Self-congruity MGC	Posting Reasons	Non posting Reasons
Neuroticism	Need UGC	Need MGC	Need SCU	Need SCC	Company	No incentives /interest
Extraversion	Info UGC	Info MGC	Info SCU	Info SCC	Consumer	Constraints /Obstacles
Openness	Evaluation UGC	Evaluation MGC	Evaluation SCU	Evaluation SCC	Emotional	Privacy /Secrecy
Agreeableness	Purchase UGC	Purchase MGC	Purchase SCU	Purchase SCC		
Conscientiousness						



Travel planning analysis showed that UGC impact on individuals behavior is higher than the impact of MGC in all the four stages of: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives and purchase decision. The personality investigation of the four stages showed that:

- Need UGC is affected by neuroticism, extraversion, openness, and agreeableness
- Info UGC is affected by neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and non-conscientiousness
- Evaluation UGC is affected by openness, and agreeableness
- Purchase UGC is affected by neuroticism, and agreeableness
- Need MGC is affected by neuroticism and conscientiousness
- Info MGC is affected by neuroticism
- Evaluation MGC is not affected by personality
- Purchase MGC is affected by neuroticism

Among the posting reasons the most encouraging one is consumers followed by companies, and emotions. On the other side, the most discouraging non posting reason is the lack of Interest/Incentives followed by constraints/obstacles, and privacy/secretcy. Concerning the type of the content posting by individuals this showed to be more related to the visited destinations and less to the accommodation lodgings. Regarding the personality influence:

- General posting behavior is influenced by neuroticism, openness, and agreeableness
- Destination posting behavior is influenced by extraversion
- Accommodation posting behavior is influenced by extraversion and conscientiousness
- Companies factor is influenced by neuroticism and extraversion
- Emotions factor is influenced by neuroticism, extraversion and non-openness
- Consumers factor is influenced by extraversion



- No Incentives/Interest factor is influenced by non-neuroticism and introversion
- Constraints/Obstacles factor is influenced by non-openness
- Privacy/Secrecy factor is influenced by non-openness and non-agreeableness.

Self-congruity analysis showed that:

- Need SCU substantially contributes, as a partial mediator, in the explanation of Need UGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Info SCU substantially contributes in the explanation of the Info UGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Evaluation SCU substantially contributes in the explanation of the Evaluation UGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Purchase SCU substantially contributes in the explanation of the Purchase UGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Need SCC substantially contributes in the explanation of the Need MGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Info SCC substantially contributes in the explanation of the Info MGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled
- Evaluation SCC substantially contributes in the explanation of the Evaluation MGC – personality does not contribute when self-congruity is controlled
- Purchase SCC substantially contributes in the explanation of the Purchase MGC – personality also contributes when self-congruity is controlled

Several differences also found between the two genders, and among the three age groups during the analysis of both travel planning process and self-congruity.



Part IV

DISCUSSION – CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 8

Discussion and Implications

8.1 Introduction

In the current chapter are discussed the results of the study, which were presented in the previous chapter. The chapter is structured according to the five stages of the Travel Planning Process.

Furthermore, discussion is organized according to the dissertation's research questions. In this vein, first are discussed the findings of the Travel Planning Process, and then the Self-congruity results. In each decision stage, a table summarizes the results of the personality analysis. Next are discussed the main research questions, as well as the corresponding sub-questions.

The discussion is further subdivided into the UGC's and the MGC's impact analysis in every stage of the traveler's decision-making process.



8.2 Travel Planning Process

At this point, the findings, related to the Travel Planning Process in social media, are discussed. Discussion is separately given for each of the five stages and is further categorized according to the UGC's and MGC's impact in the related research questions.

8.2.1 Travel Need Recognition

Travel motivation, under the impact of the social media content (UGC and MGC), was examined according to the following facets:

- a) Inspires me to travel
- b) Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before

Both facets contributed to the variables of *Need UGC* and *Need MGC* of the study. Results indicate that both UGC and MGC motivate people to travel. This comes in accordance to Gretzel et al. (2007), who underlined the role of social media during the pre-trip stage, as well as with other studies which link the internet use with travel motives (Frias et al., 2008; Ren et al., 2009; Abd Aziz et al., 2006; 2010). However, the comparison between the UGC and the MGC influence showed a clear predominance of user published content in the travel need recognition. In other words, UGC is more powerful than MGC in motivating consumers to travel. Between genders, women influenced more than men, by the social media content (UGC and MGC). Among the age groups, the individuals of 18-24 are stimulated more by users' than marketers' content, compared to the older travelers, while no differences are reported for the MGC's influence. Notwithstanding, regardless age or gender, individuals are stimulated to travel mainly when they interact with the UGC. Below are given the personality implications of the travel content (UGC and MGC) impact in the formation of travel stimuli.



UGC - Travel Need Recognition

Table 8.1 summarizes the results of the personality association with the UGC's impact in Travel Need Recognition. According to this summary, following is given the discussion of the corresponding research questions.

Table 8.1 Personality Overall Results of UGC impact on Travel Need Recognition

Need Recognition UGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>	✓	✓		✓		
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>	✓		✓			✓
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>						

RQ (1a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel need recognition?

Four out of the five personality traits are associated with Travel Need Recognition. Therefore, personality is an important indicator of how people decide to travel when interacting with social media UGC. This comes in accordance with other studies which link personality and travel motivation (Parks & Guay, 2009; Komarraju & Karau, 2005; Clark & Schroth, 2010). Need Recognition is associated with neuroticism, extraversion, openness and agreeableness. When facing the unknown neurotics feel more distressed than others do (Hirsh, et al., 2008). Since, travel



activity often encompasses the “unknown” it is often associated with stressful situations. Nonetheless, when travel content is providing by other users it seems to chisel these impressions, offering a relaxing “ambience” that motivates neurotic individuals to travel. Extraverts enjoy sociability and tend to engage a lot in social activities (Wilt et al, 2009). Hence, UGC fulfils their need for social and interpersonal contact and inspires them to travel. Open-to-experience individuals love novelty and originality (McCrae et al., 2009). UGC supports, by definition, both novelty and originality and unsurprisingly attracts the interest of open people. High agreeableness is related to the intention of maintaining interpersonal positive relations and, moreover, with the “*willingness to suspend one’s individual interests for the good of one’s social group*” (Koole et al., 2001). Therefore, it is natural agreeable individuals to be inspired to travel by the UGC, since social media enhance interpersonal relations in a user-oriented collaborative manner that empowers social groups.

RQ (1a.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Neuroticism is associated with travel stimuli when users get in touch with user-generated-content. This is consistent with other studies which have shown that neuroticism is related to individual motivation (Judge et al., 2002; Komarraju & Karau, 2005; Clark & Schroth, 2010). Consequently, UGC acts sedative for neurotic people.

RQ (1a.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Extraversion drives travel stimuli when individuals interact with the UGC. The motivational character of extraversion is also affirmed by Komarraju et al. (2005) and Clark et al. (2010). Hence, UGC comforts the social needs of extraverts.



RQ (1a.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Openness-to-experience is related to the travel motivation under the impact of the UGC. This comes in accordance with studies that link motivation with openness (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010). In other words, UGC fulfills the curiosity of open people for the new and the original.

RQ (1a.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Agreeableness is associated with the travel need recognition under the impact of the UGC. In consequence, UGC reinforces the trusting feelings that describe agreeable people and encourages them to travel; a result which confirms that agreeableness is related to individual's motivation (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010).

RQ (1a.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel need recognition?*

In contrast to the Komarraju et al. (2005) and Clark et al. (2010) findings, which relate conscientiousness with behavior motivation, no relation was detected between travel motivation and conscientiousness under the impact of the UGC. It can be assumed that UGC is not related with responsibility, dutifully act and reliability that describe the conscientious people, since it is created with no professional intentions or implications.



MGC - Travel Need Recognition

The overall results for the association of the Big Five traits with the travel motives, under the impact of the MGC, are presented in Table 8.2. According to these results, below, are discussed the corresponding research questions.

Table 8.2 Personality Overall Results of MGC impact on Travel Need Recognition

Need Recognition MGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>						
<i>Non-openness</i>						✓
<i>Openness</i>						
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>						
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>	✓	✓		✓		

RQ (1b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel need recognition?

Neuroticism and conscientiousness are the traits that validate personality's association with the travel need recognition, under the MGC's impact. Moreover, low openness-to-experience is also shown an indirect association with travel motivation resulted by the MGC's influence. The findings confirm that neuroticism and conscientiousness are related to individuals' motivation (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010). hence, travel content provided by professionals mitigates the worries and anxieties of neurotic people. Furthermore, conscientious people, who



are very concerned about responsibility issues, are also influenced by the MGC. On that account, it is assumed that marketing content is more reliable to them due to its professional character. Consequently, when people interact with marketers' content, they are inspired to travel because of the official aspect of this content. They seem to trust MGC because of its formal type which eliminates their anxieties and enhances their reliability intents. On the other hand, MGC does not enhance creativity and imagination since it affects non-open individuals.

RQ (1b.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Neuroticism is one of the Big Five traits that motivate people to travel when they read professional travel content. This is in accordance with Komarraju et al. (2005) and Clark et al. (2010) who found that neuroticism is associated with individuals' stimulation. Thus, MGC has the power to quiet the concerns of neurotic people which related to the travel decisions.

RQ (1b.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Although extraversion has been found to be associated with individuals' motivation (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010), it didn't show any relation with travel motivation. Therefore, MGC does not boost interpersonal interaction and sociability, in order to inspire travel intentions.

RQ (1b.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Openness-to-experience is associated indirectly with the travel need recognition when individuals underact with the MGC. The association of openness and motives is also affirmed by other studies (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010). Less



open individuals, between 35 to 44 years old, are those who associate openness with the MGC's impact in travel motivation. Thus, MGC is not considered as an innovative source by the social media users.

RQ (1b.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel need recognition?*

Agreeableness is not associated with the MGC's impact in travel need recognition, although this trait has been found to predict individuals' motivation (Komarraju et al., 2005; Clark et al., 2010). Hence, travelers are somehow skeptical with the MGC.

RQ (1b.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel need recognition?*

The fact that conscientiousness is associated with travel need recognition shows that the professional character of the MGC is connected with the reliability and the validity that this type of traveler searches for. Men, and the 18-24 age group, are showing association with conscientiousness, under the impact of the MGC.



8.2.2 Information Search

Travel Information Search was studied according to the following aspects:

- a) Helps me find travel information when I need it
- b) Reduces my effort to find travel information
- c) Increases the quality of travel information

All three aspects were successfully incorporated into the Info UGC and Info MGC variables. However, the UGC found to be more effective when compared to the MGC's influence. Hence, when people search for travel information in the social media, users' content dominates on the content provided by travel suppliers. Nevertheless, the MGC is still influential, but less than UGC, when information about destinations, accommodation lodgings, and other travel products is demanded by tourists.

Women, compared to men, are more sensitive both to the MGC's and the UGC's influence, while no differences reported with respect to the age groups. However, UGC still overtakes the MGC's impact, for both genders and all age groups.

Below are discussed the corresponding personality research questions with respect to the UGC's and the MGC's impact in the travel information search.



UGC - Travel Information Search

The overall personality influence on travel information search, when individuals interact with the UGC, is presented in Table 8.3. Below are discussed the research questions of the current stage.

Table 8.3 Personality Overall Results of UGC impact on Travel Information Search

UGC - Information Search	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>	✓	✓				
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>						
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>	✓				✓	
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Conscientiousness</i>						

RQ (2a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel information search?

The significance of neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and non-conscientiousness traits shows that personality influences the travel information search through the UGC. Heinström (2003) and Halder et al. (2010) have been found that neuroticism sets obstacles in information search. However, when this search is related to the UGC, neuroticism is positively related to the information search. This suggests that the user-generated-content reduces the negative emotions of neurotic people and enhances their attempts when gathering travel information.



Extraversion is also positively related to the travel information search with the UGC contribution, affirming that extraversion is related to informal sources and to thought-provoking information (Heinström, 2003). Moreover, UGC enriches the feeling of compatibility that agreeable people looking, in their relations with others, and helps them when searching for travel information. This is in accordance to Halder et al. (2010) who found that agreeableness eliminates search obstacles. Finally, non-conscientiousness found to affect the information search when UGC incorporated. This finding is reverse to the conclusions of Heinström (2003) and Halder et al. (2010), showing that UGC is more related to leisure activity in the social media.

RQ (2a.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel information search?*

Although, neuroticism has been found to be correlated with information research obstacles (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010), in the case of the UGC incorporation in decision-making, neuroticism supports positively travel information search. This shows that the UGC is a source that reduces travelers' anxiety and lowers their worries when seeking for travel information.

RQ (2a.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel information search?*

Extraversion is associated with travel information search related to the UGC. This is consistent with the findings of Heinström (2003) and Halder et al. (2010) which support that extraversion enhances information search.



RQ (2a.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel information search?*

Openness-to-experience does not show any association with information search in social media, in contrast to the results of Heinström (2003) and Halder et al. (2010). It seems that UGC has been already integrated in the traditional travel information sources and users find normal to incorporate this kind of information in their searches.

RQ (2a.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel information search?*

According to other studies that link agreeableness with information seeking behavior (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010), agreeableness shows association with travel information search at the UGC. Therefore, it seems that through the UGC's usage, people find ways for social cooperation.

RQ (2a.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel information search?*

While conscientiousness has shown to positively affect information search behavior (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010), when UGC interferes, conscientiousness is a negative indicator of searching travel info. The informal style of the UGC seems to match more with non-conscientious users whose behavior is less reticent.



MGC - Travel Information Search

The role of personality in the Travel Information Search behavior, when the MGC is incorporated, is given in Table 8.4. Further, are discussed the research questions related to this stage.

Table 8.4 Personality Overall Results of MGC impact on Travel Information Search

MGC - Information Search	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓	✓	✓			
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>						
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>				✓		
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>						
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>		✓				

RQ (2b): *Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel information search?*

Travel information search when MGC involves, is directly related with neuroticism, and indirectly with openness and conscientiousness. Neuroticism, hence, is the dominant trait that drives consumer behavior. In contrast to Heinström (2003) who argues that neuroticism puts constraints related to information relevance and secure, it seems that when professionals' content helps neurotic people to handle their concerns of travel information sources validity. Nevertheless, openness and conscientiousness also show an impact, though lower, indicating that people see the



presence of travel suppliers in the social media as an innovative activity, as well as the formal content as a trustful one. This is in accordance to Halder et al. (2010) who found that both openness and conscientiousness positively affect the information search behavior.

RQ (2b.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel information search?*

Neuroticism shows association with travel information search when the MGC influences the consumers' behavior. Although in other studies (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010) neuroticism was negatively correlated with the info search, the MGC appears to enhance neurotics when searching for travel products' information.

RQ (2b.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel information search?*

Extraversion is not related to the travel information search through the MGC. This supports Heinström's (2003) findings, who argued that extraverts are relied to more informal sources, such as friends, for information.

RQ (2b.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel information search?*

Openness-to-experience indirectly affects the travel info search via marketers' content. In accordance to the Halder et al. (2010), openness inclines in active information search and acquisition of diverse information sources, including the source of MGC.



RQ (2b.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel information search?*

In contrast to the Heinström (2003) and Halder et al. (2010), the agreeableness is not related with information search, when the MGC is used. Therefore, MGC does not provide the trustworthiness that agreeable people demand in their social expressed activities.

RQ (2b.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel information search?*

Conscientiousness is related to the MGC's impact in travel information search, though indirectly. Hence, the professional origin of the MGC positively affects the information search behavior, confirming the results of information behavior studies (Heinström, 2003; Halder et al., 2010).



8.2.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

The evaluation of travel alternatives, under UGC and MGC influence, has been studied through three statements:

- a) Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers
- b) Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)
- c) Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections

All statements contributed to the *Evaluation UGC* and *Evaluation MGC* variables. Research has shown that consumers consult both UGC and MGC when they evaluate their travel alternatives. However, the impact of UGC on their decisions is higher, following Tuominen (2011) findings that consumer reviews increase the probabilities of a hotel to be included in consumers' consideration and choice sets.

It appears that users are more affected by users' content, such as consumer reviews, when they evaluate travel products. This doesn't mean that they do not consider travel suppliers' content in social media. They also consult marketers' content, but still their decisions are dominated by consumer reviews.

The influence of personality traits on the above relationships is discussed beneath.



UGC - Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The association of personality with the UGC's influence in the Evaluation of Alternatives behavior, are described in Table 8.5. The research questions of this stage were discussed based on this summary.

Table 8.5 Personality Overall Results of UGC impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

UGC - Evaluation of Alternatives	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>						
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>				✓		
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>	✓	✓		✓		
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>						

RQ (3a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

Personality actually influences the evaluation of the travel alternatives with the UGC's utilization. Openness and agreeableness directly affect this relationship, while extraversion shows a latent association. The association of the openness illustrates that the UGC is considered by travelers as an original information source, when evaluating travel products. This is consistent with Kyoo Kim et al. (2011) who state that consumers, among other reasons, utilize online consumer reviews in order to



find out what is new in the market. Since, the UGC improves cooperation among users, agreeable individuals find it convenient for their judgments. Moreover, since extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions, UGC is the best way for them to evaluate travel products via social collaboration.

RQ (3a.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Neuroticism is not associated with the evaluation of travel alternatives when the UGC is used. It seems that when it comes to the evaluation of the travel choices, the UGC does not improve the emotional stability.

RQ (3a.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Extraversion is indirectly associated with the use of the UGC in the evaluation of travel alternatives, confirming that the UGC pleases extraverts by letting them involved in social communities' activities.

RQ (3a.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Openness-to-experience is positively associated with the UGC's exploitation in evaluating travel products. It is obvious that the UGC is considered by users as a creative, original, imaginative, and untraditional source of guiding products' valuation.



RQ (3a.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Agreeable individuals consider the UGC as an important external source in assessing the performance of travel products, suppliers and destinations. It appears that the UGC is considered as a valuable source for agreeable people because of its cooperative attributes.

RQ (3a.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Conscientiousness is not associated with the evaluation of travel alternatives under the impact of the UGC, affirming the intention of conscientious people to rely more on formal sources.



MGC - Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

The examination of the personality's influence in the travel alternatives evaluation, under the impact of the MGC, is presented in Table 8.6. Next are discussed the corresponding research questions.

Table 8.6 Personality Overall Results of MGC impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

MGC - Evaluation of Alternatives	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>						
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>						
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>						
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>						
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>			✓			
<i>Conscientiousness</i>		✓		✓		

RQ (3b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?

When referring to the evaluation of alternatives, under the impact of the MGC, personality doesn't show to have any remarkable impact. The conscientiousness is the only personality trait that contributes to the consumers' behavior. Nevertheless, this contribution is indirect and contradictory. High, as well as low conscientiousness have implications on the travelers' evaluations, when the MGC incorporated. This might be explained by the Kalmus et al. (2011) who showed that conscientious



individuals use the internet for work and information (WI) purposes, while non-conscientious individuals for social media and entertainment (SME) purposes.

RQ (3b.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Neurotic individuals do not prefer the MGC when comparing travel products. It seems that MGC does not help neurotics to control their impulses and to cope with the stress that might be originated by the products' comparisons.

RQ (3b.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Extraversion is not associated with the evaluation of travel alternatives under the MGC's impact. It seems that MGC does not provide users with the perceived ease of use and the perceived usefulness that the extraverts claim, when they use social media (Rosen & Kluemper, 2008).

RQ (3b.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Openness-to-experience is not associated with the evaluation of travel alternatives when MGC incorporated. Therefore, MGC does not inspire the curiosity and the imagination that open individuals need, in order to be encouraged to use social media content in their evaluations.



RQ (3b.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Agreeableness is not associated with the evaluation of travel alternatives under the MGC's impact. Thus, agreeable people do not find in the MGC the compassionate and cooperative aspects they are interested in.

RQ (3b.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel evaluation of alternatives?*

Conscientiousness is not associated directly with the evaluation of the travel alternatives, when MGC is exploited. However, conscientiousness has a latent impact on the consumers' evaluations. Interestingly, not only conscientious but also non-conscientious people find the MGC valuable, when evaluating travel products. This contradiction shows that in the case of the travel products' valuation, MGC expresses both rigorous and tolerant individuals. All in all, conscientiousness has implications in the MGC's contribution to the consideration sets of travelers.



8.2.4 Travel Purchase Decision

The travel purchase decision in social media was investigated by the following statements:

All three statements validated the variables of Purchase UGC and Purchase MGC which incorporated in the analysis of consumers' behavior. Social media content (UGC and MGC) found to affect travelers purchase decision, supporting other studies findings which connect social media use with purchase intentions (Huang et al., 2010; Mäntymäki & Salo, 2013; Guo & Barnes, 2011; Pookulangara et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2012; Kim, Gupta & Koh, 2011). Nevertheless, the non-professional content provided by other users has more implications on travelers' decision-making. UGC showed much more influence on the consumers' purchase decision than the MGC.

Differences related to the age did not detect among users, with respect to the content's origin (formal or non-formal). On the other hand, gender analysis revealed that women are more sensitive to both UGC's and MGC's impact. In general, the UGC influences respondents - of all ages and genders - more than the MGC does. This comes in accordance with the Ye et al. (2009) findings, which associate the positive consumer online reviews with increased number of hotel bookings, and the conflicted reviews with negative impacts on the hotels' sales.

The personality implications are discussed below.



UGC - Travel Purchase Decision

The overall results of the association of personality with the travel purchase decision, under the impact of the UGC, are given in Table 8.7. The discussion of the related research questions is presented next.

Table 8.7 Personality Overall Results of UGC impact on Travel Purchase Decision

UGC - Purchase Decision	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>						
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>						
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>						

RQ (4a): Is there an association between personality and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

The personality traits which affect purchase decision for travel products are the neuroticism and the agreeableness. Neuroticism and agreeableness have been also linked with online purchase behavior by several studies (Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010; Barkhi & Wallace, 2007). It seems that the UGC helps neurotics to handle their feelings when they face purchase decisions. Since, neurotic individuals are those who need, more than others, to reduce their fears when making decisions, it appears that UGC accommodates these uncertainties. Agreeable people, on the



other hand, seem to find in the UGC the aspects of social cooperation and consideration that are necessary for them.

RQ (4a.1): Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

The fact that the neuroticism is associated with travel purchase decision, under the impact of the UGC, suggests that users' content can positively affect and decrease the anxieties, which the travel purchase decision can cause. Neuroticism has also been related with the purchase behavior by the Bosnjak et al. (2007) and Tsao & Chang (2010).

RQ (4a.2): Is there an association between extraversion and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

Several studies have shown that extraversion has implications in the online purchase behavior (Barkhi & Wallace, 2007; Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010; Sahney et al., 2010). Interestingly, though, the extraversion is not associated with the travel purchase decision, under the impact of the UGC. It seems that when it comes to purchase, the UGC does not provide to the extraverts the desired convenience in building relations.

RQ (4a.3): Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?

In contrast to previous studies which link openness-to-experience with the online purchase intentions (Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010; Chen, 2011), in the case of the UGC openness is not associated with the travel purchase decision. It seems that open individuals do not consider UGC, as a source which improves their purchase decisions with creative ways.



RQ (4a.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

The fact that the agreeableness enhances the use of the UGC in the travel purchase decisions, shows that UGC fulfills the need of agreeable users to respect others. This comes in accordance to the studies of Bosnjak et al. (2007) and Tsao & Chang (2010).

RQ (4a.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

Conversely to the Tsao & Chang (2010) and Chen (2011) findings, conscientiousness is not associated with the travel purchase decision under the impact of the UGC, confirming the willingness of conscientious individuals to base their decisions on more formal sources.



MGC - Travel Purchase Decision

The following Table 8.8 presents how personality is associated to the travel purchase decision when the MGC incorporated. The research questions related to this stage are discussed afterwards.

Table 8.8 Personality Overall Results of MGC impact on Travel Purchase Decision

MGC - Purchase Decision	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>						
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓	✓			✓	
<i>Introversion</i>						
<i>Extraversion</i>						
<i>Non-openness</i>						
<i>Openness</i>						
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>						
<i>Agreeableness</i>						
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>						
<i>Conscientiousness</i>						

RQ (4b): Is there an association between personality and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?

Neuroticism is the only personality trait that associates personality with the MGC's impact in the travel purchase decision, confirming the findings of other studies (Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010;). Therefore, MGC enhances the purchase decision in social media via the trustworthiness provided by its professional mode. It seems that when it comes to the stage of booking travel services or suppliers, travelers require official advice and opinions coming from professional publishers.



The same stands for things to do/see at destinations, as well as the purchase of complementary travel products that enrich the tourist experience.

RQ (4b.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

According to the Bosnjak et al. (2007) and Tsao et al. (2010), neuroticism is associated with the web purchase behavior. The same stands even when MGC incorporated. It appears that experts' opinions make neurotics to feel safe, as well as to feel able to handle their emotional stability.

RQ (4b.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

Though extraversion has been found to be correlated with online purchase decisions (Barkhi & Wallace, 2007; Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010; Sahney et al., 2010), under the MGC's impact, it does not show association with the travel purchase behavior. This might be explained due to the professional incentives of the MGC that do not enhance the sociability that extroverts are looking.

RQ (4b.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

Openness-to-experience is not associated with the Travel Purchase Decision, under the impact of the MGC. Several studies, though, have linked openness with the online purchase decisions (Bosnjak et al., 2007; Tsao & Chang, 2010; Chen, 2011). Nevertheless, it seems that MGC does not inspire the novelty that open people desire.



RQ (4b.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

Although, Bosnjak et al. (2007) and Tsao & Chang (2010) have been found associations between agreeableness and web purchases, when the MGC interferes in this relation, no association is detected. It seems that the formal profile of the MGC, does not deliver to the agreeable individuals the compassionate and cooperative aspects they require.

RQ (4b.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and MGC impact on travel purchase decision?*

Even though there are studies that connect conscientiousness with purchasing on the web (Chen, 2011; Tsao & Chang, 2010), conscientiousness is not related with the travel purchase decisions when MGC incorporated. It appears that when it comes to purchase, conscientious individuals do not trust the professional content, probably due to the more advertising style that the MGC takes in this stage.



8.2.5 Travel Post-Decision Behavior

The examination of the post-decision stage was referred to whether travelers post content related to their travel experiences. People were almost equally distributed between the posting and non-posting behavior. Nevertheless, the non-posting behavior slightly overtakes the posting one (53% and 47%, respectively). Women and individuals between 25-34 years old are those who post more, while men and individuals of 35-44, post less in social media. The destination content posts are more common than the accommodation content posts, a fact that is mainly driven by the women. The factor analysis revealed three general posting and three non-posting factors, namely:

- Posting Factors
 - *Company reasons* (to reward or harm travel companies)
 - *Emotional reasons* (fun, communication, reliving trips, meeting people)
 - *Consumer reasons* (to help other people or to share experiences)

- Non-Posting Factors
 - *No incentives/interest* (not interested, lazy, haven't thought about posting, others do it, no incentives)
 - *Constraints/Obstacles* (time constraints, lack of confidence in writing, forget, plan on starting)
 - *Privacy/Secrecy* (security/privacy, want to keep great places secret, embarrassed to share my experience).

Consumers is the main reason that inspires people to post travel content, while the lack of Interest/Incentives is the dominant reason that discourage people to post travel experiences in social media.



The role of personality is discussed below. Table 8.9 presents the overall personality results in the post-decision behavior. Following is given the discussion of the corresponding research questions.

Table 8.9 Personality Overall Results of Travel Post-Decision Behavior in social media

Post-Decision Behavior	Total	Destination	Accommodation	Emotions	Consumers	Companies	No Incentives/ Interest	Constraints/ Obstacles	Privacy/Secrecy
<i>Non-neuroticism</i>							✓		
<i>Neuroticism</i>	✓			✓		✓			
<i>Introversion</i>							✓		
<i>Extraversion</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<i>Non-openness</i>				✓				✓	✓
<i>Openness</i>	✓								
<i>Non-agreeableness</i>									✓
<i>Agreeableness</i>	✓								
<i>Non-conscientiousness</i>									
<i>Conscientiousness</i>			✓						

RQ (5a): Is there an association between personality and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?

Personality is clearly associated with posting behavior. All Big Five traits influence consumers' behavior, in direct or indirect ways. Neuroticism, openness and agreeableness have a direct impact, while extraversion and conscientiousness an indirect one. Among the traits with the direct influence, openness has the dominant influence. Agreeableness is next in importance, followed by neuroticism. Although,



extraversion's impact is indirect, it is a very influential trait, since, all posting factors are under its stimulation. Conscientiousness is the least influential trait, since, its impact is indirect and comes only from one posting factor. Therefore, those who post in social media are mainly extraverted, open and agreeable and less neurotic and conscientious, which comes in accordance with the Yoo & Gretzel (2011) findings.

RQ (5a.1): *Is there an association between neuroticism and UGC contribution during evaluation?*

Neuroticism is associated with posting behavior, via emotions and companies factors. Therefore, neurotic people post travel information in order to reward or harm travel companies, and to fulfill their emotional needs. Non-neurotics require more incentives in order to be motivated to publish content.

RQ (5a.2): *Is there an association between extraversion and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?*

Extraversion constitutes a posting stimulus for content related to the destination and accommodation travel experiences, as well as with all the reasons that drive people to post content (emotions, consumers and company reasons). Therefore, extraversion is the main personality trait behind the posting behavior. Introversion, on the other side, discourages people to post content due to lack of incentives or interest. It seems that introverts need more stimulation in order to post.

RQ (5a.3): *Is there an association between openness-to-experience and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?*

Openness is related to the posting behavior, in accordance to Yoo & Gretzel (2011). Non-openness is related with the emotions posting factor showing that less open people find the chance to exhibit their feelings via social media, something that



bothers them in real world (McCrae & Sutin, 2009). Non-open individuals are discouraged to publish content due to reasons related to constraints/obstacles and privacy/secretcy.

RQ (5a.4): *Is there an association between agreeableness and UGC contribution during travel post-purchase evaluation?*

Agreeableness is associated with posting behavior, while non-agreeableness discourages posting due to the privacy/secretcy reasons. It seems that the characteristics of suspiciousness, uncooperativeness, and irritability deter the non-agreeable individuals to post travel content.

RQ (5a.5): *Is there an association between conscientiousness and UGC contribution during evaluation?*

Conscientiousness is associated with the posting of content related to the accommodation experiences of tourists. It seems that competence, organized, scrupulous, and neat individuals, are those who post information about accommodation lodgings.



8.3 Self- congruity

The self-congruity findings are discussed in this section. The discussion is given according to the corresponding research questions for each stage of the travel decision-making process.

8.3.1 Travel Need Recognition

The role of the self-congruity in the travel need recognition, under the impact of the UGC, is discussed below. The discussion is provided according to the corresponding research questions.

RQ (6a): *Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel need recognition?*

Motivation to travel, via social media, depends on self-congruity. Under the impact of the UGC, self-congruity is a partial mediator of the personality's relationship with the need recognition (Table 8.10). In other words, personality indirectly affects travel incentives via congruity. Travelers need to feel congruent with those posting travel UGC. More precisely, when they interact with the travel UGC they need to feel congruent with the personality of the publishers, in order to be motivated to travel. On the other side, when users interact with marketing content, self-congruity and personality have a direct impact on travel motives (Table 8.11). Self-congruity has the dominant impact ($b = .389$), while neuroticism a direct, positive but smaller impact ($b = .195$). Therefore, users' congruence with marketing content drives travel motivation, under the impact of the MGC.

All in all, the travel stimuli are connected to the self-congruity under the impact of both the UGC and MGC, which comes in accordance with the findings of related studies (Hung & Petrick, 2012; Murphy et al., 2007; Gretzel et al., 2007).



UGC - Travel Need Recognition

The overall results of self-congruity relatively to the travel need recognition under the impact of the MGC, are given in Table 8.10.

Table 8.10 Self-congruity Overall Results UGC impact on Travel Need Recognition

Need Recognition UGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓		✓	✓		
<i>Mediation</i>	✓	✓				

RQ (6a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel need recognition?

Self-congruity partially mediates the association between personality and travel need recognition, when this is influenced by the UGC. On the other hand, self-congruity is a perfect mediator for men. It appears that men are influenced by the UGC, to undertake a trip, only when they feel personality congruence with its publishers. Self-congruity directly influences the women behavior. Neuroticism ($b = .191$), extraversion ($b = .150$), and openness ($b = .230$) also affect women. The group of 18-24 is also directly influenced by the self-congruity ($b = .328$), as well as by the personality traits of neuroticism ($b = .363$), extraversion ($b = .570$), and openness ($b = .334$). On the other hand, individuals between 25-44, consider congruence important, though personality does not explain their behavior.



MGC - Travel Need Recognition

Self-congruity overall results, for the MGC's impact in the travel need recognition, are presented in Table 8.11.

Table 8.11 Self-congruity Overall Results MGC impact on Travel Need Recognition

Need Recognition MGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓
<i>Mediation</i>						

RQ (6a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel need recognition?

Self-congruity explains how the travel needs recognized, under the impact of the MGC. Moreover, personality also affects this relationship. Therefore, the MGC is even more influential, when social media users feel a kind of congruity with companies. On the other side, men, as well as the age group of 25-34, are not influenced by personality traits. However, congruity is still important to them. Women, as well as the age groups of 18-24 and 35-44, directly influenced by the self-congruity and the personality traits, in order to be motivated to travel.



8.3.2 Travel Information Search

Below are discussed the self-congruity research questions of the travel information search stage.

RQ (7a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel information search?

Self-congruity plays an important role in explaining the search of the travel information in social media. Users claim congruity with other users and brands/companies, in order to consider, in their decisions, the travel information published in social media (Table 8.12). When they interact with content provided by other users, congruity and personality have a direct impact on travelers' behavior. Self-congruity ($b = .446$) has the highest positive impact, followed by neuroticism ($b = .209$) and openness ($b = .115$), while conscientiousness impact is negative ($b = -.184$). Hence, matching between users raises the influence of the UGC content.

The influence of the travel information provided by social media marketers, also depends on self-congruity (Table 8.13). Self-congruity has a direct positive impact ($b = .437$) on consumer behavior, as well as the neuroticism ($b = .180$). Hence, users need to feel congruent with travel brands or suppliers, in order to include the information published by such organizations in their travel decisions.

Concluding, congruence along with personality, are necessary elements in understanding how travel information search takes place in social media, confirming the results of related studies (Bosnjak, 2010; Burgess et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2011; Ayeh et al., 2013).



UGC - Travel Information Search

Table 8.12 summarizes the self-congruity results, with respect to the UGC's impact in the Travel Information Search.

Table 8.12 Self-congruity Overall Results of UGC impact on Travel Information Search

Information Search UGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Mediation</i>		✓		✓		

RQ (7a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel information search?

Self-congruity, as well as personality, determine consumers' behavior, when they search for travel information via the UGC. For men, self-congruity perfectly mediates the association of their personality with their information search behavior. Therefore, men consider the congruence with their personality, as a prerequisite, in order to adopt the UGC as a travel information source. For women, congruity and personality have a direct impact on their information search behavior. Self-congruity is the major contributor ($b = .432$), while the personality traits have a lower impact [neuroticism ($b = .261$), openness ($b = .187$), and conscientiousness ($b = -.281$)]. Self-congruity is a partial mediator between the personality and the information behavior of the 18-24 age group. In other words, personality has a positive indirect effect on their information search behavior through the self-congruity. Congruity and personality have a direct effect on the behavior of the age groups of 25-34 and 35-44.



MGC - Travel Information Search

The role of self-congruity in the travel information search via marketers' content, is presented in Table 8.13. The discussion of the related research questions is given next.

Table 8.13 Self-congruity Overall Results of MGC impact on Travel Information Search

Information Search MGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓
<i>Mediation</i>						

RQ (7a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel information search?

Information search is influenced by congruity and personality, when this information is provided by marketers. Under the MGC impact, self-congruity is also important for men, while personality has no implications. For women, on the other side, congruity and personality are both affecting their decisions. The same holds for the ages of 18-24 and 35-44, where personality and congruence are explaining the tourists' behavior when they interact with social media information coming from travel suppliers. The middle age group of 25-34 does not consider personality important, when looking for congruence with brands/companies travel content. However, congruity is a prerequisite for them.



8.3.3 Evaluation of Alternatives

The discussion of the self-congruity research questions, related to the stage of the evaluation of travel alternatives, is given below.

RQ (8a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel evaluation of alternatives?

When consumers evaluate travel products, they demand self-congruity with other users, as well as companies in order to incorporate social media content in their validations. When the UGC is incorporated in such decisions, self-congruity along with personality affect people (Table 8.14). Self-congruity, though, has the dominant impact on their preferences ($b = .580$), while personality participates with the openness ($b = .154$) and the conscientiousness ($b = -.106$) traits. Hence, the similarity with other users is what drives consumers' choices when they evaluate travel products by utilizing UGC.

The role of the MGC in the consumers' evaluations is also depended by the self-congruence with the brand or company's image (Table 8.15). Personality does not play a role here. It appears that congruence is the only prerequisite for travelers, but this congruity is not related to the personality.

Confirming the conclusions of other studies (Beerli et al., 2007), self-congruity is a major influential factor that establishes whether consumers ask advise by the social media content when they evaluate alternative travel choices.



UGC - Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

In Table 8.14 are presented the overall results of the self-congruity's influence in the evaluation of travel alternatives according to the UGC. The research questions related to this stage are discussed afterwards.

Table 8.14 Self-congruity Overall Results of UGC impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

Evaluation of Alternatives UGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Mediation</i>		✓		✓		

RQ (8a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel evaluation of alternatives?

When the UGC is incorporated in the users decisions, congruity, along with personality, have a direct impact on consumer's evaluations. For men, self-congruity is a partial mediator between their personality and their evaluations about travel options, when the UGC is used in these evaluations. The same holds for the age group of 18-24. Women influenced directly by congruity ($b = .562$) and personality [openness ($b = .161$); conscientiousness ($b = -.199$)]. Those aged between 25-34 are influenced by self-congruity ($b = .535$), as well as personality [openness ($b = .172$) and agreeableness ($b = .274$)]. On the other side, for the individuals between 35 to 44, the self-congruity is the only influential factor, when they evaluate travel alternatives with the UGC contribution.



MGC - Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

Table 8.15 summarizes the results of self-congruity on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives under the impact of the MGC. Below is given the discussion of the research questions of this stage.

Table 8.15 Self-congruity Overall Results of MGC impact on Evaluation of Travel Alternatives

Evaluation of Alternatives MGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>				✓		
<i>Mediation</i>						

RQ (8a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel evaluation of alternatives?

Self-congruity is the only influential factor of the consumers' behavior configuration in the evaluation stage, under the impact of the MGC. The same stands for both genders, and the individuals of 25-44 years old. The younger group of 18-24 age is influenced by congruity and personality. This influence is direct, positive and high for self-congruity ($b = .569$), direct, positive though lower for personality [neuroticism ($b = .277$) and openness ($b = .283$)].



8.2.4 Travel Purchase Decision

The self-congruity research questions relatively to the travel purchase decision, are discussed in the current section.

RQ (9a): Does congruity theory hold in social media referring to travel purchase decision?

Self-congruity plays a major role in understanding the purchasing behavior in social media. When users interact with UGC, self-congruity has a positive and direct impact on their purchasing behavior (Table 8.16). Personality also affects the purchase decisions in a direct way, via agreeableness ($b = .163$) and conscientiousness ($b = -.136$). Therefore, in order travelers to consider UGC, when taking purchase decisions, they need to feel congruent with those publishing content.

In the same context, when users interact with content published by travel suppliers congruency is important (Table 8.17). Congruity impacts, in direct and positive ways, in the purchase decisions ($b = .565$), as well as personality does [neuroticism ($b = .136$)]. Hence, self-congruity is a major contributor in explaining how the MGC affects the purchase decisions.

Generally speaking, self-congruity not only holds in social media purchase decision but it also underlies, in combination with personality, this behavior.



UGC - Purchase Decision

Table 8.16 presents the overall results of the self-congruity influence in the Travel Purchase Decision, under the impact of the UGC. Following are discussed the related research questions.

Table 8.16 Self-congruity Overall Results of UGC impact on Travel Purchase Decision

Purchase Decision UGC	Decision					
	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Mediation</i>		✓				

RQ (9a.1): Does congruity theory hold between users referring to the impact of UGC on travel purchase decision?

Congruity and personality directly affect the purchase decision for travel products, when individuals interact with the UGC. For men, congruity constitutes a partial mediator between their personality and their purchasing decisions. Women are directly affected by congruity ($b = .558$) and personality [neuroticism ($b = .159$), openness ($b = .186$), and conscientiousness ($b = -.185$)]. The purchasing behavior of the 18-24 is positively affected, in direct way, by self-congruity ($b = .299$) and personality [agreeableness ($b = .210$)]. The age group of 25-34 shows the same direct relationships [self-congruity ($b = .613$), openness ($b = .137$), agreeableness ($b = .244$), and conscientiousness ($b = -.168$)]. Individuals between 35-44 are only affected by self-congruity.



MGC - Travel Purchase Decision

The following Table 8.17 summarizes the self-congruity association with the MGC's impact on the Travel Purchase Decision. The examination of the corresponding research questions is discussed next.

Table 8.17 Self-congruity Overall Results of MGC impact on Travel Purchase Decision

Purchase Decision MGC	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44
<i>Self-congruity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Personality</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<i>Mediation</i>						

RQ (9a.2): Does congruity theory hold between users and tourist companies referring to the impact of MGC on travel purchase decision?

Self-congruity with the companies' image is a prerequisite, when people decide to purchase travel products with the utilization of the MGC. Personality has also direct implications on the consumer's purchase behavior. Personality via neuroticism ($b = .159$), openness ($b = .186$) and conscientiousness ($b = -.185$), as well as self-congruity ($b = .558$) directly affect the men' purchasing behavior, under the impact of the MGC. The women behavior is determined only by self-congruity. Self-congruity ($b = .553$), as well as personality [openness ($b = .373$)] affect the behavior of the individuals between 18-24 . Neuroticism ($b = .240$) and congruity ($b = .491$) affect the behavior of the individuals between 25-34. Congruity ($b = .690$) and conscientiousness ($b = .237$) define the behavior of the individuals between 35-44.



8.4 Conclusions

At the current chapter the findings of the research were discussed and the implications of these findings were analyzed. According to the discussion, and its implications, in the next chapter are given the overall conclusions of the study, the practical and theoretical implications and recommendations, as well as the limitations and implications for future research.



Chapter 9

Conclusions, Contributions and Implications for Future Research

9.1 General Conclusions

Based on the EBM consumer decision-making model, the current dissertation aimed to shed lights on how people make travel decisions in social media. Tourist decision-making was analyzed according to EBM's stages of: travel need recognition, travel information search, evaluation of travel alternatives, travel purchase decision and travel post-purchase behavior. The role of personality has been also incorporated in the analysis, in order to investigate the latent incentives behind travelers' behavior. Personality studied according to the Big Five traits model, due to the model's theoretical robustness and to its compatibility with internet and social media usage.

An in-depth review of the literature revealed that social media content has implications on consumer behavior. However, research on how content modulates this behavior is limited. In this manner, the present study focused on how travel content, published in social media, affects the decision-making of tourists. Moreover, the examination of the literature highlighted the need to distinguish user-generated from marketing-generated content. User-generated-content (UGC) defined according to the OECD context as *"all the travel content produced and released in social media by users and out of professional purposes"*, and Marketing-generated-content (MGC) as *"all the information and content produced and released to social media by travel producers for marketing reasons"*. This distinction raised the issue of what is the type of content that has the greatest influence on travelers' behavior.



A further examination of the literature determined that personality has implications on internet and social media use. However, the detected linkages had more to do with the features usage of social media technologies, and not with their effect on users' behavior. This conclusion introduced the necessity to investigate personality's associations with travel decision-making process in social media. Moreover, literature analysis revealed that self-congruity significantly contributes to travel decision-making, but has not yet been researched in social media. This fact generated the need to examine whether self-congruity holds, with regard to social media content exploitation. All mentioned literature shortcomings resulted in a number of research questions, which have been studied through an online distributed questionnaire. The findings revealed a number of interested conclusions for the five phases of the travel decision-making procedure.

Travel Need Recognition – Social media content motivates people to travel, generating the so-called travel need recognition. In other words, when people interact with online content they are inspired to go on a vacation. Moreover, reading content in social media creates travel motives even though consumers had no intention before. This shows the dominant role of content and places it among the other external-pull factors of travel inspiration, such as marketing efforts. Interestingly, user-generated-content creates greater interest and motivation to the consumers. Though, marketing content has implications on consumer need recognition, users posts are primarily stimulate consumers. MGC actually interests neurotic and conscientious travelers. Professional posts give people the secure and the validity of their official origin. On the other hand, UGC attracts neurotic, extraverts, open and agreeable individuals. Hence, UGC incorporates almost all Big Five traits showing that users' posts appeal to almost all kind of travelers. Moreover, self-congruity is a partial mediator of personality and travel motivation by UGC. Thus, in order people to be inspired by UGC they need to feel personality congruence with the content producer. In the case of MGC congruity is important to consumers but does not refer to personality, which directly affects their motivation. It is obvious that consumer-generated-content has the greatest impact on



consumers' stimulation; while at the same time has the strongest associations with personality.

Travel Information Search – Consumers include social media content among the sources they utilize when gathering travel information. Social media content supports the ease access to information when they need it by reducing the required effort and by increasing the quality of information. Although MGC is seriously considered by travelers during this stage, consumers rely more on user-generated-content. It seems that when content is provided by users it raises travelers' trust, since it has no marketing incentives or purposes. Neurotics, extraverts, agreeable and non-conscientious individuals consult UGC travel information. Neurotics also prefer MGC, while open and conscientious people show a marginal association with MGC preference. Self-congruity is a prerequisite for both UGC and MGC supporters but has not to do with personality aspects. Personality, therefore, affects the way people search for travel information via social media content. However, UGC applies better to consumers' needs and attracts the interest of more personality types.

Evaluation of Travel Alternatives – Content in social media appears to assist consumers during the evaluation stage. Content provided by users or/and companies supports travelers to compare travel products, to expand their consideration sets, as well as to reconfirm travel selections. Consumer reviews, though, are those that govern their choices. Travel suppliers content is also examined by users and plays an important role. Nevertheless, UGC is the leader. Openness, agreeableness and marginally extraversion drive people to consult UGC during travel products validation. On the contrary, personality has latent implications on MGC utilization via conscientiousness. Both congruity and personality affect directly UGC selection. MGC is only influenced by self-congruity. It is obvious that UGC is the type of content which controls consumer behavior during the evaluation stage, while personality determines this behavior.



Travel Purchase Decision – When comes to purchase decision social media content supports consumers to select booking methods, activities at destinations, as well as complementary travel products to enrich their tourist experience. Users, however, show a preference to user-generated-content compared to marketing-generation-content. Neurotic and agreeable individuals consult UGC in order to make a purchase decision. Moreover, neurotics also select MGC. Furthermore, self-congruity directly affects UGC and MGC choice, just as personality does. It appears that when consumers reach the purchase stage personality's influence is almost the same between UGC and MGC utilization. Nevertheless, users' opinions outweigh marketers' efforts in formulating consumer behavior.

Travel Post-decision Behavior – Almost half of travelers post content related to their travel experiences. It appears that participants are mature social media users since an important number of them has already passed from consuming or/and participating to producing content (Shao, 2008). Travelers prefer to post content about the visited destinations, though accommodation content is also provided. The main reason that travelers produce and publish content is related to other consumers. In other words, they share their experiences in order to help other people take decisions based on consumer reviews. People also provide content for rewarding or punishing travel suppliers, as well as for emotional reasons. On the other hand, the main reason that discourages people to publish content is the lack of incentives. Time constraints and other obstacles, as well as privacy issues also prevent people of posting content. Those who publish content are mainly extraverted, open and agreeable and less neurotic and conscientious, while individuals who do not post are non-neurotic, introverts, non-open and non-agreeable.

All in all, UGC is more effective than MGC during all phases of tourist decision-making process. Moreover, UGC attracts the interest of more personality types. Additionally, self-congruity is a prerequisite in adopting any kind of social media posts. In total, both types of content influence and form consumer behavior



showing the dominant role that social media play in the tourist industry. Electronic word-of-mouth has already overtaken not only the traditional but even the digital marketing attempts. Blogs, wikis, online forums and review sites, virtual communities and social networks seem to guide consumer behavior in our days. It appears that today's marketing is not anymore in the hands of travel suppliers. The new technologies of social media enhance the role of consumers who collaborate in order to take the best of travel services and experiences.



9.2 Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The findings have various implications for research and practice.

Implications for Theory

To our knowledge, this is the first work that incorporates the role of content itself in studying social media, as well as in studying consumer behavior. In this way, this study contributes to the literature in terms of explaining the impact of social media on travelers' behavior and establishing a new approach in the social media research. Furthermore, this is one of the very few studies that research all phases of the tourist decision-making process. However, none of the previous studies engaged the role of consumers' personality in this investigation. Additionally, this is the first attempt of linking personality with travel motives, as well as with travel information search. In this vein, the current research provides researchers with an effective tool for identifying behavioral aspects of Web users.

Likewise, the study falls among the limited research works that examine the personality of real consumers, in contrast to the majority of studies which are based on samples consisting of students. The dissertation offers the provision of a representative research model for the travelers' personality assessment. Moreover, this is the first time that is examined the role of self-congruity, with respect to social media use. The study introduces the notion of matching consumers' self-concept, with the image of users and companies, as this image is shaped by the content they publish. In addition, the present research highlights that is essential to distinctly examining social media content as user-generated and marketing-generated.

All in all, this study introduces a new approach in researching social media role in the travel context, introducing a number of theoretical issues that should be considered by consumer behavior academics.



Implications for practice

Tourism industry practitioners may benefit from the presented framework, as well. One of the most relevant conclusions is that through social media travelers have found ways to collaborate for their own benefit. Even though, word-of-mouth has been always played a major role in forming consumers' opinions, the e-word-of-mouth has a tremendous impact. Web 2.0 technologies enhanced the delivery of consumer reviews around the world in fast and vast ways. The findings of the research highlight in a unique way this movement. All phases of travel decision-making are captured by users' content, decreasing the magnitude of marketing efforts. However, the study findings revealed some useful implications which managers and marketers in tourism can follow, in order to increase the magnitude of the MGC in all the stages of the traveler's decision-making process.

Travel Need Recognition – At this phase travel suppliers aim to increase consumer awareness about their services and products. However, MGC attracts the interest on only neurotic and conscientious individuals. Marketing content, therefore, should be enhanced with attributes that interest extravert, open and agreeable travelers. Travel marketers should produce content that increases sociability and collaboration among users, as well as between users and the company. Moreover, marketing content should be more innovative and creative. Consumers seem to be tired of the classical promotional aspects of marketing, and turned to the UGC for inspiration. Now that consumers also produce content, marketers cannot continue with the typical way of thinking. MGC should be enriched with original attributes that consumers can't find in UGC. Even though, the power of travelers is higher today, than before the evolution of social media, travel suppliers still know their products better than consumers do. Hence, they still have the control on the diffusion of information that is not yet available to the public. Nevertheless, MGC should preserve the characteristics which make neurotic and conscientious people to depend on it. In other words, marketing content must find ways to inspire openness, extraversion and agreeableness, without missing its professional standards. Another



issue that marketers can incorporate in this stage of consumer decision-making is to attract more users to contribute content about their services and products. Since travelers are inspired mainly by the UGC, travel companies can increase consumer awareness by ensuring that they are included in this content.

Travel Information Search – Trustworthiness of social media content seems to be the main issue in this phase. Since travelers rely more on other perceptions than on marketing content, travel suppliers must focus on making their content more reliable. One of the main concerns is that marketers should not promise more than they can do. In the social media world, consumers can easily crosscheck the validity of marketers' content. Extravert, agreeable and non-conscientious people are not fond of MGC. It is suggested MGC to be incorporated in more SNSs, since social networks are preferred by extravert, open and non-conscientious individuals (Hughes et al., 2012). Furthermore, companies must ensure that when complaints or problems recorded on consumers' posts, corresponding responses are provided immediately. These answers must include aspects which showing that the company is concerned about consumer needs, that customers and their desires are the priority. This not only will retrieve the reputation of the firm or destination, but also will show the intention of maintaining interpersonal positive relations with consumers and will attract agreeable users' interest.

Evaluation of Travel Alternatives – During the evaluation of alternatives the main objective of companies and destinations is to ensure that they have been included in consumer's choice sets. However, if destinations and travel suppliers can achieve their content to be used by consumers during the evaluation stage, this will increase the possibility that their services will reach travelers' consideration sets. The more content about businesses is exploited by travelers, the better for companies and destinations. In this vein, travel suppliers must attract the interest of open-to-experience, agreeable, as well as extravert individuals. These are the types of personality that are assisted by the UGC during the evaluation stage. Innovativeness can include creative forms of presenting or using content. One possible suggestion is



this of businesses' replies to consumer reviews, content or questions. There are plenty of sites or forums where consumers discuss the options of taking a vacation, asking other users for advices. Companies can take part in these conversations and reply to consumers' requests, using their official brand names. Moreover, these answers can include links to their sites or social media pages than just advices and suggestions. In this way, travel suppliers will assist consumers' evaluations, while at the same time they increase WOM about their services. The incorporation of the mash-up and AJAX technologies is also an option. DMOs can release applications that will assist people to compare different companies at the destination. Travel companies, on the other side, can release applications that will allow consumers to compare complementary products to their activities. These applications can exploit UGC in their evaluations, increasing in this way the sociability that demand extravert individuals, as well as the collaboration that agreeable people request.

Travel Purchase Decision – In order to increase the number of consumers who consult the MGC in their purchase decisions, marketers must make their content to appeal more to agreeable people. Agreeable individuals are interested in cooperation and social harmony. Therefore, collaboration is the answer. One way of doing this is to introduce into brand sites or social media profiles activities and applications that enhance users' cooperation. Travel suppliers can ask users to advice potential travelers of what to do or see at the destinations. Another option is to host in their sites applications that show what were the activities or the complementary products that previous customers have purchased at the destination. A mash-up map that shows what people did at the destination, in combination with UGC comments about these activities would significantly attract agreeable individuals' attention. Moreover, they can offer links to complementary sites that will help people to book their purchases. This can also be amplified with consumer reviews and comments. All these will increase MGC's helpfulness, since agreeable people are stimulated by utilitarian motives to shop online (Tsao & Chang, 2010).



Travel Post-decision Behavior – Travelers prefer to post content mainly about their experiences on destinations. Hence, there is space for lodgings' suppliers to provide more content about accommodation services, overcoming the effectiveness of the UGC in this sector. Moreover, DMOs and travel suppliers, in general, must encourage the UGC production by offering more stimuli to the travelers. These could include rewards for those posting comments, such as discounts and special offers. Other incentives can be the organization of competition for the best posts. In this way, companies can ensure that users will produce content related to their services, reflecting in eWOM for their business. Furthermore, content contests will encourage creativity, sociability and collaboration, attracting the interest of open-to-experience, extravert and agreeable people, who are those that mainly publish content. In this way, travel companies will further encourage the UGC production. Since, travelers produce content mainly to help other consumers, users will feel comfortable to contribute in content's contests. Additionally, rewarding travelers' posting efforts, will emotional engage them with the company, an aspect which also has impacts on UGC's production.

Self-congruity – Congruence between users, as well as between users and companies emerged as a prerequisite when people utilize content of social media in their travel decisions. Self-congruity, in combination with personality, specifies the way in which content is affecting users' behavior. Travel suppliers should detect which are the characteristics that demanded by their own consumers, in order to feel congruent with the company's content. Market researches, related to the company's image in social media, as well as the matching between brand image and individuals' self-concept, are required. On the basis of the research evidence, companies will be able adjust their MGC in consumers' preferences. Accordingly, in order to exploit the congruence between users, suppliers can add on their sites the options of "*people who searched for this information also looked at*", or "*people who liked this also liked*" with the appropriate links, which will enhance the UGC's impact for their own advantage.



In contrast to Web 1.0, in the Web 2.0 world, travel suppliers should establish new and innovative ways in order to attract consumers' attention. One of their primary objectives should be the determination of what stimulates consumers' in incorporating UGC in their decisions more than MGC. The investigation of consumers' personality creates a great opportunity in determining these incentives. Several studies have shown that personality can be predicted via social media use, as well as content creation. Hence, tourism suppliers must incorporate in their market research techniques that determine customers' personality. Moreover, tourism marketers should concentrate on content creation that will attract the interest of all personality types, apart from neurotic and conscientious individuals. They must be more creative and innovative in content production, and must find ways to lessen the formal character of MGC while keeping its professional efficiency.



9.3 Limitations and Future Research

The present study is the first attempt that links social media content with consumer behavior. In this manner the study gives a more generalized examination of the phenomenon. Research has mainly focused on whether there is an association between the personality traits and consumer decision-making. This seriously restricts the interpretation and generalization of the findings. Consequently, research should be continued to include more comprehensive investigations, apart from the variables' associations. It is strongly suggested the examination of the causal relationships between personality and consumer behavior in social media. This will give a more detailed representation of how content formulates behavior of different personality types and will lead to broader assumptions.

Likewise, the research covered all phases of consumer decision-making process. This restrained study of doing an in-depth analysis of each decision stage. However, it is important this observation to be extended in a detailed analysis of the corresponding phases. Primarily, the exploration of personality's influence on travel incentives and information search it is vital and critical. No research had up to now focused on this issue. However, the present findings showed strong associations. It is necessary, therefore, to further capture how personality impacts on these phases, not only in social media but also in general. Likewise, the deeper analysis of the rest decision-making stages is also critical.

Moreover, the examination of travelers' behavior was based on the well-known EBM model and the robust Big Five personality traits model. Hence, the dissertation did not focus on modelling development. Future research might deliberate the theoretical background of personality's impact in social media consumer decision-making process. The development and empirical testing of scientific constructs will enhance theorists to understand the existing causalities behind the mentioned relationships. Furthermore, the study covered only the Big Five traits of personality.



Nonetheless, lower personality facets might drive consumer choices while in different decision stages. Hence, this is another issue that future research should focus to better determine consumer behavior in social media.

Besides, self-congruity analysis was targeted only on whether congruence holds with respect to content usage. Results revealed that congruity has a decisive and magnitude role on whether travelers adopt content use in their decisions. Thus, a further examination of the congruence role is vital. Future research should capture the aspects of actual and ideal self-congruity, as well as functional congruity. The examination of these concepts will highlight any causal aspects that define self-congruity's role on content acceptance.

Another essential topic that the dissertation did not address is how social media content use is combined with other sources. Consumers do not only articulate digital content when making travel decisions. It is, therefore, of great importance to investigate how behavior is formulating under the combined impact of all possible external travel information sources. Likewise, personality is not the only internal psychological factor that affects consumer behavior. It is interesting to examine how consumers needs and wants, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs also affect decision-making in social media.

Consequently, there is a wide research area for scholars to cover. A greater understanding of how both personality and social media impact on travelers decision-making is important because it can lead to more comprehensive theories of consumer behavior, and assist travel marketers, suppliers, practitioners, theorists, and anyone else who benefits from advanced consumer behavior understanding.



9.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The current dissertation contributed to consumer behavior knowledge due to the following aspects:

- Defined the role of social media content into consumer behavior
- Determined the role of social media content into all phases of travel decision-making
- Demonstrated the associations of Big Five personality traits with travel decision-making
- Demonstrated the associations of Big Five personality traits with travel motives
- Demonstrated the associations of Big Five personality traits with travel information search behavior
 - Established the role of self-congruity in social media content exploitation
- Introduced the notion of distinctly examining User-Generated-Content and Marketing-Generated-Content impacts and implementations.



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Appendix

PhD Questionnaire

This questionnaire is provided for the needs of a PhD dissertation. Please take 10 minutes to give as your valuable opinion about Social Media Use in Tourism Decision Making related to Personality. Thank you in advance for your priceless help.

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Personality

These questions assess personality type

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
I get stressed out easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I worry about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I fear for the worst	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am filled with doubts about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I panic easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I talk a lot to different people at parties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable around people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I start conversations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make friends easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Personality

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
I don't mind being the center of attention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get excited by new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy thinking about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy hearing new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy looking for a deeper meaning in things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a vivid imagination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I sympathize with others' feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Personality

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
I am concerned about others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I respect others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that others have good intentions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I trust what people say	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I carry out my plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pay attention to details	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am always prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make plans and stick to them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am exacting in my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

These questions assess travel planning with respect to users' posts Vs. sponsored/commercial posts

Inspires me to travel
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

Helps me find travel information when I need it
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reduces my effort to find travel information
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

Increases the quality of travel information
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

Leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options)
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Helps me to reconfirm my travel selections
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

Helps me to book travel services/suppliers
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Influences what to do/see at destinations
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Travel Planning in Social Media

Helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience
when reading in social media

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sponsored/commercial travel posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Self-congruity in Social Media

These questions assess congruence level with respect to users' profiles Vs. corporate/brand image

Reading in social media travel posts inspires me to travel when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reading in social media travel posts makes me seriously consider to go on a vacation even though I had no intention before when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Self-congruity in Social Media

Reading in social media travel posts helps me find travel information when I need it

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reading in social media travel posts reduces my effort to find travel information when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Self-congruity in Social Media

Reading in social media travel posts increases the quality of travel information when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reading in social media travel posts helps me to evaluate/compare travel destinations/services/suppliers when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Self-congruity in Social Media

Reading in social media travel posts leads me to expand my consideration set (destination/accommodation options) when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reading in social media travel posts helps me to reconfirm my travel selections when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Self-congruity in Social Media

Reading in social media travel posts helps me to book travel services/suppliers when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reading in social media travel posts influences what to do/see at destinations when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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*** Required**

Self-congruity in Social Media

Reading in social media travel posts helps me purchase complementary destinations/services/suppliers to enrich my tourist experience when

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Users' profiles reflect the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corporate/brand image reflects the kind of person I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you post information in social media about your trip experiences? *

Yes
 No

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* Required

Online Comments/Reviews

I write comments/reviews about the destination

I write comments/reviews about the accommodation

Reasons that I post online reviews

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
To help other people take decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To share experiences on consumer reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because people rely on consumer reviews and posting reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To reward a company that has done right by you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To motivate companies make improvements in their products and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To assist retailers make better decisions about their product and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because giving public feedback is the best way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To motivate companies make improvements in their products and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To assist retailers make better decisions about their product and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because giving public feedback is the best way to get companies listen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To correct the record after you see someone else's unfair review	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because it's fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication among like-minded people is a nice thing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relive my trips	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I meet nice people this way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If a company harms me, I will harm the company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incentives are offered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*
 Please check the box to continue

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Online Comments/Reviews

Reasons that I do not post online reviews

	I strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	I strongly agree
Time constraints	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of confidence in writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lazy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Haven't thought about posting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan on starting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Security/privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others do it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No incentives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Want to keep great places secret	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Embarrassed to share my experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Please type your Nationality

Gender

Age

Marital Status

Education

Employment Status

Household income

Time spend on social media per day

How many times do you travel per year?

Traveled within the last 12 months

Yes
 No

