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Why do people share their travel experiences on social media?

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ABSTRACT

Tourism practices and destination decisions are more and more affected by the opinions of trusted friends channeled through social media, and it is therefore of great interest to explore the role that this plays in the travel context. It is also valuable to understand the behaviour of people commonly known as "lurkers", who travel but do not share their experiences with others. We draw on social influence theory and its three constructs – identification, internalization, and compliance, as well as the users' personality, to investigate these issues. Based on 381 responses, findings reveal two dominant reasons: first, perceived enjoyment was the most important motive for travellers to share their travel experiences on online networks and travel websites. Second, security and privacy issues are the top latent reasons. This study extends the tourism literature by combining all online behaviours into one single model. We also provide suggestions for further research.

1. Introduction

Travellers look for suggestions, recommendations, and insights from online social networks when planning their trips (Bilgihan, Barreda, Okumus, & Nusair, 2016). TripAdvisor offers information from millions of travellers, with 500 million reviews and recommendations and 390 million unique visitors (Smith, 2017), leading to an enormous amount of user-generated content (UGC). Thus, social media is becoming increasingly important for the tourism industry (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005; Perez-Vega, Taheri, Farrington, & O'Gorman, 2018). The development of the Internet has reshaped not only the way people plan their trips, but also the way they share their travel experience with their family and friends. Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, affirmed that "*People influence people. Nothing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend*" (Zuckerberg, 2017). It is of interest to practioners in the tourism industry to understand why people are so influenced by the opinions of others (Wood & Hayes, 2012) when choosing a travel.

There are facilitators and inhibitors regarding the practice of sharing travel experience on social media. For instance, some people may be driven by altruism or self-esteem, while others may pay more attention to security and privacy issues. Many authors have sought to explain how these factors influence the sharing of experiences through social media (Chung & Koo, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010), and which of them may affect users in searching travel experiences. However, little is known about how these facilitators and inhibitors work together in the mind of the users who share their travel experiences on social media. This research proposes to flesh out the knowledge in this area by answering the question – why do travellers share their travel experience on social media? The motivators of sharing travel experiences online usually relate to altruism, personal fulfilment, and self-actualization. Altruistic motivations refer to the wish to help others make wise decisions. Personal fulfilment and self-actualization motivations have to do with the way people wish to be perceived by others. These motivations are the most important for information sharing, especially regarding travel experiences. Inhibitors of sharing travel experiences online often include concerns about security, privacy, the environment, personal reasons, and relationship issues.

Social influence theory can be applied to the investigation of behaviour pertaining to the sharing of travel experience (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Researchers have sought to explain social influence on online communities (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006; Hau, Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2013). For example, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) reported a positive association between perceived social benefits and the level of participation in an online travel community. More and more travellers are turning to online travel communities to fulfil their travel-related tasks, ranging from seeking travel information and tips to finding travel friends. However, to the best of our knowledge, no study has yet endeavoured to connect social influence to the drivers of facilitators and inhibitors of sharing travel experiences through social media.

Sharing travel experiences through social media is the behaviour or activity of sharing travel-related experiences with others on one or more social media platform(s) (Kang & Schuett, 2013). These sharing

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activities pertain to holiday attributes such as prices, weather conditions, restaurants, and attractions, or may include emotions, imaginations, and fantasies (e.g. photos and videos) (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Previous research shows that social networks usually provide richer information than that found on other types of platforms such as official sites or media sharing sites (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Travellers elect social media platforms as the predominant tool for sharing their travel experiences (S. Wang, Kirillova, & Lehto, 2017). One example is the popular website TripAdvisor, where almost 200 million travellers search for information and references on destinations, restaurants, hotels, influencing their travel plans (Filieri, Alguezaui, & McLeay, 2015). Sharing travel information, stories, and experiences, and uploading text contents, images, audios, and videos is becoming a favoured information channel in the tourism industry (Hur, Kim, Karatepe, & Lee, 2017; Kang & Schuett, 2013; Matson-Barkat & Robert-Demontrond, 2018). In Portugal, Facebook is at the top of the list of social media networks, being used by 78% of social media users (Statcounter Global Stats, 2017).

The impact of social media on the tourism industry can be seen through two dimensions: before travel and after travel. Before the trip, people search for travel information and recommendations mainly to plan, organize, and get ideas. Besides looking for information, do travellers also share this information in order to tell the world of their experiences? After the trip, travellers may or may not wish to share their experiences on social media platforms.

The present study seeks to analyse this issue in depth. We focus on a Southern European country - Portugal, using an online survey initially developed in English and then translated into Portuguese to collect the data. The questionnaire was back-translated into English by a different translator to ensure semantic equivalence (Brislin, 1970). We collected data on both friendship relationships and interactions for a large subset of the Facebook social network. Obviously, that format may minimize response bias; these results remain based on self-reported data with their potential limitations.

Due to the constant growth and the strong presence of social media in our lives, human behavior that leads to online participation has received considerable attention from researchers. However, previous studies have left much unexplored due the vast number of behaviours that the human brain can trigger. The purpose of this study is to investigate the drivers that lead people to participate online to tell their travel experiences to others, as well as to gain insight on the factors that lead them not to share. People are "*strongly and unconsciously influenced by others*" (Franks, 2010, p. 4) in many ways and this research supports the belief that social psychology will be the predominant approach to understanding travellers' online behaviour. The limitations of earlier studies are mainly related to the non-differentiation among social media participants (observers, contributors, or both) and their different behaviours in social media use.

Moreover, few studies have conducted a holistic interpretation of the direct and indirect determinants of online participation. Inspired by these reasons, this paper firstly contributes to demonstrating that depending on which role the user plays (poster or lurker) there are different behaviours in the use of social media along with the influence of user personalities. Secondly, it provides a more holistic evaluation of the drivers of sharing one's travel experiences on social media in comparison with previous research papers. Thirdly, but perhaps most importantly, this research examines the relationship between social influence, the drivers of facilitators, and inhibitors with the consequence of sharing travel experiences through social media. Studying these three relationships may help to explain people's beliefs and behaviours toward sharing travel experiences on social media.

We have structured this paper as follows. Section 2 presents the existing theoretical background. Section 3 proposes the conceptual model and corresponding hypotheses. Section 4 describes the research methodology used to test the model. Section 5 presents the data analysis and results, followed by Section 6, which discusses practical and theoretical implications, limitations and future research suggestions. Lastly, Section 7 offers the principal conclusions.

2. Theoretical background

Recent developments in technologies have clearly impacted our society, notably consumers. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the consumer has become more informed, demanding, challenging, and curious (Law, Leung, & Buhalis, 2009). Aided by the exponential increase of information offered online, travellers' tendency to search for recommendations online is now a constant and growing reality (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

A new "*mega trend*" is now recognized in global society – the intense, widespread, and growing use of the so-called social media. Social media are Internet-based applications on Web 2.0 that allow users to interact with regard to mutual interests (Dippelreiter et al., 2008; Nezakati et al., 2015). User-generated content (UGC) can be described as the information created and shared by users of social media. The content of this shared information takes many forms, including reviews, recommendations, photos and videos, question-and-answer forums, and blogs (Durio, 2017). Through social media websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TripAdvisor, people are more engaged and socially integrated into an online environment. In the tourism industry, in which the amount of travel information is growing at a dizzying rate (Nezakati et al., 2015), the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and interests worldwide has proved to be an important source of travel-planning data. The success of social media has brought it to the point at which it is more and more perceived as a marketing tool in the tourism context (Güçer, Bağ, & Altınay, 2017).

As Joo Bae, Lee, Suh, and Suh (2017), and Yang, Tan, and Li (2019) investigated with Airbnb users; pre-trip and post-trip behaviours differ. Before the trip, travellers search for information and recommendations on hotels, restaurants, activities, attractions, events, and nightlife, making their decisions much more accurate based on the reviews available on social media networks such as Facebook and TripAdvisor (Jażdżewska & Jagnuszewska, 2017). According to EyeforTravel, 88% of travellers search for this type of information before they book their trip (Benady & Hadwick, 2016). Moreover, as stated in a study conducted by Nielsen, *Nielsen Global Trust in Advertising Survey*, approximately eight in ten of the respondents (83%) say that they trust the recommendations of friends and family more than information gathered from tourism agencies, and two-thirds (66%) trust consumer opinions posted online (Nielsen, 2015). After the trip, travellers may or may not wish to share their experiences and interact with other travellers through social media platforms.

2.1. Facilitators to share content online

According to a study conducted by Munar and Jacobsen (2014), altruistic and community-related motivations are the most important for information sharing. In other words, people are highly motivated to share their experiences online to help other travellers with useful advice to avoid using bad products and services. Another motivation is to maintain social contacts and friendships. Social influence seems to be highly important and applicable in this context (Bilgihan, Barreda, Okumus, & Nusair, 2016; S. A.; Lee & Oh, 2017).

Kang and Schuett (2013) stated that changes in behaviours shaped by social influence take place during three commitment processes: identification, internalization, and compliance (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Malhotra and Dennis (2005) also studied the volatility of behaviours based on these three processes of attitude change. The thought identification process (when people feel that they belong to a social group and perceive that they will fit in with the group when they share their knowledge through social media) (Kang & Schuett, 2013); internalization (when an individual accepts the opinion of others as evidence of the truth and as part of their own values and beliefs) (Malhotra & Dennis,

2005). In this case the individual is influenced to accept information and use social media due to the inherent values – values with which people identify themselves (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Finally, compliance occurs when behaviour is adopted in order to achieve rewards or avoid punishment (Malhotra & Dennis, 2005).

Based on the theory of belonging and the intrinsic motivation of altruism developed by Ma and Chan (2014), perceived online attachment motivation (creation of strong relationships and cohesive groups is an innate characteristic of humans) and perceived online relationship commitment (improving the social interaction with others – the need to belong) have positive effects on online knowledge sharing (Ma & Chan, 2014). Yoo and Gretzel (2008) also suggested seven factors that influence online travellers to write reviews: enjoyment; exertion of collective power over companies; venting negative feelings; concerns for other consumers; helping the company; expressing positive feelings; and self-enhancement (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Lai and Chen (2014) found that intrinsic motivation influences posters (i.e., enjoyment and knowledge self-efficacy), while extrinsic motivation influences lurkers (i.e., reciprocity) (Lai & Chen, 2014). Moreover, Correa, Hinsley, & Zúñiga (2010 explored the dimensions of the Big-Five model and social media use and how these are related. Their results revealed that people who are more extroverted and open to experiences tend to use social media more (Correa et al., 2010). Vannucci, Flannery, and Ohannessian (2017) examined the association between social media use and anxiety in emerging adults. Their findings suggest a positive correlation between the two – the higher the daily social media use is, the greater is the likelihood of being anxious. This means that an anxious person might engage with social media excessively and eccentrically, in order to validate her/his self-esteem (e.g. constantly sharing information to obtain the maximum number of comments and "likes").

2.2. Inhibitors to sharing content online

Even though the creation of consumer-generated content is increasing every day, the number of those who remain silent also continues to grow, and perhaps at a faster rate (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Thus, it is increasingly valuable to understand "the silent majority" (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014), that is, the lurkers – those who do not share their own experiences on social media. Earlier studies have defined the lurker concept in different ways, such as, "silent groups" (Sun, Rau, & Ma, 2014), as someone who has never shared any type of information on social networks (Preece, Nonnecke, & Andrews, 2004), a person who reads but never posts (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014), or an individual who has a conservative and strategic attitude toward the Internet, in order to guard personal information (Osatuyi, 2015). In this paper, a lurker is a person who does not share any type of content, while still engaging with social media platforms. Research by Preece et al. (2004) revealed five main reasons for lurking, which are basically related to issues of low self-esteem (e.g. shyness in sharing information on social media or the feeling of not fitting into any group) or issues pertaining to not being technology user-friendly (e.g. sporadic and uncomfortable use of technologies). The 1% rule proposed by Arthur (2006) states that in a group of 100 people online, one will produce content, ten will engage with an interaction (e.g. by adding a comment), and the remaining 89 will observe it passively. It has been widely demonstrated that the majority of online information is generated by very few users (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014).

2.3. Social influence theory

The social influence theory and the perceived enjoyment concept (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992) have been used to explain group and collective behaviour. Social influence theory is defined as the degree to which a person expects a particular behaviour from the people who are important to him or her (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Earlier research has used social influence theory to construct cognitive behaviour models that consider only one aspect – subjective norms (e.g. Jeng & Tzeng, 2012), which reflect social pressure from significant others to perform a behaviour. Based on a theoretical framework for the analysis of social influence developed in the early 1950s, Kelman (1974) proposed three processes of influence, including compliance (subjective norm), internalization (group norm), and identification (social identity) (Kelman, 1974). This theory suggests that changes in behaviours shaped by social influence arise from three levels of psychological attachment, which result from distinct commitments on satisfying personal goals (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

Briefly, identification has been understood as the adoption of a particular behaviour to maintain a relationship with a person or group. Internalization is defined as the acceptance of induced behaviour by assuming the opinion of others as evidence of certainty. Compliance stands for the acceptance of influenced behaviours in the expectation of approval and favourable feedback, and to avoid dissatisfaction and censure. These three constructs have an influence on perceived enjoyment that can be defined as a pleasant reaction to media use (Tamborini, Bowman, Eden, Grizzard, & Organ, 2010).

The importance of social influence on social media platforms has drawn the attention of researchers. Researchers have explored social influence on online communities (Chiu et al., 2006; Hau et al., 2013). For instance, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) reported a positive association between perceived social benefits and the level of participation in an online travel community. More and more travellers are turning to online travel communities to undertake their travel-related tasks, ranging from seeking travel information and tips to finding travel friends. However, to the best of our knowledge, no study has yet endeavoured to connect social influence to the drivers of motivations and inhibitions with the consequence of sharing travel experiences through social media.

2.4. Personality influence on sharing content online

Gawel (1997) suggested the theory of human motivation, in which people are driven to achieve certain needs displayed in a hierarchy. People become motivated to accomplish their needs while moving up in the hierarchy only when their lowest needs are satisfied. Once basic needs – physiological and safety needs – have been met, the next level to be fulfilled is that of social needs (e.g. love and belonging), followed by self-esteem needs (e.g. to feel respected and to enjoy status within society), and last, reaching the top of the hierarchy, where the needs of self-actualization are met – realizing individual potential, self-fulfilment, and personal growth (Maslow, 1943). An innate characteristic of humans is the desire to identify their role in society; which is inherently related to the desire for self-realization (Maslow, 1943). Social media represents a means by which people can convey what they want people to think about them, thereby achieving their personal fulfilment.

The driving factors that distinguish poster and lurker groups are related to the influence of personality traits in each group (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014). A study conducted by *The New York Times* on the psychology of sharing identified six sharing personality types, or "personas". Termed as altruists (people who want to help others and who are less driven by self-interest); careerists (motivated to create discussion and debate); hipsters (those who want to have an online identity and stay connected with the world); boomerangs (those strongly motivated by the reaction they receive back from sharing, that is, who seek comments and *likes*); connectors (people who are concerned about mutual experiences and staying connected); and last, selectives (people who share information only with a certain person, anticipating certain reactions) (Brett, 2011).

On the other hand, the lurker's personality is somewhat different. Literature states that people are influenced by what others think, especially those with low self-esteem, with lack of confidence in themselves, and those who are too shy to post (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014).

Table 1
Facilitators, Inhibitors, and personal characteristics in sharing content online.

Reference	Context	Social influence theory			Facilitators			Inhibitors			
		Internalization	Identification	Compliance	Altruistic motivations	Personal fulfilment and Self-actualization	Perceived enjoyment	Environmental reasons	Relationship reasons	Personal reasons	Security and privacy reasons
Preece et al. (2004)	The research targets in this study are lurkers and their motivations for not posting.							X	X	X	X
K. H. Yoo and Gretzel (2008)	This study focuses on the drivers that lead people to write reviews on a travel website, based on an online questionnaire.				X		X				
K.-H. Yoo and Gretzel (2011)	The influence of users' personality regarding online generated content is the key of this investigation. Findings demonstrated a high correlation between personality and sharing content through social media networks									X	X
Kang and Schuett (2013)	Social influence is the base of this research, which seeks to identify the reasons for sharing travel information online	X	X	X			X				
Lai and Chen (2014)	A model was developed based on the two dimensions of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, in order to explore the reasons to post or not post online contents.				X		X		X		
Munar and Jacobsen (2014)	This study investigates the motivations of travellers to contribute with information relevant to other travellers through social networks, specifically regarding the destination of Mallorca in Spain				X	X					
Sun et al. (2014)	A deep investigation of lurkers was carried out to understand their reasons, what defines them, and make recommendations for lurkers to share content online were suggested.							X	X	X	X
(Zhou, 2011)	This study explores online contribution factors from a social influence perspective.	X	X	X							
Correa et al. (2010)	The big-five model (extraversion, emotional stability, and openness to experience) was explored from a social media use perspective	X	X	X							
Amaro, Duarte, and Henriques (2016)	A cluster analysis was developed in order to categorize travellers based on their use of social media platforms				X						
Alarifi, Sedera, & Recker (2015)	Research was carried out to explain users' motivations to post or lurk in Enterprise social networks	X	X							X	
Yuan, Lin, and Zhuo (2016)	This study attempts to predict consumer knowledge sharing in an online travel community and suggests that it could be driven by intrinsic reasons and self-enrichment					X					
Chung and Han (2017)	This research studies the relationship amongst tourists' persuasion, attachment, and behavioural changes in social media	X	X	X							
Gunn (2017)	This research seeks to understand the barriers that encumber eWOM contribution in the travel and hospitality industry							X	X	X	X

(*continued on next page*)

Table 1 (*continued*)

Reference	Context	Social influence theory			Facilitators			Inhibitors			
		Internalization	Identification	Compliance	Altruistic motivations	Personal fulfilment and Self-actualization	Perceived enjoyment	Environmental reasons	Relationship reasons	Personal reasons	Security and privacy reasons
Sedera, Lokuge, Atapattu, and Gretzel (2017)	This paper investigates the social influence impact on posting photographs and comments on social media while travelling.	X	X	X		X					
Hu and Kim (2018)	This paper explores if personality matters in the relationship between eWOM motivations and eWOM behaviour.					X	X				

In contrast, Correa et al. (2010) investigated how the personal characteristics of web users may influence them to participate actively in social media. Their research revealed that introverted and lonely people tend to use the Web to alleviate their real-world isolation (Correa et al., 2010). Other studies report that one of the most popular reasons for not sharing online is to remain anonymous due to privacy concerns (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011), which characterizes this group by their discretion.

The constructs in this model are based on our review of existing theory. Amongst all of the personal characteristics discussed in the literature review, three constructs stand out – internalization, identification, and compliance – all of which have arisen from social influence theory. Regarding facilitators, we postulate that the most important in explaining online travel sharing experiences are altruistic motivations, personal-fulfilment and self-actualization, and perceived enjoyment. Lastly, the most important inhibitors applied in this study are related to environmental, relationship, personal, and security and privacy issues. Table 1 provides a summary of the determinants identified in previous studies within this context, relating them to the emergent constructs. From Table 1 we can see that no study to date has developed a holistic assessment of the factors that explain actual travel experience sharing (AS), which is the main contribution of our paper.

3. Model research and research hypotheses

We propose an integrative research model from three major groups (Fig. 1). First, social influence theory has been playing a pivotal role in people's personality, which gathers three types of personal characteristics – Identification, internalization, and compliance (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Those indicators have a direct effect on perceived enjoyment and an indirect effect on actual travel experience sharing (AS) (Tamborini et al., 2010). By joining these constructs we can evaluate the impact of the social influence theory on perceived enjoyment. Perceived enjoyment explains actual travel experience sharing (AS). The second major group is related to the facilitators of online sharing, which highlights two main contributing factors: altruistic motivations and personal fulfilment and self-actualization reasons. Finally, from the third group, the inhibitors, four constructs emerge: environmental reasons, relationship reasons, personal reasons, and security and privacy reasons.

3.1. Social influence theory

The constructs from Kang and Schuett (2013) – Identification, internalization, and compliance – aim to explain how personality influences the sharing of content online and to predict certain users' behaviours in certain situations. Identification is associated with users who may develop feelings of membership to a community with increased usage experience. After extended group usage, the user may feel a sense of social identity (Zhou, 2011). Internalization reflects that an individual deals with perceptions and behaviour related to interaction within the referent group (Zhou, 2011). Compliance, corresponding to an initial stage of decision-making to use a group technology (since the user has no prior usage experience) will tend to rely more on the prevailing subjective norm to use the system or not (Chung & Han, 2017).

It is expected that identification and internalization have a positive influence on perceived enjoyment, and consequently on actual travel experience sharing because the sense of belonging or fitting into a group brings a generally positive outlook on life as well as convergence with one's personal customs and values (Kang & Schuett, 2013). On the contrary compliance is likely to have a negative influence on perceived enjoyment and consequently on actual travel sharing, because users are under situations of surveillance and manipulation, which has a pejorative effect on users and creates a non-enjoyable behaviour such as sharing information on social media (Kang & Schuett, 2013). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1. Identification has a positive influence on perceived enjoyment in

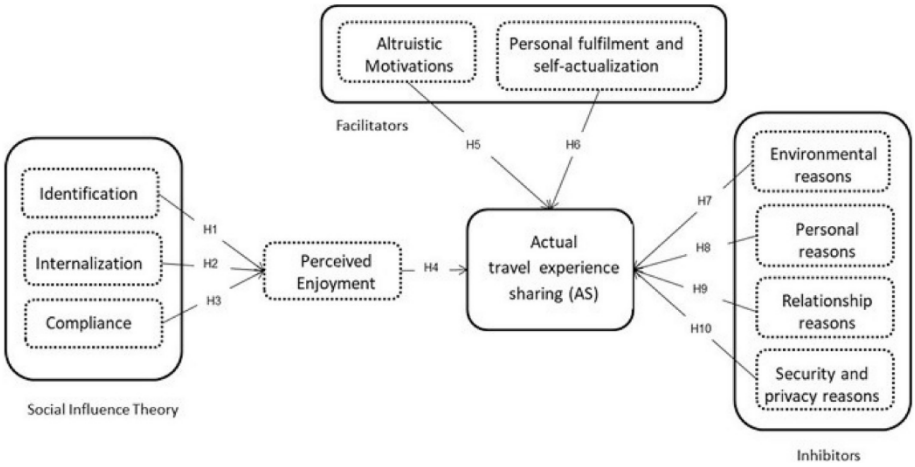

Fig. 1. The research model.

travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

H2. Internalization has a positive influence on perceived enjoyment in travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

H3. Compliance has a negative influence on perceived enjoyment in travel experience sharing (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

H4. Perceived enjoyment positively influences actual travel experience sharing on social media (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

3.2. Facilitators to sharing content online

The determinants that may facilitate travellers to share their experiences on social media were gathered into two major groups: altruistic motivations and personal-fulfilment and self-actualization. Altruistic motivations are related to people who want to help others to make the right decisions, prevent them from choosing bad services and products, or to contribute to websites that are considered to be helpful and valuable (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014); personal fulfilment and self-actualization expresses the way through which people convey what they want people to think of them, thereby achieving their personal fulfilment (e.g. people who want to be more recognized for their travel experiences) or to fulfil their social needs (travellers who seek to consume information and interact with other travellers) (K.-H. Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). In the context of the online social environment, altruistic behaviour indicates those who are more willing to use social media to keep in touch and share knowledge with people who are important to them and to give help to others (Ma & Chan, 2014). Social media brings to them a degree of personal fulfilment and self-actualization. Both facilitators are expected to positively influence actual experience sharing in a way that people have a genuine willingness to share that brings them satisfaction (Lai & Chen, 2014), influenced by intrinsic motivations (Pan, Maclaurin, & Crotts, 2007). Thus, we hypothesize that:

H5. Altruistic motivations have a positive influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

H6. Personal fulfilment and self-actualization have a positive influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

3.3. Inhibitors to share content online

Sun et al. (2014) examined the issue of why lurkers lurk, and suggested four reasons for this behaviour. The third group includes those inhibitors: environmental reasons, which are related with the poor characteristics of the websites that severely impact the intention to contribute to social media (e.g. poor quality of messages, bad design, a small number of responses, and long response delay), factors also found by Nonnecke, Andrews, Preece, and Voutour (2004). Personal reasons are associated with personal characteristics that restrain users from participating, such as introversion, lack of self-esteem, and shyness – motives also reported by Preece et al. (2004). Relationship reasons represent low intimacy with other members and the fear of making a commitment to the social group leading to non-collaboration, also mentioned in the research of Preece et al. (2004) and Rau, Gao, and Ding (2008). Security and privacy reasons have to do with users' fears that security and privacy are not assured by social media platforms (they fear that sharing content on social media will dangerously reveal their private information). These issues and rationales are also pointed out by K.-H. Yoo and Gretzel (2011). All the determinants mentioned so far represent impediments and fear that online participation will lead to a detrimental effect on actual travel experience. Hence, we postulate that:

H7. Environmental reasons have a negative influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

H8. Personal reasons have a negative influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

H9. Relationship reasons have a negative influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

H10. Security and privacy reasons have a negative influence on actual travel experience sharing on social media.

4. Methodology

We gathered the data using an online survey through Google forms. To test the tool, a pilot test was first carried out from 22 to May 24, 2017 on a group of 30 social media platform users, between the ages of 20 and 55 years old, in Portugal. This initial study sought to improve the questions and delete unclear and/or ambiguous items in order to refine the survey content and structure. Preliminary evidence presented reliable and valid scales. Following the pre-test, the questionnaire was sent through social media platforms, in order to reach the target, namely, users of social media platforms.

The questionnaire items were based on those reported in the literature and adapted for this context. All items for each question were measured with a seven-point range scale, from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7) (see Appendix). We tested our framework by submitting a survey through Facebook between June 2017 and July 2017. Due to the difficulty of fixing the sampling frame, there was no systematic sampling. The participants of this study are Portuguese persons who use Facebook. By August 2017, Facebook users in Portugal had reached approximately 5.9 million (78% of social media users), 51% are

Table 2
Profile of the respondents.

Characteristics	Frequency (n = 381)	Respondents (%)	Facebook Population	Characteristics	Frequency (n = 381)	Respondents (%)
Gender				Education		
Female	251	65.9%	51.0%	Non-tertiary education	42	11.1%
Male	130	34.1%	49.0%	Undergraduate	208	54.5%
Age				Masters degree	121	31.8%
16–24	120	31.5%	23.0%	PhD degree	10	2.6%
25–44	184	48.3%	46.0%			
45 or older	77	20.2%	31.0%	Profession		
				Student	85	22.3%
				Working-student	31	8.1%
				Employee	209	54.9%
				Self-employed	37	9.7%
				Unemployed	10	2.6%
				Retired	9	2.4%

female and 46% are between 25 and 44 years (NapoleonCat, 2017). However, in order to reflect the characteristics of population, we recruited respondents mostly from a group of users between the ages of 20 and 50 and well-educated. To ensure that there were no duplicate respondents, IP addresses were recorded and checked. Since the universe of interest is users of social media, the first question of the questionnaire was to separate respondents who use any social media platform (e.g. Facebook) and those who do not use social media. Consequently, all of the non-users were excluded (254 responses). Additionally, 52 responses were removed due to incompleteness, leaving a total of 381 with valid and complete responses. We used Harman's single-factor test proposed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) to assess common method bias. The first factor explains 31.2% of the covariance amongst all constructs. This is less than 50%, which means that common method bias does not affect our data (Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012). This study entails all the common shortcomings involved in using an open access sampling methodology (e.g., self-selection bias, lack of information about non-respondents, and unknown response rate) (Kuss, Griffiths, Karila, & Billieux, 2014). There is, however, a degree of divergence regarding age and gender in our sample compared to the global Facebook population (Table 2). We applied post-stratification weights, i.e. the weighted PLS algorithm (Becker & Ismail, 2016), based on gender and age. The results of the "weighted" analysis adjusted to the Facebook population using the survey weights reveal that the discrepancy is not statistically significant (based on *t*-test for each path coefficient). For this reason, the sample is reliable for the analysis herein.

As shown in Table 2, more women (65.9%) than men (34.1%) participated in the survey. This statistic coincides with the findings of Kimbrough, Guadagno, Muscanell, and Dill (2013), who studied gender differences in mediated communication: women are more engaged with social media compared to men (Kimbrough et al., 2013). Respondents were mostly between 25 and 44 years old (48.3%) with a large percentage (86.3%) having received an undergraduate or masters degree. More than half of the sample (54.9%) is employed.

5. Data analysis and results

Our study employed structural equation modelling (SEM), namely partial least squares (PLS) path modelling, to estimate and test the

Table 3
Cross-loadings.

Items	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR
Ident1	**0.885**	0.637	0.303	0.632	0.373	0.654	−0.148	−0.277	−0.338	−0.271
Ident2	**0.933**	0.614	0.366	0.506	0.324	0.572	−0.091	−0.188	−0.258	−0.157
Ident3	**0.897**	0.579	0.383	0.448	0.310	0.577	−0.031	−0.100	−0.202	−0.117
Inter1	0.585	**0.878**	0.329	0.498	0.279	0.503	−0.054	−0.193	−0.249	−0.186
Inter2	0.553	**0.821**	0.294	0.564	0.328	0.585	−0.140	−0.204	−0.246	−0.200
Inter3	0.609	**0.877**	0.313	0.586	0.356	0.513	−0.177	−0.275	−0.321	−0.266
Comp1	0.201	0.207	**0.624**	0.036	0.173	0.202	0.157	0.055	0.093	0.037
Comp2	0.299	0.233	**0.683**	0.073	0.116	0.276	0.201	0.150	0.056	0.083
Comp3	0.358	0.354	**0.952**	0.214	0.282	0.345	0.091	0.059	−0.058	−0.024
Pjoy1	0.583	0.605	0.183	**0.956**	0.412	0.561	−0.331	−0.410	−0.473	−0.386
Pjoy2	0.580	0.651	0.214	**0.961**	0.425	0.557	−0.332	−0.446	−0.523	−0.414
Pjoy3	0.553	0.593	0.147	**0.958**	0.435	0.524	−0.336	−0.451	−0.481	−0.406
AM1	0.386	0.384	0.260	0.483	**0.918**	0.340	−0.183	−0.224	−0.255	−0.133
AM2	0.319	0.303	0.244	0.356	**0.927**	0.269	−0.143	−0.137	−0.231	−0.084
AM3	0.316	0.337	0.236	0.359	**0.890**	0.238	−0.128	−0.134	−0.235	−0.112
PF1	0.629	0.594	0.341	0.545	0.330	**0.941**	−0.080	−0.178	−0.281	−0.245
PF2	0.640	0.594	0.377	0.564	0.303	**0.940**	−0.111	−0.208	−0.322	−0.270
PF3	0.611	0.556	0.309	0.489	0.240	**0.921**	−0.099	−0.148	−0.251	−0.225
ER2	−0.011	−0.034	0.116	−0.143	−0.017	−0.051	**0.663**	0.259	0.239	0.189
ER3	−0.121	−0.162	0.135	−0.364	−0.190	−0.106	**0.979**	0.439	0.437	0.306
PR1	−0.073	−0.202	0.132	−0.326	−0.098	−0.130	0.411	**0.814**	0.522	0.487
PR3	0.033	−0.036	0.218	−0.171	−0.064	0.002	0.328	**0.677**	0.429	0.336
PR4	−0.336	−0.294	−0.021	−0.480	−0.219	−0.236	0.333	**0.867**	0.636	0.568
RR2	−0.355	−0.342	−0.067	−0.537	−0.287	−0.322	0.421	0.651	**0.936**	0.585
RR3	−0.165	−0.217	0.055	−0.368	−0.175	−0.215	0.356	0.589	**0.871**	0.475
SPR1	−0.190	−0.249	0.052	−0.412	−0.109	−0.246	0.310	0.595	0.594	**0.931**
SPR2	−0.144	−0.176	0.018	−0.325	−0.116	−0.173	0.255	0.519	0.491	**0.906**
SPR3	−0.238	−0.267	−0.043	−0.408	−0.111	−0.295	0.280	0.565	0.540	**0.923**

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Comp (Compliance); Pjoy (Perceived enjoyment); AM (Altruistic motivations); PF (Personal fulfilment and self-actualization); ER (Environmental reasons); PR (Personal reasons); RR (Relationship reasons); SPR (Security and privacy reasons).

Table 4
Reliability and validity criteria (Composite reliability), correlations and AVEs (the square root shown in bold on the diagonal).

Cons-tructs	Mean	SD	CR	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR	AS
Ident	2.628	1.432	0.931	**0.905**										
Inter	2.957	1.409	0.894	0.679	**0.859**									
Comp	2.392	1.340	0.805	0.383	0.363	**0.767**								
Pjoy	3.952	1.838	0.971	0.597	0.643	0.190	**0.958**							
AM	3.621	1.665	0.937	0.376	0.377	0.271	0.443	**0.912**						
PF	2.399	1.611	0.954	0.671	0.623	0.367	0.571	0.313	**0.934**					
ER	2.276	1.374	0.818	−0.107	−0.148	0.144	−0.347	−0.168	−0.103	**0.836**				
PR	2.554	1.483	0.831	−0.220	−0.263	0.093	−0.455	−0.184	−0.191	0.439	**0.790**			
RR	2.911	1.781	0.900	−0.303	−0.319	−0.018	−0.513	−0.264	−0.305	0.433	0.687	**0.904**		
SPR	3.331	1.809	0.943	−0.212	−0.255	0.009	−0.420	−0.121	−0.265	0.308	0.611	0.592	**0.920**	
AS	3.062	1.458	NA	0.538	0.562	0.144	0.747	0.503	0.564	−0.250	−0.422	−0.470	−0.425	NA

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Compliance (Comp); Perceived enjoyment (Pjoy); Altruistic motivations (AM); Personal fulfilment and self-actualization (PF); Environmental reasons (ER); Personal reasons (PR); Relationship reasons (RR); Security and privacy reasons (SPR); Standard deviation (SD).

Table 5
Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT).

Constructs	Ident	Inter	Comp	Pjoy	AM	PF	ER	PR	RR	SPR
Ident										
Inter	0.785									
Comp	0.444	0.421								
Pjoy	0.632	0.721	0.158							
AM	0.411	0.432	0.288	0.473						
PF	0.729	0.711	0.410	0.606	0.338					
ER	0.108	0.156	0.258	0.368	0.161	0.115				
PR	0.234	0.288	0.220	0.488	0.192	0.196	0.598			
RR	0.332	0.382	0.122	0.577	0.303	0.347	0.541	0.878		
SPR	0.218	0.287	0.077	0.445	0.133	0.281	0.366	0.711	0.687	

Notes: Identification (Ident); Internalization (Inter); Compliance (Comp); Perceived enjoyment (Pjoy); Altruistic motivations (AM); Personal fulfilment and self-actualization (PF); Environmental reasons (ER); Personal reasons (PR); Relationship reasons (RR); Security and privacy reasons (SPR).

Table 6
Formative measurement model evaluation.

Formative construct	Items	Mean	SD	Weights	VIF
actual travel experience sharing (AS)	AS1 - Every time I travel I share photos	3.992	2.169	0.763***	1.529
	AS2 - Every time I travel I share videos	2.304	1.568	0.169**	1.662
	AS3 - Every time I travel I share personal blogs	1.593	1.244	0.157**	1.532
	AS4 - Every time I travel I share reviews on TripAdvisor or other websites from hostels and restaurants I visited.	2.462	1.749	0.175*	1.398

Notes: Standard deviation (SD); Variance inflation factor (VIF); *$p > 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

linkage between constructs. We considered the PLS technique to be the most appropriate method to follow in this study for three reasons: the purpose of the PLS approach is prediction, suitable for these types of models; the PLS technique does not requires neither a large sample nor a normal distribution; and PLS is indicated for the analysis of a complex model that includes a formative indicator (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). All constructs were measured using reflective items except for the actual travel experience sharing (AS) construct, which is a formative indicator. Consequently, there were two different analyses in the measurement model section, one for the reflective constructs and another for the formative constructs.

5.1. Measurement models

Regarding the reflective constructs, we needed to evaluate internal consistency, convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance extracted (AVE)), and discriminant validity (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). We assessed the composite reliability criterion to verify the internal consistency. The values showed results greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016). To evaluate convergent validity, we analysed the indicator reliability and the AVE. The indicator reliability criterion reveals that the loadings of each indicator should be greater than 0.7. According to this criterion the following items were removed due to low loadings: ER1, ER4, PR2, and RR1. All the other items indicate satisfactory values greater than 0.7, except for ER2, which shows a loading of 0.663, which is acceptable (see Table 3). Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that the AVE should present a value greater than or equal to 0.5, which reflects adequate convergent validity (Götz, Liehr-Gobbers, & Krafft, 2010, pp. 706–726). Consequently, and according to the results shown in bold on the diagonal in Table 4, all constructs indicate AVE greater than 0.5.

In order to ensure discriminant validity, three criteria were considered: The Fornell–Larcker criterion, the cross-loadings, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). The Fornell–Larcker criterion assumes that the square root of AVE, depicted in bold in Table 4, should be higher than the correlation between the other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This can be confirmed in Table 4. The second criterion used for discriminant validity was the cross-loadings. According to Götz et al. (2010, pp. 706–726), cross-loadings should be lower than the loadings of each indicator (highlighted in bold in Table 3), which can also be seen in Table 3. Finally, the HTMT is an advantageous approach to gain insights into discriminant validity. If the HTMT value is below 0.90, discriminant validity has been established between reflective constructs, as demonstrated in Table 5 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015).

Concerning the formative measurement, the variable actual travel experience sharing (AS) is a formative construct. We evaluated the formative construct based on the multicollinearity, statistical significance, and sign of weights (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). In

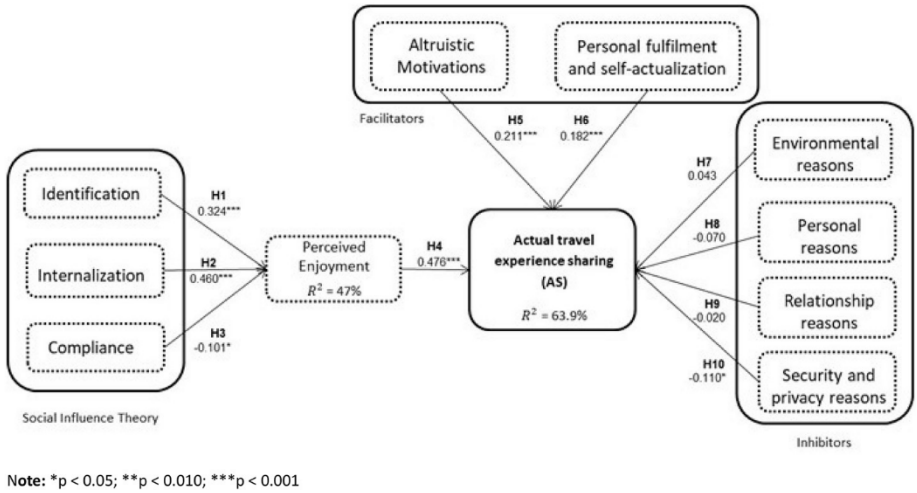

Figure 2. Structural model results, Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.010; ***p < 0.001.

order to assess the degree of multicollinearity between the formative items, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was calculated. VIF values revealed to be lower than 5 (G. Lee & Xia, 2010) varying from 1.398 to 1.662 (Table 6), meaning that actual travel experience sharing (AS) had no problems of multicollinearity. In terms of statistical significance and sign of weights, the four items are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and with a positive sign (Table 6).

In conclusion, both the reflective and the formative constructs can be used to test the structural model.

5.2. Structural model and hypotheses testing

The structural model was evaluated using the explained variation (R^2) criteria and the degree of significance of the path coefficients, assessed by the bootstrapping technique (5000 iterations). Also, VIF values are lower than 5, ranging between 1.199 and 2.334, which suggests that the multicollinearity problem is excluded (G. Lee & Xia, 2010). Fig. 2 displays the estimated structural model and its results.

The results revealed that the proposed model explains 63.9% of the variation of actual travel experience sharing (AS). Results show that the following hypotheses were supported: identification (H1), internalization (H2), perceived enjoyment (H4), altruistic motivations (H5), personal fulfilment and self-actualization (H6). Compliance and security and privacy reasons demonstrate a negative impact on actual travel experience sharing, which also confirms the hypotheses H3 and H10. On the other hand, hypothesis H7 related to environmental reasons, H8 with regard to personal reasons, and H9 related to relationship reasons were not supported. Internalization (Inter) was the most significant construct for explaining perceived enjoyment (Pjoy) ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.460$; $p < 0.001$) followed by identification ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.324$; $p < 0.001$). Perceived enjoyment revealed to be the most important construct for explaining actual travel experience sharing ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.476$; $p < 0.001$). In other words, people share their travel experiences on social media simply for pleasure because they usually find it to be enjoyable and fun, more than for any other reason.

6. Discussion

This study assesses the extent to which travellers share their travel experiences on social media, considering what motivates or inhibits them toward actual travel experience sharing and understanding the role of the users' personality characteristics in this context.

Table 7 summarizes the results presented with the conclusions of our hypotheses. Internalization was the most significant construct for explaining perceived enjoyment ($\hat{\beta} = 0.460$; $p < 0.001$). Internalization occurs when an individual takes on the opinion of others as evidence of the truth and as part of her/his own values and beliefs (Malhotra & Dennis, 2005). They opt to use social media due to inherent values and the values that people identify with. Consequently, perceived enjoyment was the most important variable in explaining why travellers contribute their travel experiences on social media, as supported by studies undertaken by Khan (2017) and Kang and Schuett (2013). Our research reinforces an important conclusion: people find compatible values on social media and share their travel experiences there simply for pleasure because they usually find it to be enjoyable and fun, more than for any other reason. Sharing travel experiences to help other travellers make their plans (e.g. prevent people from using bad products or services and advise them on better options), seems also to be a common behaviour among posters, which confirms previous research, e.g., Munar and Jacobsen (2014) and Munar and Ooi (2012, pp. 255–273). Recently, Sedera et al. (2017) studied the effect of social influence on travel experiences, affirming that, while travelling, people share content on social media in order to be socially accepted. In our study the results of personal fulfilment and self-actualization were the least explanatory motivations of actual travel-experience sharing ($\hat{\beta} = 0.182$; $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that among all motivations, few travellers admitted to sharing information on social media just to be socially recognized due to their travel experiences and to gain personal reputation. An interesting question arises from this finding: are people truly honest regarding social affirmations or are they too embarrassed to admit it to a society that they perceive to be judgemental?

According to the results reported in Table 6, visual content (photographs) was confirmed to be the most common preference amongst the posters, affirming that every time they travel they share photographs. However, fewer share videos and narrative content as on personal blogs or reviews on TripAdvisor or other related websites when travelling. Despite the burgeoning of story-telling through millions of reviews and recommendations, this conclusion, supported by the findings of Munar and Jacobsen (2014) and Bilgihan et al. (2016), shows that travellers continue to prefer a faster and more impactful way to share their travel experiences, reinforcing the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words".

6.1. Theoretical and managerial implications

From a theoretical perspective, this research has contributed to understanding the factors impacting actual travel experience sharing either positively or negatively. Allied to this, social influence theory and its three constructs – identification, internalization, and compliance – have

Table 7
Results and hypotheses conclusions.

Hypotheses	Independent variables	Dependent variables	Findings	Conclusion
H1	Identification	Perceived enjoyment	Positive and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.324$; $p < 0.001$)	Supported
H2	Internalization	Perceived enjoyment	Positive and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.460$; $p < 0.001$)	Supported
H3	Compliance	Perceived enjoyment	Negative and statistically significant $\widehat{\beta} = -0.101$; $p < 0.05$)	Supported
H4	Perceived enjoyment	Actual travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.476$; $p < 0.001$)	Supported
H5	Altruistic motivations	Actual travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.211$; $p < 0.001$)	Supported
H6	Personal fulfilment and self-actualization	Actual travel experience sharing	Positive and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.182$; $p < 0.001$)	Supported
H7	Environmental reasons	Actual travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\widehat{\beta} = 0.043$; $p > 0.100$)	Not Supported
H8	Personal reasons	Actual travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\widehat{\beta} = -0.070$; $p > 0.100$)	Not Supported
H9	Relationship reasons	Actual travel experience sharing	Non-significant effect ($\widehat{\beta} = -0.020$; $p > 0.100$)	Not Supported
H10	Security and privacy reasons	Actual travel experience sharing	Negative and statistically significant ($\widehat{\beta} = -0.110$; $p < 0.05$)	Supported

played a critical role in this study, as well as the users' personality. This study's major theoretical contribution is in combining the different behaviours in social media into a single model, thereby obtaining an integrated and holistic perspective. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first empirical research that investigates the relationship combining social influence, the drivers of facilitators, and inhibitors with the consequence of sharing travel experiences through social media. Prior research on sharing travel experiences has investigated the phenomenon in an isolated way. Each set of dimensions focuses on a certain perspective, which is difficult to embrace in its entirety, and the variety of possible situations in a particular situation. Thus, the joining of these three sets of dimensions is crucial in expanding the scope and generalizability of understanding the environment of sharing travel experiences. Another contribution of this research is in providing empirical evidence linking drivers of social influence theory, facilitators, and inhibitors to sharing travel experiences. Showing the relationship between these three groups of drivers could offer new insights and guidance to the tourism management field.

From a practical perspective, there are important implications for travel marketers and tourism agencies. Findings confirm the importance of social media in spreading travel information, such as online word-of-mouth and its impact on users' behaviour. Moreover, only those companies that follow the growth and progress of technology are successful, being unafraid of change but having the ability to adapt to it (Y. Wang, Yu, & Fesenmaier, 2002). Nevertheless, security and privacy reasons regarding social media boost the number of lurkers. Despite all of the advantages social media networks might have, the number of people who do not trust it is large enough to warrant some consideration. Travellers tend to trust the assessments and opinions of family and friends more than those declared on tourism agency websites because these opinions tend to be more honest and accurate. This represents a threat for the tourism industry, but it can also represent an opportunity to invest in other approaches. For instance, companies that provide a platform for user-generated content, as suggested by Durio (2017), are encouraging their customers to share useful and reliable insights, which is therefore valuable for business improvement.

Lurkers are unwilling to assume the degree of exposure that social media entails, especially the exposure to multiple threats and risks to their privacy. However, it is important that people share their points of view, feedback, and also their criticism regarding a product or service, so that companies can improve those products or services based on authentic feedback. Sun et al. (2014) suggested four types of de-lurking, i.e., strategies to stimulate lurkers to post: external stimuli (offer tangible rewards), encouragement (improve users' self-confidence), usability improvement (make usage easier for users), and guidance for newcomers (advice from more experienced members) (Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, 2014). It is very important to promote an honest and reliable interaction so that all of the parties involved can take advantage.

The results encourage the tourism industry to be aware of the power of user-generated content through social media platforms and its implications for their business. The challenges are enormous. Thus, it is fundamental that companies and all travel-related businesses know how to exploit the advantages and how to overcome the possible disadvantages that accompany the social media context.

We found that perceived enjoyment explains why travellers share their travel experiences on social media, which indicates that sharing is possibly associated with pleasure and fun. Understanding how social media enables users to share their travel experiences more, thereby offering many pleasurable and fun advantages, may encourage more users to share travel experiences. Understanding the characteristics of facilitators could be influential in helping service providers to design strategies to deal with this group of users. For instance, for users with a high tendency to altruistic motivations and personal-fulfilment and self-actualization, managers should offer solutions that continually encourage the users to share their travel experiences through social media. The lack of security and privacy reasons was recognized as an inhibitor to sharing travel-experience through social media. For people with a high tendency to avoid uncertainty, for instance, service providers should offer solutions that mitigate the risk of sharing travel-experiences, which may positively encourage and transmit a sense of security and the willingness to share travel-experiences. The Cambridge Analytica scandal and a U.S. Congressional hearing in 2018 highlighted the threat to trust in social media. Facebook faced pressure from millions of users and regulators to improve security, transparency, and accuracy. On the Edelman Trust Barometer survey in 2018 conducted in the U.S., 61% of respondents said that they no longer trust social media companies (Edelman, 2018). In addition, in the same report 83% of people think business has an obligation to protect people's privacy and personal information, which would help to mitigate the uncertainty risk and overcome the inhibitor of sharing travel-experiences. In addition, this study can serve as a motivation for organizations to check the level of commitment to solve problems regarding information privacy practices. In that sense, findings from our research form a basis for an organizational self-assessment of information privacy practices.

6.2. Limitations and Future research

As noted above, this research has some limitations that should be recognized. First, the study is subject to all of the shortcomings that exist regarding open access sampling (e.g., self-selection bias, lack of information about non-respondents, unknown response rate) (Kuss et al., 2014). However, the full range of scores on all variables was represented in the data, which normally strengthens the validity of estimated relationships between constructs.

Second, despite the vast literature on the topic of sharing content on social media, there is poor empirical support to combine the different behaviours on social media – posters and lurkers – as well as the impact of users' personality into one single model.

Third, Millennials represent the majority of posters on social media because they come with the age of the Internet. They also show the highest levels of trust in social media (Tran, Hue, Nguyen, & Phan, 2017). The proposed research model did not include age as a moderator variable. As an element of future research, we suggest undertaking a multi-group analysis that compares, for example, male and female and/or younger and older persons.

Lastly, the data were gathered in Portugal. To enhance generalization, a comparison with different countries, with a larger sample, including a variety of ages, and across a variety of cultures would be welcome.

7. Conclusion

A word-of-mouth revolution has been growing in strength since the emergence of the Internet (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Users are no longer passive and have themselves been producing their own content and making it available online. This study reviewed users' behaviours regarding online participation, in particular on the subject of sharing travel experiences and which behaviours differ before and after trips. Our research focused on the after the trip perspective, seeking to shed light on the drivers that lead travellers to share their travel experiences on social media (Facebook), e.g. photos, videos, and/or reviews, and also understand what may prevent or mitigate online sharing.

Three main conclusions were reached. First, perceived enjoyment was the most important motive in explaining why travellers share their travel experiences on Facebook; more than any other reason, sharing travel content is perceived to be fun and entertaining. Our study also shows that social media users committed to travel experience sharing have used social media for personally meaningful and rewarding goals (internalization and identification). If users do not perceive travel-experience sharing on social media as useful in achieving their goals, travel experience sharing behaviour may not be pursued.

Second, characteristics of facilitators could be significant in helping service providers to design strategies to deal with this group of users. For instance, for users with a strong inclination to altruistic motivations and personal-fulfilment and self-actualization, managers should offer solutions that continually encourage the users to share their travel experiences through social media. In this regard, the social media influencers in the tourism industry is one of the strategies that has been growing over the past decade. Social media influencers are shaping audience behaviours through posts on Facebook, Instagram, blogs, and/or tweets (Magno & Cassia, 2018). It is therefore critical that tourism agencies know who the active contributors with travel information are, e.g. those who offer advice on where to go, where to eat, or what to do at a certain destination, since those will be the social influencers who will persuade and influence larger audiences in a beneficial, powerful, and effective way.

Finally, security and privacy reasons are at the top of lurking motives – people want to remain anonymous and preserve their privacy and safety. Security and privacy reasons were found to be the most explanatory inhibitor when it comes to sharing information on social media, respondents reporting that one of the main reasons for not sharing their travel experiences is to preserve their privacy and safety. This conclusion coincides with the findings of Nonnecke, East, and Preece (2001), who studied the question "*why do lurkers lurk?*" in depth, as well as the findings of Fogel and Nehmad (2009), who studied risks, trust, and privacy issues regarding social networks. Our investigation strengthens the belief that information confidentiality on the internet is having an impressive negative effect on individuals' willingness to engage on social media. Regardless of all benefits that the Internet has brought to our lives, as time goes by people are becoming distrustful and more and more concerned about its risks, namely regarding security and privacy, rights that people increasingly tend to preserve. To overcome this negative effect, our conclusions suggests looking at security and privacy issues as an opportunity of strategic decision making, with several objectives and solutions, whereby the objectives focus on the prevention of risks associated with sharing travel experiences. It is essential to highlight the importance of companies and brands to promote platforms for user-generated content, since such content has been identified as an indispensable marketing strategy tool. Safeguarding proprietary information should be an imperative, and risks should be managed proactively and quickly when the unexpected occurs.

Authors' contributions

Tiago Oliveira improved the model, estimated the statistical analysis, and revised the whole paper. Benedita Souza Araújo develop the initial model, the data collection, and the initial version of the paper. Carlos Tam gave feedback for initial model, answered the reviewers' questions, solidify and revised the whole paper.

Appendix A. Constructs and items

Construct	Items	Description	Reference
Identification	Iden1	I am very interested in what group members think about travel experience sharing.	Kang and Schuett (2013)
	Iden2	I feel a sense of belonging to a group when I share my travel experiences through social media.	
	Iden3	I feel I will fit into a group when I share my travel experiences through social media.	
Internalization	Inter1	The reason I prefer to share my travel experiences is primarily based on the similarity of my values and those represented by social media.	Kang and Schuett (2013)
	Inter2	The reason I prefer to share my travel experiences on social media than on other communication tools is because of its value.	
	Inter3	I want to share my travel experiences on social media because I think it is congruent with my values and beliefs.	
Compliance	Comp1	Unless I am rewarded for sharing my travel experiences on social media in some way, I may spend less time sharing knowledge and information.	Kang and Schuett (2013)
	Comp2	How hard I work on sharing my travel experiences is directly related to how much I am rewarded.	
	Comp3	In order for me to get the responses I want on social media it is necessary to express the right behaviour or attitude on social media.	

(*continued on next page*)

(*continued*)

Construct	Items	Description	Reference
Perceived Enjoyment	Pjoy1	I usually find sharing my travel experiences through social media to be enjoyable.	Kang and Schuett (2013)
	Pjoy2	Sharing my travel experiences through social media in a group is pleasant.	
	Pjoy3	I have fun sharing my travel experiences through social media in a group.	
Actual travel experience sharing (1)		Please choose your usage frequency for each of the following: Note: Frequency ranged from 0 "never" to 7 "more than once per day of the trip"	Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu (2012)
	AS1	a) Every time I travel I share photos	
	AS2	b) Every time I travel I share videos	
	AS3	c) Every time I travel I share personal blogs	
	AS4	d) Every time I travel I share reviews on TripAdvisor or other websites from hostels and restaurants I visited.	
Altruistic Motivations	AM1	I want to help others	Munar and Jacobsen (2014)
	AM2	I want to prevent people from using bad products	
	AM3	I want to contribute to websites that are useful for me	
Personal fulfilment and self-actualization	PF1	I want to be recognized because of my travel experiences	Munar and Jacobsen (2014)
	PF2	I like to transmit what I want people to think of me	
	PF3	It is important to me that people know I travel	
Environmental reasons		Please choose the extent to which each of the hypotheses below inhibit online participation:	
	ER1	There is a long delay in response to postings	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	ER2	There is poor quality of messages	
	ER3	The interaction design is bad	
	ER4	There is a low response rate	
Personal reasons	PR1	I had no confidence in sharing my travel experiences on social media.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	PR2	I am afraid that what I post may not be important, may not be completely accurate, or may not be relevant to a specific discussion.	
	PR3	I am too shy to share travel experiences in public.	
	PR4	I do not post because my needs, such as searching for information, could be fully satisfied by lurking (reading is enough)	
Relationship reasons	RR1	I am afraid to make a commitment to a group.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	RR2	I do not want to spend additional time and resources to maintain a commitment.	
	RR3	I have low intimacy with other members	
Security and privacy reasons	SR1	My requirements for security and privacy are not satisfied by sharing my travel experiences.	Sun, Pei-Luen Rau, & Ma, (2014)
	SR2	I am afraid that sharing my travel experiences will place me in danger or reveal my personal information.	
	SR3	One of the main reasons for not sharing my travel experiences is to preserve privacy and safety	

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