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The Roles of Purchase Intentions and Social Media in Dark Tourism

Abstract

Dark tourism is roughly understood as travelling to places historically associated with death and tragedy. However, the determinants of such a specific type of tourism are not well explored. Therefore, this research aims to determine the possible relation between the intention variables, particularly perceived risk and the values of sensation-seeking and hedonism. For this purpose, an online questionnaire of eight subscales was applied to 821 participants, with ages corresponding to generations Y and Z. The results of a structural equation modelling revealed the existence of seven latent variables whose goodness-of-fit suggests that dark tourism is mainly related to the intention to visit and search for information on the Internet. This study is novel compared to previous research in that it suggests that the destination does not have a direct relation to the intention to share information on social media.

Keywords: culture, dark tourism, identity, perceived value, social networks

1. Introduction

Multiple events are changing our way of conceiving tourism. For instance, the crisis of Covid-19 has hit the world economy and caused notable changes in how we create movement, spending, travel, and vacations (Nicolaa et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2021). According to Quarantelli (2018), disasters are not only an academic rhetoric exercise but respond to specific classification requirements that distinguish them from catastrophes or daily emergencies. The pandemic differs from an epidemic since it involves not only a country or a continent but on a global scale (Addeo et al., 2021).

On the other hand, other events such as the attack on the World Trade Center (Potts, 2012) and the tsunamis in Thailand, Indonesia (Grayman & Bronnimann, 2018), Japan (Fortin & Uncles, 2011), or Chornobyl (Urbonavicius, 2021), among others affected society in terms of the perceptions, behaviour, economic conditions, and the response of a large part of the population (Zwanka & Buff, 2021), and the local response in terms of sustainable development and marketing strategies to prepare, protect and rebuild a destination after a disaster, both in terms of physical assets and destination image (Rosselló et al., 2020). Thus, adapting to new circumstances forces humans to change consumption patterns and reinvent what was previously considered habitual (Rintoul et al., 2018). Consequently, diverse forms of tourism have arisen, including the 9/11 Memorial & Museum (Potts, 2012) and the Indonesia post-tsunami museums (Grayman & Bronnimann, 2018). All these tourism plans have their unique qualities, reaching unusual offers such as adventure tourism, diaspora tourism, or even war tourism; the latter is associated with experiences related to death, risks, and

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dangers, among other aspects (Cohen, 2011; Christou, 2021; Li et al., 2019; Mowatt & Chancellor, 2011; Proyrungroj, 2022).

Covid-19 forced tourism, including dark tourism, to adjust to new consumption patterns. In addition, travelling restrictions drove changes from vendors who migrated to virtual environments where consumers experience a destination (e.g., immersive technology, augmented or virtual reality applications) (Addeo et al., 2021). These changes in consumption patterns are some forms of adaptation of the economic system to the changing needs through the different stages of the consumer journey.

Thus, this paper aims to identify the relationship between the variables of perceived value for young Colombians and the purchase or visit intention of tourist destinations. Additionally, it seeks to determine their intention to search for the destination online and their intention to share content on social media. Lastly, this work contributes to different business models that can enhance the growth of the dark tourism sector. Furthermore, this research opens the door for quantitative methods, permitting a better understanding of the perceived value, its latent variables, and its topical trends using statistical modelling methods (Bashir et al., 2022).

2. Literature review

Several academic approaches have addressed these new consumption patterns, including morality (Michelson & Miller, 2019), psychology (Nawijn & Biran, 2018), culture (Silverman, 2021), and even memories (Wang et al., 2021). However, despite these multiple efforts to properly conceptualize and understand these new forms of tourism and consumption, a gap in marketing and consumer behaviour research remains (Matiza, 2020). For this reason, this paper attempts to present a new perspective on consumer behaviour.

One of the previously mentioned forms of consumption is dark tourism (Cohen, 2011; Li et al., 2019; Mowatt & Chancellor, 2011), which emerged in the late '80s and early '90s under the name thanatourism. Closely related to visiting places where some catastrophe or death had occurred (Seaton, 1996), this consumer phenomenon has acquired great popularity in recent decades, even starring in a series on Netflix (Zerva, 2021), a global streaming platform.

Even though the concept of dark tourism has not changed radically from its beginnings to the present date, it is worth reviewing some of its definitions to understand its conception as a consumer phenomenon (Šuligoj & de Luca, 2019). Table 1 shows different interpretations of dark tourism over time. The development of definitions derived from thanatourism is acknowledged in a more general approach, associated, in addition to death, with risk and adventure, for which authors such as Sharpley (2009) establish a continuum from grey to dark tourism. This rating depends on the destination's attractions and the experience concerning death. Light (2017) raises essential differences between thanatourism and dark tourism. Dark tourism covers other forms of tourism not necessarily associated with death, while thanatourism is a more concise term for destinations tourists experience places or objects with death. In dark tourism, the following practices are analyzed: travellers' motivations, tourist activity, and experiences in certain areas and heritage (Mionel, 2019).

Table 1
Definitions associated with dark tourism

Author and year	Definition
Seaton (1996, P: 240)	Thanatourism: "travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death".
Foley and Lennon (1999, P:46)	Dark tourism: "Tourism associated with sites of death, disaster, and depravity".
Stone (2016, P:23)	"Dark tourism is concerned with encountering spaces of death or calamity that have political or historical significance, and that continue to impact upon the living".
Lacanieta et al., (2020, P:1)	"Travel to destinations associated with death, disaster, and the macabre".
Kerr et al., (2021, P:1)	"Dark tourism has become an internationally recognized taxonomy denoting tourist travel to sites of or associated with death and 'difficult heritage'".

Several studies have examined the aspects determining preferences for this type of tourism. At the forefront is the interest in lived experiences. Kang et al. (2012) consider that visitor experiences change the perception of the visited destination. Thus, visitors obtain a perception that can become educational, patrimonial, emotional, or simply a visual of the destination (Cohen, 2011; Luna-Cortés, 2018; Mowatt & Chancellor, 2011), with visual and experiential perceptions being pre-eminent (Sharpley, 2009). These appraisals concerning their experiences and what they represent have an essential impact on acquiring tourist packages.

Zhang et al. (2016) suggest that the perception during and after visiting a dark tourism destination is related to culture, emotion, escape, and curiosity. This perception can be associated with experiences and emotions in a safe context and a sense of personal differentiation and identity. Podoshen (2013) studied unusual environments of dark tourism, such as black metal festivals, finding that the event dramatization provides a degree of security that generates a growing interest and significant demand for this type of tourism (Podoshen et al., 2018). From this perspective, the emotions associated with risk act as essential mediators of the intention to visit, following the extent that consumers can access images, videos, and information immediately through web pages. The findings conform with what Martini and Buda (2018) referred to as emotions and dark tourism and Chew and Jahari (2014), who used risk as a critical mediator.

In addition to the previously mentioned attributes, perceived value plays a key role. Stone and Grebenar (2021) created a conceptual model for future dark tourism and place-making commodification. Similarly, in dark tourism, Ghorbanzadeh et al. (2021) have explored the concept of the image, perceived value, and satisfaction as mediating variables in examining the relationship between experience quality and behavioural intentions in war tourism to predict the indirect and direct impacts on the quality of tourists' experiences.

Previously, Zeithaml (1988) stated that perceived value is the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on their perceptions of what is received and what is given. Holbrook (1999) states that consumer value—interactivity, relativism, affectivity, and a grounding in the consumption experience is intimately interrelated with the other three. They compose an interconnected system of related aspects that overlap and combine to constitute consumer value. Different marketing studies state that perceived value is present at the various stages of the purchase process, from the pre-purchase to post-purchase and experience sharing. Thus, perceived value is a more vital determinant of behavioural intentions than quality or satisfaction (Sharma & Nayak, 2020).

Furthermore, Schwartz and Bardi (2001) categorized 10 cultural value types that influence individual experiences: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Hence, cultural values shape decisions and mediate consumption and perceived value (Wang et al., 2021). These values are part of the trade-off relationship between the elements consumers perceive.

According to Wang et al. (2021), dark tourism sites constantly involve cultural, natural, and historical introspection. From this perspective, the value goes from being a material element to being understood as a subjective element, which varies in each context (Fraiz et al., 2020; Parasuraman, 1997). Therefore, each identity becomes fundamental for perceiving quality in dark tourism destinations and sharing experiences on social media (Gallarza et al., 2019). Furthermore, experience quality is even more relevant when customers seek unique destinations or experiences, such as dark tourism (Light, 2017; Faerber et al., 2021). These factors affect post-consumption behaviour, such as willingness to share their experiences in their social networks.

According to this line of argument, cultural and personal values give experiential meaning to dark tourism destinations, acquiring a function of identity that must be congruent with the environment and that must be analyzed before tourism packages are offered (Oh & Kim, 2017; Schwartz, 2014; Sharipudin et al., 2021).

Aligned with this suggestion, Tinson et al. (2015) consider that dark tourism is not only related to personal identity and its expression but is eventually associated with the development of the place and national identities. For example, in publications of positive and negative experiences on social media, accompanied by photographs, videos, and testimonies, the consumer can participate in the economy and alter its hierarchical order (Jansson, 2018; Luna-Cortés, 2018).

Consequently, tourism research progressively observes user-generated online content (Jeffrey et al., 2020), providing insights into consumer attitudes and values. However, according to Wight (2020), few of these studies look beyond the role and nature of social media to focus on the experiences and behaviours of social media users in their web exchanges. In this context, it is essential to look at different consumer segments and their post-purchase behaviours in the sense of the differences in preferences, usability, perceived value, and willingness to communicate and share experiences with others (Bizirgianni & Dionysopoulou, 2013).

Luna-Cortés (2018) conducted a study to describe the relationship between self-congruence and influence on the perception of the destination brand. This research also reinforced the idea that young travellers are motivated to create content on social media when congruent with their identity (self-image) and travel experience. Moreover, the generational differences show that older consumers seek soft adventure travel (Patterson & Balderas, 2020) while young consumers seek adventurous and one-of-a-kind experiences to share on social media that reflect their identity. These findings leave specific questions that require more explanation of how dark destinations acquire a high value for consumers.

3. Methodology

This paper is based on the study developed by Rivera-Eraso and Sandoval-Escobar (2020), which identifies a model for the perceived value of dark tourist destinations for young Colombians. This study developed a model of five latent variables (Utilitarian, Perceived Risk, Hedonic, Social and Sensation Seeking values), modelled using AFC (Luna-Cortés, 2021). However, the proposed model omitted intention variables, such as the intention to visit or purchase a tourist package, search for information on the Internet, and share information about the proposed destination.

To address this issue, this paper identifies possible relationships among the variables proposed below by using a structural equation model (Suhud et al., 2021).

3.1. Participants

The present study included 821 people from generations Y (Millennials, born between 1980 and 1995) and Z (Centennials, born between 1995 and 2002). The sample was obtained through an open call and had the voluntary participation of young people between February and April 2020. 56.3% of the respondents were male, and 43.7% were female. 54.81% of the respondents belonged to Generation Y, while 45.19% to Generation Z. The respondents are Colombians from different regions of the country. 71.86% of the participants were single, 25.94% were married, and the remaining 2.19% were in a different marital status. Regarding the frequency with which they travelled, the most frequent case was that they travelled spontaneously (58.47%) or made at least one trip every six months (24.6%). The respondents in the sample had a higher education degree, given that 95.49% had a bachelor's degree; moreover, 54.69% were working when completing the survey.

3.2. Instruments and design

The present study used a descriptive, transactional, and correlational design using a structured survey. Data were collected using an electronic form, and participation was voluntary by signing informed consent. The

instrument of this study was a survey constructed from the proposals developed by Chang and Wildt (1994), Cho and Jang (2008), and Luna-Cortés (2017).

The instrument consisted of statements accompanied by ten images alluding to different dark tourism offerings, containing characteristics of tourist activities related to death. The images were then organized into a spectrum depending on their relationship to death or other atrocities. Finally, an arbitrary criterion was used for the presentation of the images.

Three preliminary tests were developed. The first was cognitive validation conducted by three expert judges and ten potential consumers of tour packages. Subsequently, the Q-sort validation method was used (Hilden, 1954) to identify opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards the proposed images and discard those that generated extreme rejection; this procedure was carried out with 18 potential users. Finally, a pilot study was conducted using a convenience sample of 70 people. All the Cronbach's alpha values of the dimensions were > .80, which indicates that the final instrument has adequate internal consistency.

According to the literature and the findings in the pilot study, the final instrument was structured around the following constructs: (1) intention to search for information on the Internet regarding the tourist destination, (2) intention to purchase or visit a destination tourism (3) intention to share information on the Internet regarding a tourist destination, (4) utilitarian value, (5) risk avoidance value, (6) hedonic value, (7) sensation seeking, and (8) social value.

Five statements were proposed to share information about their vacation experience on social media, three to search for information about the destination, and four to visit these destinations. Additionally, three statements for each remaining dimension contain 27 statements with a Likert-type response model. Table 2 illustrates the scale used in the present investigation.

Table 2
Dimensions, variables, and items of the value perception scale

Variable	Factors	Items	Code
Intention to search information on the Internet about the destination.	Information search intention 1	I would look for information about these types of destinations on the Internet.	I_B1
	Information search intention 2	I would search the Internet to find out more about this tourist experience.	I_B2
	Information search intention 3	I would browse the Internet to find information about these types of destinations.	I_B3
Intention to visit.	Visit intention 1	I would visit these types of destinations for one of my upcoming vacations.	I_V1
	Visit intention 2	I would like to get to know this type of destination in the future.	I_V2
	Visit intention 3	I would like to plan a trip to this type of destination in the future.	I_V3
	Visit intention 4	I would choose this type of destination in the future.	I_V4
Intention to share information on social networks.	Intention to share information on social networks 1	I would be willing to upload information about my vacations on social media if I travel to such a destination.	U_R1
	Intention to share information on social networks 2	I would like to share my vacation experiences with others if I went to this type of destination.	U_R2
	Intention to share information on social networks 3	I would like others to know about my vacation experiences in a destination of this type using my social networks.	U_R3
	Intention to share information on social networks 4	My social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) would be part of my daily routine while visiting places like these.	U_R4
	Intention to share information on social networks 5	I would probably talk to friends on social media to find out about this type of destination.	U_R5

Table 2 (continued)

Utilitarian value.	Utilitarian 1	This type of tourist destination provides the optimal qualities for a vacation trip.	V_U1
	Utilitarian 2	This type of destination would be a destination that could meet my tourist needs.	V_U2
	Utilitarian 3	This type of tourist destination would provide me with the type of trip I am looking for.	V_U3
Perceived risk.	Perceived risk 1	I feel that these tourist sites could be dangerous.	R_P1
	Perceived risk 2	I feel that this type of tourist site can pose risks to my health and physical integrity.	R_P2
	Perceived risk 3	I feel that this type of tourist destination could pose an economic risk for me.	R_P3
Hedonic value.	Hedonic 1	This type of destination is exciting.	V_H1
	Hedonic 2	These types of destinations are attractive.	V_H2
	Hedonic 3	This type of destination allows me to imagine the events happening there.	V_H3
Sensation seeking value.	Sensation Seeking 1	This type of destination gives me a feeling of adventure.	B_S1
	Sensation Seeking 2	This type of destination provides a novel experience.	B_S2
	Sensation Seeking 3	This type of destination brings unknown sensations.	B_S3
Social value.	Social 1	These types of destinations help me interact with other people.	V_S1
	Social 2	This type of destination helps me get to know other cultures.	V_S2
	Social 3	This type of destination allows me to exchange information and experiences with friends and family.	V_S3

Note. This paper is an adaptation into English of the original questionnaire, which was carried out, developed, and validated in Spanish.

3.3. Procedures

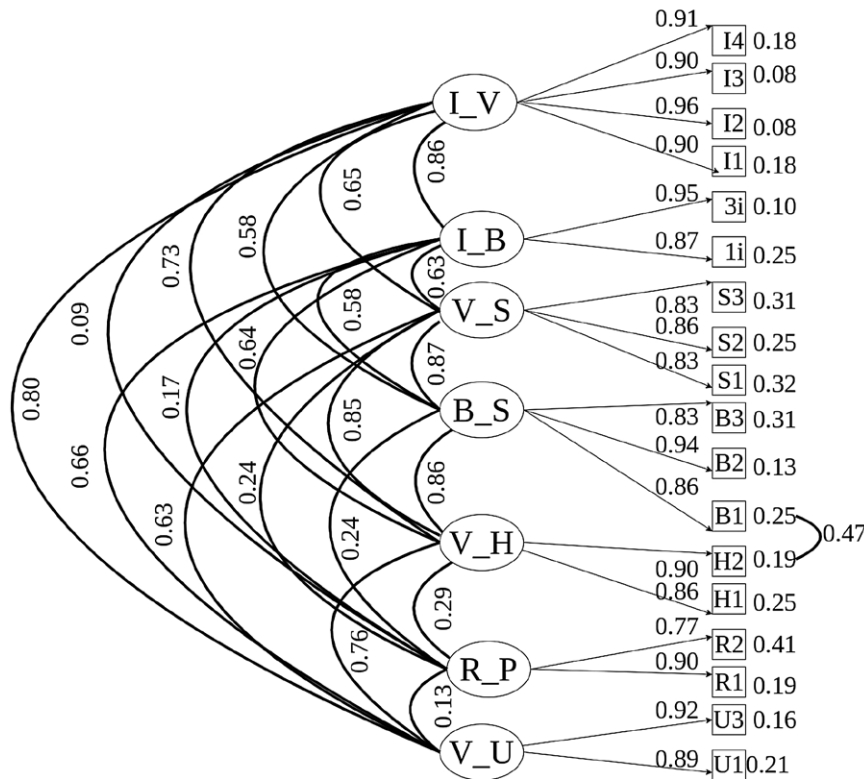
The study was developed through an application hosted on Google forms at <https://forms.gle/mnJKYqZ6b-c3XRBWJA>. The first part of the questionnaire shows the purpose of the study, provides information about the institution that organized it, and explains the study's objectives. Then, the participants were asked if they were willing to participate in the study, and informed consent was given. This procedure was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Konrad Lorenz University (Bogotá, Colombia). The second part of the questionnaire asked the respondents to observe images referring to different dark tourism plans. The third part of the questionnaire included questions to measure the respondent's perception of the previously mentioned topics. The participants responded according to their level of agreement (or disagreement) with each item. After reading an item, seven response options were presented (1. Totally disagree; 2. Strongly disagree; 3. Disagree; 4. Indifferent; 5. Agree; 6. Strongly agree; 7. Totally agree). The items that made up this part of the questionnaire can be seen in Table 2. The last questionnaire questions focus on demographic characteristics such as sex, age, educational level, and marital status.

4. Results

An SEM analysis was carried out using the covariance matrix and the maximum likelihood estimate for the data analysis. Rstudio version 3.6 (Rstudio team, 2020) was used to perform the study in different stages.

Figure 1 presents the result obtained with the proposed model, composed of seven correlated dimensions within where the following can be found: hedonic value, practical value, social value, sensation-seeking value, perceived risk avoidance value, information search intention and visit intention.

Figure 1
SEM model of the perceived value of unknown tourist destinations for young Colombians



The SEM model proposes a low covariance between perceived risk and the rest of the latent variables. Thus, the covariance between perceived risk and utilitarian value is 0.13, 0.29 with hedonic value, 0.24 with sensation seeking and social value. Finally, this is a low covariance between the perceived risk and the variables of intention to search for information on the Internet (0.17) and the lowest relation of all present between the perceived risk and the intention to visit only 0.09. Such relationships may be a sign that perceived risk does not strongly influence value perception.

On the other hand, one of the variables with the highest levels of covariance is the "intention to visit" with values of 0.86 with the "intention to search for information", 0.80 with the "utilitarian value", 0.73 with the variable of "hedonic value" and 0.65 with "social value".

Additionally, it is worth highlighting the variable "hedonic value" and the variable "value of sensation seeking", which obtained a significant covariance of 0.86, but also the variable of "social value" had a covariance of 0.85 with the social value.

This type of analysis usually includes TLI, CFI and RMSEA (Kline, 2015). Once the most suitable structure is verified, the reliability and validity of the instrument are analyzed. Lastly, an invariance analysis was developed to compare the proposed model with the intergenerational groups and to depict possible differences between the sexes (Lara & Merion, 2019; Plaza-Vidal et al., 2020).

Following the results obtained by the SEM model, the variable of intention to generate information in social networks was not included because it did not fit the model, interfering in its goodness-of-fit indexes, allowing an improvement in the RMSEA from 0.074 to 0.069 and in other indexes such as the CFI and TLI from 0.92 to 0.96 and from 0.930 to 0.946 respectively. Table 3 shows the main goodness-of-fit indexes.

Table 3
Goodness of fit indices

Goodness of fit Indices	Model with seven correlated constructs
Chi-SQ	563.01
P	0.000
CFI	0.96
TLI	0.946
RMSEA	0.069

Note. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

As the last stage of the present study, an invariance analysis was performed for the sex and age variable groups to identify possible differences between groups for the proposed model. Tables 4 and 5 show the analysis results for each group, respectively.

Table 4
Invariance of the model for the age variable

	RMSEA	CFI	AIC	TLI
Config	0.068	0.962	45973.678	0.949
Metric	0.067	0.961	45965.052	0.95
Scalar	0.066	0.961	45949.672	0.951
Strict	0.062	0.963	45952.238	0.958

Thus, in the invariance analysis, each model is compared by restricting elements. The criterion for this analysis is based on identifying the variability in the goodness-of-fit for each model.

Table 5 shows no evidence of a decrease in RMSEA higher than 0.015 or $\Delta CFI < -.01$ (Dimitrov, 2010), specifying that for the gender variable, there is a strong metric invariance.

Table 5
Invariance of the model for the age

	RMSEA	CFI	AIC	TLI
Config	0.089	0.937	45614.3	0.915
Partial	0.068	0.962	45973.678	0.949
Metric	0.088	0.935	45626.231	0.916
Scalar	0.082	0.937	45634.12	0.916

Finally, the multigroup invariance model took an age as an element for intergroup comparison. The analysis had to stop at the partial invariance analysis stage since it indicated a decline in RMSEA greater than 0.015 or $\Delta CFI < -.01$ (Dimitrov, 2010) since age significantly differs in the value perception for this kind of tourist activity.

5. Conclusions

The values associated with sensation seeking and hedonism significantly predict the intentions to visit the destination and search for information online. Furthermore, the structural equation model establishes a significant relationship between the intention to visit and search for information on the Internet, showing the importance of the perceived value concerning dark tourism, particularly regarding hedonic and utilitarian values. Concerning perceived value, there is a weak relationship between perceived risk and other latent variables of the study, particularly relating to the variables of visit intention and information search on the proposed destination, representing an additional motivational process involved in the preference for dark tourism destinations.

6. Theoretical and managerial implications

When comparing results from studies on other products and services (Shimul et al., 2021; Spinks et al., 2021), perceived risk in our research does not increase or decrease these anticipatory beliefs. However, the evidence confirms that consumers value the sensations and expectations of hedonic experiences associated with the destination.

The values associated with the tourist destination are anticipators of positive emotions and motivators for choosing tourist destinations. The information search and the visit intention are produced by the evaluation of the information (Fraiz et al., 2020), implying that the values of the dark destination are associated with its cultural, social, and emotional attributes. These findings confirm the model proposed by Luna-Cortés (2018) to the extent that the relation between the consumer identity and the product or service makes it more probable to learn more about the destination and later share information share experiences on social media.

Further, it has been established that the effectiveness of marketing strategies is moderated by emotions (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021), which are significantly related to culture. However, its approach requires specific methodologies that capture emotions in situ since people only sometimes report their feelings about tourist destinations. Therefore, using images, rating scales, and psychophysiological measurements will allow a deeper analysis of the emotions in evaluating unknown tourist destinations.

The study results show the importance of considering tourism identities when designing communication and marketing strategies, especially for those who rely on experiences or unpredictable activities that require information-seeking behaviours. Therefore, social networks have become an important stage for the tourism decision-making process. Thus, according to Kim et al. (2020) and Zanatta et al. (2019), social networks are a learning environment where connections are created to interact with specific communities and exchange knowledge and opinions. For this reason, they are decisive in reducing uncertainty and generating anticipatory beliefs and positive emotions (McArthur & White, 2016). Furthermore, Cleveland et al. (2016) and Kolmykova et al. (2021) indicate that digital contexts have shortened distances and are more segmented (Parkinson et al., 2021), which has eliminated communication barriers and facilitated the exchange of ideas.

The weak relationship between the variables “intention to share information on social media” with the other dimensions can be understood based on the importance of the “Social value” for the individual. To a certain extent, people are constantly looking to reaffirm their identities, using their social network ties or primary social group as a reference to avoid the risk of being rejected (Bee & Madrigal, 2013; Gariner & Kwek, 2017; Schwartz, 2014; Vecchione et al., 2019).

In the case of our study, as established by Weeks et al. (2017), there are no fundamental differences between the generations represented in the study, which indicates that generations “Y” and “Z” have a similar perception of value, considering the cultural influence on individual perceptions, which forms self-perception (Grigoryan & Schwartz, 2020; Ye et al., 2019). In this situation, the culture and national values belong to the same territory since it is identified that at the intergenerational level, the perception of value is similar, making it clear that Colombians share a common cultural heritage.

Contrastingly, the analyses reveal noticeable differences in the perception of value between gender groups, thus suggesting that men and women perceive value differently and have different forms of intention regarding the purchase or visit intention to a destination, the possible sharing of information on social networks (or word-of-mouth “eWOM”) and the use of the Internet to search for information when planning a trip.

Consequently, the need arises to create new psychographic profiling of male and female consumers. A recent study shows this is especially relevant in tourism, where female consumers likely choose niche tourism over mass tourism (Tasci et al., 2021). This knowledge allows Destination Marketing Organisations and travel

agents to create novel experiences for better-targeted tourists, thereby ushering tourists to post online content about the destination (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2018). Thus, adequate segmentation through the creation of niche markets and a detailed description of the characteristics and needs of the population interested in living the tourist experience is necessary (Rehman et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2017). For these reasons, travel and tourism businesses must consider managing social media networking sites (SNSs) as an inseparable part of their integrated marketing strategy (Chopra et al., 2022).

7. Future implications and limitations

The findings previously presented merit future research and require different approaches. First, it would be beneficial to explore the role of emotions in the preference for dark destinations since we note that perceived risk and fear are not good predictors of visit intention. On the other hand, the association of the search for sensations and the reaffirmation of social value strongly relates to the intention to visit or seek information about the destination. Furthermore, the emotional dimension seems to have a fundamental role but can differ in the information search during or after the visit. This aspect has been highlighted by Hosany et al. (2020), who argue that emotions play an essential function in defining tourism experiences and influencing tourist evaluations.

Additionally, employing this instrument in a new context, such as different countries or locations, would enable the identification of the dimensions of value within other cultural, social, and age groups. In doing so, researchers would have the opportunity to compare the findings of this study with fresh perspectives.

As a limitation, in the Colombian context, the social conflict is concentrated in specific regions, mainly in rural areas, since the urban regions in the centre of the country, such as the capital and the larger cities, have not had the same level of exposure to the armed conflict and death as rural regions (Crespi-Vallbona et al., 2019). Moreover, similar cultures that have suffered violence, fear, and agony for decades exhibit desensitization to pictures of violence or death (Podoshen et al., 2015). Therefore this shows that it is vital to identify and research the emotional sensitivity, stressors, and considerations of different cultures (Luna-Cortés, 2021) and to predict the influence of communication on dark tourist destinations.

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Submitted: November 20, 2022

Revised: August 29, 2022

Accepted: January 20, 2023