LEUPHANA

UNIVERSITY OF LÜNEBURG

Self-presentation of tourists and evaluation of the social environment: Prestige benefits of leisure travel

Von der Fakultät Management und Technologie
der Leuphana Universität Lüneburg

zur Erlangung des Grades
Doktor der Philosophie
(Dr.phil.)

genehmigte Dissertation von
Friedericke Antonia Westrup Kuhn

aus
Itzehoe

LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITY OF LÜNEBURG

Eingereicht am: 16.03.2022

Mündliche Verteidigung (Disputation): 07.09.2022

Erstbetreuer/in und
Erstgutachter/in: Prof. Dr. Martin Lohmann
Zweitgutachter/in: Prof. Dr. Florian Kock
Drittgutachter/in: Prof. Dr. Rainer Höger

Die einzelnen Beiträge des kumulativen Dissertationsvorhabens sind oder werden wie folgt veröffentlicht:

Kuhn F (2020) Conspicuous souvenirs: Analysing touristic self-presentation through souvenir display. *Tourist Studies* 20(4). DOI: ps://doi.org/10.1177/1468797620956935.

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) The impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on tourists' personal prestige – an experimental study. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research* 16(1). DOI: doi.org/10.1108/IJCTHR-02-2021-0035.

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) Personal prestige through travel? – Testing the personal prestige inventory in a tourism context. *Leibniz Institute for Psychology PsychArchives.* DOI:http://dx.doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.4932

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) Personal prestige through travel? – Developing and testing the Personal Prestige Inventory in a tourism context. *Consumer Behavior in Tourism and Hospitaliy.* (manuscript accepted 6 October 2022).

Veröffentlichungsjahr:
2022

Veröffentlicht im Onlineangebot der Universitätsbibliothek unter der URL:
http://www.leuphana.de/ub

Acknowledgements

I wouldn't have been able to carry out this project without the supervision, support, friendship and love of my mentors, family and friends. Here is a few lines to thank all of you.

Martin Lohmann, the term "Doktorvater" must have been invented for you. You picked me up almost six years ago, and since then have continually supported me and shown me the wonders of academia and practical market research. You have enabled me to develop myself and my skills, and to elevate my personal prestige to a new level. I will be forever grateful.

Florian Kock, thank you for your constant support, countless video calls, constructive reviews and essential suggestions contributing to the quality of this work. I dearly enjoyed your insights to the art of conducting thorough research, the diplomacy of publishing, and also the brainscrambling but eye-opening conversations about statistics!

Rainer Höger, thank you for your support, the insights to your research projects and collegial teaching in our courses and seminars. Thanks to Fritz Müller for sharing your wisdom on experimental methods, gallons of coffee and exciting stories about the history of psychological research. Elke Bartkowiak, your emotional support and the refreshing breaks outside made long office days shorter and helped me get through tough phases.

To my family, Mama, Sebastian, Michaela, Julian and Andy, thanks for *always* being there.

Friends, cheers to all of you.

This one goes out to the loving and absolutely rocking memory of my father.

I. Content

II.   *Overview of publications yielded by the thesis*

Publication 1:

Published research article: Kuhn F (2020) Conspicuous souvenirs: Analysing touristic self-presentation through souvenir display. *Tourist Studies* 20(4). (first published 28 September 2020). DOI: ps://doi.org/10.1177/1468797620956935.

_____

Publication 2:

Published research article: Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) The impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on tourists' personal prestige – an experimental study. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research* 16(1). (first published 10 October 2021). DOI: doi.org/10.1108/IJCTHR-02-2021-0035.

CRediT author statement

Friedericke Kuhn: Conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, writing – original draft, visualization; Florian Kock: Conceptualization, supervision, writing – review & editing; Martin Lohmann: Conceptualization, supervision, writing – review & editing

_____

Publication 3:

Peer-reviewed preregistration: Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) Personal prestige through travel? – Testing the personal prestige inventory in a tourism context. *Leibniz Institute for Psychology PsychArchives*. (first published 21 June 2021) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.4932

CRediT author statement

Friedericke Kuhn: Conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, writing – original draft, visualization, project administration; Florian Kock: Conceptualization, supervision, writing – review & editing; Martin Lohmann: Conceptualization, supervision, writing – review & editing

Published research article: Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021) Personal prestige through travel? – Developing and testing the Personal Prestige Inventory in a tourism context. *Consumer Behavior in Tourism and Hospitaliy*. (manuscript accepted 6 October 2022)

III. *List of Tables*

IV. List of Figures

V. *Summary*

Does the presentation of travel experience affect personal prestige of tourists? Prestige enhancement has been considered a motive for travel by tourism researchers for decades. Yet, the question whether representation of travel experience actually leads to personal prestige enhancement has been widely neglected so far. The study of prestige benefits of travel is a necessary endeavour to develop suitable methodological approaches toward the concept, in order to close critical knowledge gaps and enhance scientific understanding. The present thesis lays out the rationale and results of three research projects which shed light onto the relationship between touristic self-presentation and its effects on personal prestige evaluations of the social environment. The empirical studies conducted in the frame of this dissertation conclude in the following main findings:

Leisure travel is a useful means for people to self-express in a positive way, and material representations of travel are frequently displayed to others. Tourists make use of travel experience to self-present in a positive way by uploading photos on social media, collecting and displaying souvenirs, wearing jewellery and clothing from their last trip, or talking about their trips to others. They express positive self-messages about personal character traits, affiliation to social in-groups and proof of having travelled somewhere. The findings ascertain the utility of travel representations for positive self-expression, showing that travel experience is an effective vehicle for conspicuous consumption and self-expression as an antecedent for personal prestige enhancement.

Personal prestige is an element of social relations, and holds capacity to affect perceptions of social inclusion and social distinction, so it has to be conceptualised as a multidimensional construct. In a tourism context, personal prestige is reliably measurable along the four dimensions of hedonism, social inclusion, social distinction and prosperity. The herein developed Personal Prestige Inventory (PPI) is a valid, reliable and parsimonious measurement tool which substantially enhances methodological approaches toward empirical research into personal prestige.

The way in which people represent travel experience to others measurably affects how their personal prestige is evaluated by social others. Empirical evidence of a series of experimental studies provides support for the assumption that representation of travel experience has an effect on the social evaluation of tourists' personal prestige. Experimental variance suggests small to moderate effects on personal prestige depending on the amount of leisure information given about a person, participation in tourism, and the destination and type of travel represented. This evidence is reasonable basis to conclude that whether and how people travel, and whether and how they share travel experience with others, does measurably affect social other's evaluation of their personal prestige.

By providing qualitative evidence for positive self-presentation through leisure travel, and the subsequent development and experimental application of the Personal Prestige Inventory (PPI) in a tourism context, the present dissertation enhances scientific understanding of personal prestige in the context of leisure travel and provides useful methodological advancements for further research into the topic.

1   Introduction

1.1   The promise of enhanced personal prestige through travel

"Travel yourself interesting" (Expedia, 2013)

With this marketing slogan, the online travel agency Expedia started a marketing campaign which significantly increased revenue for the company and won two marketing prices (DTA, 2015). It was lauded as a 'strategic idea grounded in *product truth* and human nature' (IPA, 2014) and 'a creative campaign aimed at repositioning travel as a valuable investment in one's self' (ibid.). The "product truth" conveyed here is not the promise of an enjoyable relaxing sun-and-fun holiday experience presented in typical travel advertisements. The suggestion to "travel oneself interesting" implies two essentially distinct effects of a leisure trip: For one, that travelling can induce positive self-change and make the tourist "a different person", and second that sharing travel experience with others can lead to social recognition. The combination of these two effects ultimately implies that leisure travel can have positive effects on tourists personal prestige (Bui and Trupp, 2019; Correia and Moital, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Pappas, 2014; Riley, 1995). The prospect of feeling better about oneself through travel and becoming a different person might induce specific motivations and guide tourist behaviour, while the prospect of positive social resonance and recognition might motivate tourists to share their travel experience with others.

In tourism studies, prestige enhancement has been researched as a travel motive for decades. Numerous theoretical and empirical studies suggest that personal prestige is a relevant factor for travel decision-making, post-trip sharing, and conspicuous consumption of travel experience (Correia and Moital, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994; Iso-Ahola, 1982). It is therefore reasonable to assume that prestige motives play a role in tourist motivation, though it should not be considered a main driver of travel behaviour (Dann, 1977). Yet, with a focus on prestige motives rather than prestige benefits in tourism research, the question whether leisure travel in fact leads to measurable personal prestige benefits has widely been neglected. There are relatively few studies exploring how tourists positively self-present when sharing travel experience with others, which is an antecedent of positive resonance and recognition. Further, there is little to no knowledge into how tourists are evaluated because of representations of their travel experience. This shows how personal prestige benefits, as opposed to prestige motivations to travel, have been widely neglected in tourism studies. Insights into personal prestige effects of leisure travel are fragmental, and appropriate measurement tools for the personal prestige concept in a tourism context are lacking.

It is undeniable that people enjoy talking about their trips and go through some efforts to let other people know about their travel experience. Millions of travel photos are posted on social media every day (Lo et al., 2011; Lo and McKercher, 2015; Lyu, 2016), people enjoy talking about their trips with others (Lee and Oh, 2017) and they display souvenirs to others to attract attention (Hume, 2013b; Peters, 2011).

The popularity of these sharing activities signifies tourists' devotion of time and effort to self-present as a traveller and enjoyment of showing off travel experience to others. The limited research effort made toward the study of touristic self-expression is surprising, considering the apparent relevance and popularity of post-trip sharing for tourists.

Currently, there is a partial picture drawn of the conundrum of leisure travel and its effects on personal prestige: It is reasonable to assume that people are, at least to some extent, incited to travel in a specific way or to display travel experience by prestige motives, and that people enjoy representing travel experience to others. It is yet unknown, what tourists actually want to express about themselves when sharing travel experience with others, and how they make use of travel representations to self-express in a positive way. From the other perspective, there is little knowledge on how tourists' personal prestige is evaluated by their social environment, and what determines changes in personal prestige evaluations over time. The present dissertation sets out to start filling this knowledge gap and gain insights to the effects of leisure travel on personal prestige of tourists.

1.2   Relevance of the topic

Compared to the fair amount of effort going into the study of prestige motives to travel (Correia et al., 2007; Correia and Moital, 2009; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Rocha and Seabra, 2016), research interest into personal prestige benefits of travel remains relatively small (Boley et al., 2018; Correia and Kozak, 2012; Kim and Tussyadiah, 2013) There is little to no empirical evidence to potentially occurring effects of travelling onto personal prestige of tourists, and closing this knowledge gap is a relevant endeavour to a number of stakeholders:

For research and academia, insights into the relationship between travel and personal prestige can enhance theoretical understandings of the prestige concept, advance methodological approaches toward personal prestige measurement, and lead to a better understanding of touristic self-presentation and respective social evaluations. Insights into how a product can affect social stance and self-perception of consumers are currently lacking, as existing research focused on either prestige motives, or brand and product prestige rather than *personal* prestige, both in tourism research and in the wider field of marketing research (Correia and Kozak, 2012; Hwang and Lee, 2019; Pappas, 2014; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998, 2004). The by now quite recognized assumption that people travel with prestige motives in the back of their minds, be it consciously or subliminally, ultimately implies that they are motivated to enhance *personal* prestige through travelling, the prestige in question should be that of the tourists, not that of the tourism product like destinations, brands or types of holidays.

Even though the prestige motive to travel has been extensively researched, the empirical evidence leaves open doubts whether large masses of people deliberately make travel decisions consciously reflecting about their own prestige needs. The need for achievement and for power, needs that can be satisfied by

prestige, are often unconscious drives (McClelland, 1988; Osemeke and Adegboyega, 2017). The challenges in elicitation of reliable data on subliminal prestige motives do not affect the study of consciously perceived prestige benefits of travel. It is more reliable to ask people about what benefits they consciously perceive than to ask what expectations might subliminally cross their minds. The focus on prestige benefits, rather than motives, taken in this dissertation will therefore promote theoretical understanding of the relationship between prestige and travel from a novel perspective.

Concomitant to the lack of research into personal prestige, there is a lack of suitable methodological approaches toward its empirical measurement. The dominant methods applied to empirically measure prestige are quantitative surveys with rather suggestive queries examining product and brand prestige rather than prestige of consumers. Two methodological shortcomings of previous research into personal prestige are apparent: For one, there is a lack of non-suggestive qualitative research into personal prestige, so that implicit perceptions and the dimensionality of personal prestige are basically un-investigated so far. Second, there is no standardized scale for personal prestige, thus no measurement instrument applicable to the study of this concept. The development of a scale to measure personal prestige in a non-suggestive approach will therefore enhance the methodological approach toward prestige and ultimately enable the research community to further investigate personal prestige enhancement through consumption. This dissertation will enhance scientific understanding and methodological approaches toward personal prestige in a tourism context by providing qualitative evidence of how travel representations are used for positive self-presentation, by developing a parsimonious, valid and reliable measurement instrument for the construct, and applying it in an experimental setting to assess the social evaluations of personal prestige in a tourism context.

The study of tourists' personal prestige will also produce relevant knowledge for the travel industry. For tour operators, it is beneficial to match marketing communication to perceived customer benefits of their products (Gallarza and Gil Saura, 2020). Tourism planning should be 'responsive to touristic desires and motivations' (Markwick, 2001: 435), thus, it is relevant for the tourism industry to understand the benefits their customers perceive in order to align marketing communication of value propositions with potential benefits of their products. 'From this perspective, future investigations should not only be about the continuation of tourism motive research, but equally about research into the effects, i.e. the question of whether the guest actually found what she/he was looking for on vacation'[1] (Lohmann, 2017: 66). With regards to prestige benefits, some tourists might hope for positive social resonance for their travel behaviour (Correia and Moital, 2009), expect to increase self-esteem (Correia et al., 2020; Fodness, 1994; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014) and be more recognized by others (Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002a; Pearce and Lee, 2005).

---

[1] Translated from German; translation approved by original author

Further, prestige is a means to satisfy some basic human psychological needs, so potential prestige benefits of travel are a relevant contribution of tourism to the overall psychological well-being of people. As an element of social relations, prestige is interrelated with the needs for social affiliation (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Brewer, 1991; Maslow, 1963; McClelland, 1988), positive resonance and feedback (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), and the need for self-actualization and a sense of competence and mastery (Deci and Ryan, 1995; Ryan and Deci, 2017). Prestige can further be used to express social distinctiveness and exert power and influence over others (Barkow, 2014; Cheng et al., 2010), and in this way satisfy needs for distinction and dominance (Brewer, 1991; Leonardelli et al., 2010; McClelland, 1988; Murray, 1938). Prestige surely is not a singular factor fulfilling these needs, only one aspect that could add to need satisfaction. A focus of attention into perceived prestige benefits of travel can therefore shed light on the sociopsychological function of tourism, and how travel serves for the satisfaction of basic psychological needs to promote well-being and overall happiness of tourists.

Lastly, the sum of travel benefits for tourists establishes the raison d'être of tourism and justifies the huge amounts of human effort, natural and social resources allocated in the organization and realization of mass-travel. The overall positive outcomes (i.e. customer benefits) are a tourism resource (Pyke et al., 2016), one factor that condones for the human efforts made and natural resources used for tourism. The examination of customer benefits for tourists in general is a relevant endeavour for the organisation and politics of tourism (Desforges, 2000). This dissertation will shed light into personal prestige benefits of leisure travel to contribute part to the study of the overall positive outcomes of travelling.

1.3 Aims and content of the dissertation

The overall aim of this dissertation is to answer the research question, whether the presentation of travel experience affects personal prestige of tourists. The subsequent chapter will dive deeply into theoretical conceptualizations of prestige in various social scientific disciplines as applied in tourism studies. Notwithstanding the importance of theoretical conceptions of the prestige concept, the reader of this dissertation should bear in mind the real-life situation the research project will explore: A tourist represents travel experience to other people by displaying souvenirs, uploading photos online, or talking about a trip, maybe anticipating positive feedback and enhancement of personal prestige. Friends, family, or online followers – subsequently termed social environment or audience – then evaluates the tourist for the representation of travel experience. The real-life situation examined in this thesis therefore appears to be very simple, yet some complex cognitive and social processes are involved which call for thorough theoretical review of personal prestige conceptualisations. A number of steps are taken in this project to come to a conclusion toward the overall research question, whether representation of travel experience has an effect on personal prestige of tourists.

First, theoretical backgrounds of prestige in different scientific disciplines are reviewed. Since tourism studies are inherently transdisciplinary, it is necessary to tap into different theoretical understandings of

prestige to assimilate the various conceptualisations of the construct as applied in tourism research. The purpose of the second chapter of this dissertation is to understand the a) conception of prestige in relevant social scientific disciplines, and b) understand to what or whom prestige can be ascribed to. This review will come to the resolution that prestige research needs to include two perspectives of prestige, the individual perception of the tourist as well as the perceptions of the social environment. The chapter concludes with an operant definition of personal prestige which is subsequently applied in the empirical studies issued in the frame this research project.

Chapter 3 will proceed to examine the different conceptualisations and empirical applications of prestige in tourism research. First, two theoretical cases on prestige relations of leisure travel are laid out. Second, the question of whether people are actually motivated to travel by prestige needs is scrutinized at hand of empirical studies of the past decades. Subsequently, the few studies examining perceived prestige benefits of leisure travel are reviewed and the research gaps are exposed.

Chapter 4 summarizes the empirical studies issued in the frame of this PhD project. Three sub-chapters present the empirical studies conducted in a sequential exploratory approach to a) qualitatively examine touristic self-expression to understand positive self-presentation through travel experience and examine the dimensionality of personal prestige for further development of a measurement instrument, b) to develop a scale measuring personal prestige and apply it in an experimental setting to investigate socially perceived personal prestige of tourists and c) to examine changes in prestige-worthiness of travel due to changing societal discourse on leisure travel.

Chapter 5 presents the theoretical and methodological contributions of the thesis, subsequently disclose the limitations and potential merits of the research project, and conclude with an answer to the main research question: Does leisure travel lead to measurable prestige benefits for tourists? At last, some suggestions for further research and a personal deliberation on the prospects for prestige benefits of leisure travel in the future is clarified.

2   *Perspectives on prestige in theory*

Prestige is a concept difficult to define and to grasp, as it relates to a wide range of theories in various social science disciplines. These theories are 'highly isolated and cultivate their own prestige concepts with minimal cross-pollination of ideas, even within particular fields of study' (Berl, 2019: 23). Due to the transdisciplinary nature of tourism research, numerous conceptualisations of prestige have been applied in studies into the nexus of prestige and leisure travel. Thus, it is necessary to develop an operant definition of prestige to examine 'prestige benefits of leisure travel'. To establish a definition of 'prestige' applicable and suitable for the purpose of examining prestige benefits of travel, this chapter summarizes a) what or whom prestige can be ascribed to and b) what types of values prestige evaluations

can be based on. Subsequently, this chapter will conclude with an operant definition of prestige as applied in this dissertation.

2.1 Two perspectives on prestige

Contributing to perspectives on social stratification in the disciplines of sociology, economics, psychology, and anthropology, prestige is associated with a multitude of overlapping scientific concepts such as status, social honour, class, accumulation of capital, social distinction or stratification. The level of analysis determines the conception and defined function of prestige within each discipline, namely to whom or what this attribute is ascribed to, and who has the capacity to perceive and evaluate prestige. While micro-level perspectives relate prestige to individual people, macro-level perspectives relate it to social aggregates like classes, institutions and organisations, or other types of entities such as brands or product types. The consolidation of micro- and macro-level perspectives on society is an inherent problem of social theory (Wiley, 1988), and this challenge extends to prestige theory as well. Table 1 gives an overview of conceptualisations of prestige in social science disciplines, the dominant perspective taken, whom prestige is ascribed to and what its function is, as well as related scientific concepts.

Table 1 - Overview of prestige conceptualisations in social sciences

Discipline	Dominant perspective(s)	Prestige is ascribed to…	Function of prestige	Related scientific concepts	Author(s) & Year
sociology	macro	classes	hierarchization / stratification	social status	Kluth, 1957
		social entities	hierarchization / stratification	class, status, position	Weber, 1922
		institutions	organizational order	occupational prestige	Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974
		nations	hierarchization of world politics	material, social, and imagined power	Wood, 2013
	micro / macro	people as members of social groups	hierarchization / stratification	individual prestige	Leopold, 1916
		people as members of social groups	social ordering mechanism	social order, class, status, power	Parsons, 1937, 1940, 1953
		classes	hierarchization / stratification	membership status, group authority, charisma	Eisenstadt, 1968
		social entities	hierarchization; communal cohabitation and social coexistence	economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital	Bourdieu, 1984, 1990
		occupations	hierarchization / stratification	position, occupational prestige	Wegener, 1988, 1992
		people as members of social groups, products and brands			Domanski, 2015
psychology	micro	people	perceived result of self-actualization	self-actualization, dominance	Rogers, 1951, 1959
		people	satisfaction of esteem needs	status, recognition	Maslow, 1954, 1963
		people	satisfaction of social needs	self-respect, self-esteem	Murray, 1938, 1964
consumer behaviour	macro	classes	social stratification	conspicuous consumption, social honor, recognition	Veblen, 1899
	micro/macro	material items	aspect of self-extension	self-extension, symbolic value	Belk, 1988, 1992
		products and brands	prestige as a sales argument; customer satisfaction		Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, 2003, 2004
		brands			
			reason to invest/buy		Fonrouge and Vigneron, 2011

In macro-level perspectives, prestige is regarded as an ordering mechanism of larger societal orders. Sociologists conceptualise prestige through the Marxist lens as part of a class struggle in the process of consolidation and reorganisation of social hierarchies (Wegener, 1992). It is ascribed to positions, institutions and organisations, and as such is an attribute of social entities rather than individual people. Various types of prestige have been defined from scientific macro-level analyses over time: For example, 'institutional prestige' is manifested by the respect and honour of prestigious institutions and their members (Weber, 1922), 'occupational prestige' is ascribed to beholders of specific positions and professions (Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974; Wegener, 1988), 'national prestige' as an attribute of nation-states (Wood, 2013). From this perspective, the function of prestige is that of an ordering mechanism within the class struggle of societal order, and individual people have little agency to affect personal prestige, as external (environmental) factors such as birth rights or affiliation to a specific class determine personal prestige (Berl, 2019). Therefore, macro-level perspectives on prestige set focus on hierarchisation of large-scale structures rather than interindividual social relationships. This perspective is useful to examine wider societal stratification at hands of social groups and classes (Weber, 1922).

In his work on social distinction, Bourdieu (1984) aims to consolidate micro- and macro-level perspectives. He draws on different types of capital determining the level and serving expression of prestige. Cultural capital is defined by sociocultural assets, such as education, language and style of speech, conduct, or also travel experience (Bui and Wilkins, 2017). Social capital refers to a person's direct social environment and their norms and values, like work colleagues, friend circle or family, but also larger social in-groups like 'the working class', 'the home owners,' or 'the backpackers'(Ourahmoune, 2016). Social capital serves the sense of community, code of conduct and moral beliefs of larger groups. The economic capital, obviously, is resembled by personal belongings, possession and wealth. Cultural, social and economic capital can be converted into symbolic capital, which is the potential to experience positive social resonance, respect, honour, recognition, or be ascribed prestige. Prestige herein functions as a 'social fabric' that serves the communal cohabitation and social coexistence.

In this way, the sociological perspective on prestige has brought about the notion of prestige being ascribed to members of social groups and entities, and its function as a hierarchisation mechanism. Yet, the macro-level perspective on prestige inherently excludes the 'individual realm' of prestige conceptions and leaves little scope for subjective perceptions and cognitions of individual people.

In a psychological perspective, prestige is an attribute of individual people that is subjectively perceived either after cognitive evaluation of one's actions and conveyed by social resonance. Prestige, here, is not an ordering mechanism of large-scale societal structure and hierarchisation, but of the perception of an attribute ascribed to individual people in interpersonal relationships. Prestige can be regarded as a means to satisfy basic human needs through a micro-level lens. Even though prestige is not explicitly mentioned in most psychological needs theories, it is a factor contributing to the satisfaction of a number

of human needs. For example, prestige can be an extrinsic goal, a motivation for people to care about personal growth, social recognition and appearance (Ryan and Deci, 2019: 129). It can satisfy esteem needs (Maslow, 1963), interpersonal needs (Rogers, 1959) or needs for affiliation and dominance (Murray, 1964).

In consumer behaviour studies, consumption, as an ideal means to represent prestigious symbols for group identity formation and consolidation, is a determinant of consumers' personal prestige. Veblen (1899) detected long ago how upper classes make use of consumption and leisure for social recognition and conspicuous display of wealth. He centralizes conspicuous consumption as a way for social distinction, and hereby focuses on how wealth is represented by consumption of 'the noble and the priestly classes' (Veblen, 1899: 2). Members of upper classes were expected to acquire and exhibit wealth in order to gain status. As such, prestige is ascribed to individual consumers at hand of subjective interpretations of societal values and social realities. From the idea that consumption represents prestige follows that products, product types and brands can hold prestige (Vigneron and Johnson, 1998, 2004). The level of prestige is determined by socially constructed values perceived by the consumer, namely hedonic value, conspicuousness like price and status, uniqueness and exclusivity, quality value, and perceived self-extension (Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998, 2004). Ascribing prestige to non-human objects like product types or brands, consumer psychologists appear to take a macro-level perspective. Yet, empirically, consumers' individual interpretation of products is examined (Hwang and Lee, 2019; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998, 1999), which is a characteristic of micro-level perspectives. In this way, the micro- and macro-level perspectives mingle in this discipline.

Consumption of goods is not only seen to reflect monetary values, but also moral, symbolic and ideological values of people (Belk, 1988). Products and goods are much rather material extensions of personal identity: Characteristics of a product can be attached to self-concept, and reciprocally, self-concept is attached to goods (Belk, 1992). Hence, the consumption of prestigious products and product types could also increase prestige of the owner and lead to *personal prestige*. The theory of self-extension leaves room for social interpretations and shared meanings of social in-groups, yet, as Belk's centre of attention is the interpretation of the individual consumer and subjective expression of social values through self-extension, empirical research along this theory can only result in subjective perceptions about personal consumption, rather than social evaluations of personal prestige. Thus, these micro-economic discussions of consumer psychology focus on consumer cognition and tap into the individual realm of prestige perceptions.

The main challenge of prestige theories is that of conciliating the perspectives of the social (i.e. macro-perspectives) and the individual (i.e. micro-perspectives) (Wiley, 1988): Prestige as an attribute of an individual or of a social entity. Following Wegener's suggestion, 'it is evident that prestige research should deal not with one but with two concepts of prestige: with prestige as a hierarchy of positions and prestige as an attribute in socially closed groups' (Wegener, 1992: 261).

A recent review of prestige theories by Berl (2019) has analysed the different levels of social structure that prestige touches upon, going from macro- to micro-level perspectives. The resulting model represents the 'idea of prestige as a holistic system with contributions […] from external environmental conditions, to cultural, institutional, collective, relational, individual, and symbolic factors' (Berl, 2019: 25). In this model, the social structure that prestige touches upon is not *either* micro- *or* macro-level but constitutes a continuum of levels from large- to small-scale (see value dimensions in Figure 1).

Cultural factors like collectively shared value judgements, meaning-making and inherited knowledge, institutional factors of societal structures and systems, and collective factors like shared experiences and in-group identity are socially constructed realities. They determine prestige from a large-scale perspective. Relational (i.e., interpersonal), individual and symbolic factors shape prestige in interpersonal relations from a small-scale perspective. With this model, Berl (2019) merges the large-scale and small-scale perspectives on prestige and in this way consolidates the two perspectives into one. When prestige is evaluated, people always refer to collective societal and cultural values as well as relational and individual aspects. In a tourism context, large-scale collective and cultural values shape the image of "tourists" as a social entity, of destinations or types of travel, and small-scale perspectives shape the individual interpretation of symbolic values in the social context.

Considering the ill-defined nature of the concept, one might ask why not to disregard "prestige" as a research topic. Yet, the recent research interest into prestige shows that it is a relevant concept for both academia and for contemporary human relations. Most people would know the term 'prestige' and roughly describe a personal definition for it – prestige still matters in everyday life of people. In transdisciplinary tourism studies, prestige has been applied by researchers from the various scientific disciplines named above, and the research interest into prestige and leisure travel has increased in the past years. However, the insights gained so far are therefore fragmental and have yielded puzzle pieces of knowledge on personal prestige enhancement through travel.

This dissertation scrutinizes the question, whether tourism consumption leads to measurable personal prestige benefits for tourists. With this aim, it does not seek to derive one universal prestige definition applicable in any social science discipline, but to understand how consumption of tourism products affects the evaluation of consumers' prestige. The situation of interest here is a tourist who demonstrates travel experience to social others based on interpretation of collective and individual values, and the subsequent evaluation of the tourists' personal prestige by social others based on their individual interpretations of the respective values. This shows that a conceptualization of prestige must entail both perspectives: Prestige can be an attribute of both the individual tourist based on individual evaluation of travel experience, and an attribute ascribed to the social group of 'the tourists', a collective image based on evaluations of collective values and discourse on tourism and travel. The type of prestige examined in this research project is personal prestige attributed to tourists, yet personal prestige of a tourist is also partially determined by collective values and prestige of the social entity of 'the tourists'. Concluding,

this dissertation defines personal prestige in the context of travel as an attribute ascribed to people due to their travel experiences: The subjectively perceived prestige on the side of the tourists themselves, and the prestige ascribed to the tourist by the social environment at hand of interpretations of collective and individual values.

2.2   *The process of prestige transactions in a tourism context*

The emergence of personal prestige is subject to highly complex processes comparable to a transaction (Domanski, 2015). There are a number of conceptual factors influencing such transactions, which affect how prestige benefits of leisure travel could occur, and on how to empirically investigate potential prestige benefits of leisure travel. This chapter will first depict the process of how personal prestige benefits of travel could emerge, and subsequently point out relevant factors determining conceptualisation of and methodological decisions for the empirical studies conducted in the frame of this dissertation.
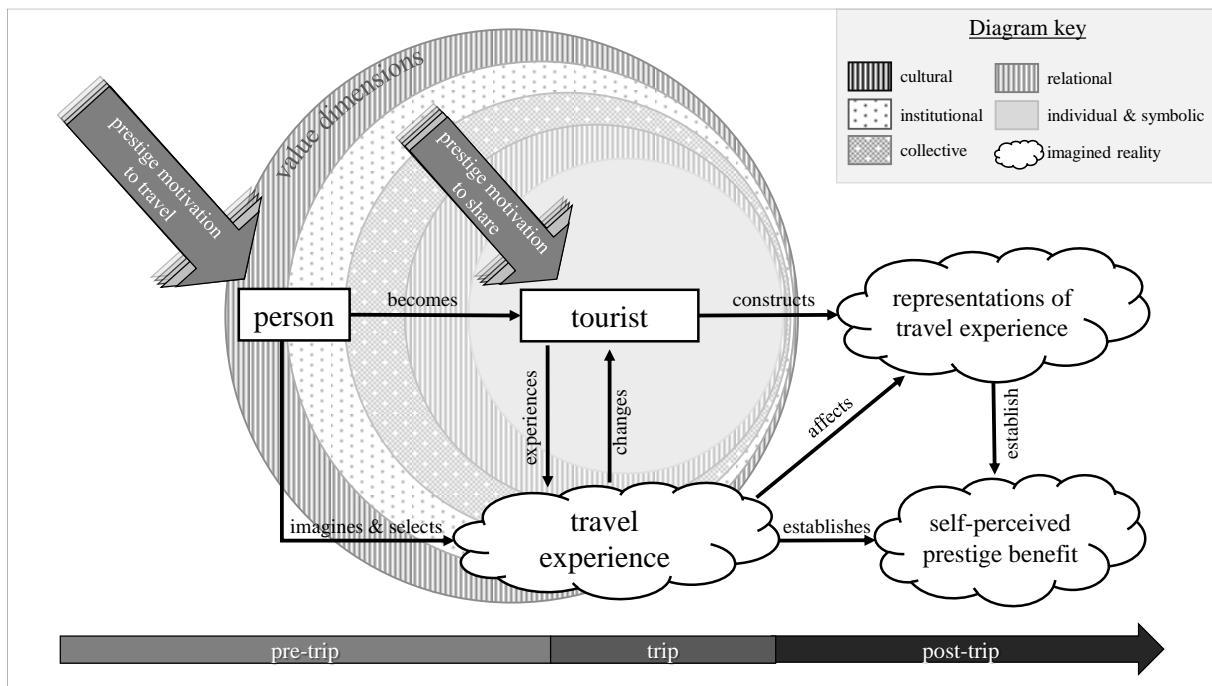
Figure 1 - Schematic illustration of occurrence of self-perceived prestige benefits

The occurrence of personal prestige benefits of travel could play out like this (Figure 1): First, a person would be motivated to travel by the experience of a divergence between the status quo and a desired state, in other words the sense of one or more needs. The motivation to travel is not initiated by a single need, but by a combination biological, social, and psychological needs (Lohmann, 2017). These needs can be held both consciously and unconsciously, so that the process of motivation can either roll out as an intentional action or a subliminal process (McClelland, 1988). Hence, personal prestige might only be but one of many motives for people to travel and can be both a conscious and unconscious driver of travel behaviour. The person, now motivated to travel, would imagine and select a trip with adequate characteristics to satisfy the consciously held needs (Gnoth, 1997). To suit the prestige motive – if

17

consciously perceived – one would select a holiday with perceived prestige-worthy qualities, for example choose an exotic destination, or book a unique or expensive type of trip (Correia and Moital, 2009). During or after the holiday, the tourist would construct an idealised self (Goffman, 1959) and a suiting representation of travel experience to share with others, for example by selecting extravagant souvenirs to display or give to others, or uploading photos on social media. This is where the prestige motive might play a role again and initiate the motivation to share travel experience with others to enhance personal prestige. To develop this "idealised travelling self", the tourist has to draw on a set of personal interpretations of cultural, institutional, collective, relational, individual and symbolic values (Berl, 2019) as outlined in Chapter 2.1. Characteristics and qualities of the trip could then be attached to the self-concept (Belk, 1988, 1992). This could already lead to the subjective perception of personal prestige benefits of the trip: The tourist might experience approximation towards the idealised self, increasing self-esteem or self-respect (Goffman, 1959; Todd, 2001) and perceive a sense of enhanced personal prestige.
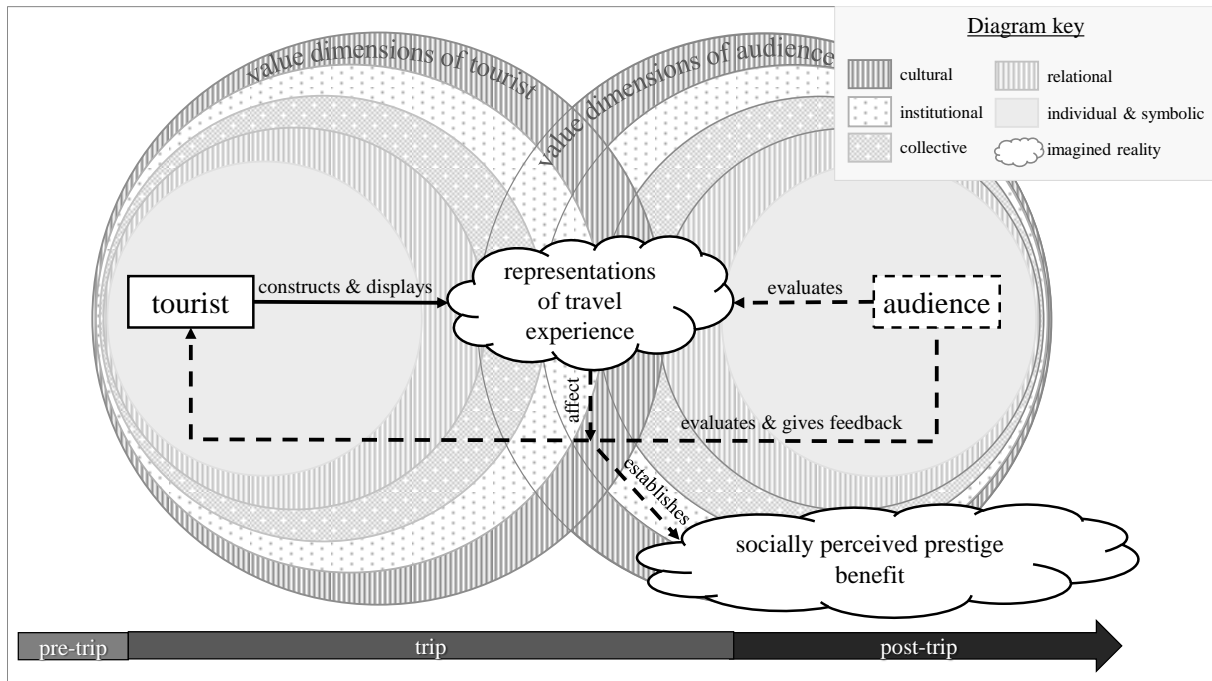
Figure 2 - Schematic illustration of occurrence of socially perceived prestige benefits

The tourist would then display travel experience to an audience (Figure 2) like the social environment of friends, colleagues, family or online followers, maybe even in expectance of positive resonance, respect or admiration (Correia and Moital, 2009). Each person in the audience would then draw back on individual interpretation of cultural, institutional, collective, relational, individual and symbolic values (Berl, 2019) regarding tourist's and travel experience's characteristics. Some of the values like the cultural or institutional dimensions of tourist and audience might overlap and result in similar interpretations, yet individual and symbolic values might differ. This stresses again that self-perceived and socially perceived personal prestige of tourists are distinct and need to be regarded individually.

It is further important to note that, when someone evaluates another person, it is never a single determinant, like travel experience, that is taken into account. Much more, 'all levels of a stratified social system contribute to individual [i.e. personal] prestige' (Berl, 2019: 25). What is meant by this is that, when a tourist represents travel experience, the audience will always evaluate multiple determinants for an overall evaluation of personal prestige (Gordon, 2017). Gender, age, culture, clothing, physical appearance, occupation, voice and multiple other characteristics are assessed at the same time, most of them unconsciously (Bourdieu, 1984). Therefore, social evaluations of tourists' personal prestige always imply a multitude of consciously perceived and subliminal determinants, and the overall process of prestige evaluation is not necessarily consciously deliberated either. Travel experience might be but one of many factors determining personal prestige evaluations and might not even be consciously deliberated. Therefore, representation of travel experience is expected to contribute a small proportion toward the overall evaluation of a person's prestige.

Chapter 2.1 has shown that prestige is a matter of perspective. This concerns not only the perspective taken in different social science disciplines, but also the viewpoint taken in real-life social situations. The process of prestige transaction entails evaluations of both the recipient and the giver of prestige, which raises an important question for this research project, namely that of *who* perceives prestige. Here, we need to make a distinction between self-perceived and socially perceived personal prestige. Self-perceived personal prestige is manifested by individual self-perception of positive self-traits like a sense of ideal self-identity, self-actualization, or social distinction, while socially perceived prestige benefits are based on the conception of the social environment, i.e. audience (Goffman, 1959), and are enacted by the overall resonance of the social environment, admiration, respect, and relative status within the group. Thus, it is necessary to examine two types of prestige benefits to assess potential personal prestige benefits for tourists, depending on who is the perceiver: The self-perceived personal prestige of tourists, as well as socially perceived personal prestige of a tourist based on the evaluation of the social environment.

3   Prestige and Tourism

This chapter will first introduce two early theoretical cases on the relation between leisure travel and prestige to provide background for conceptualisations of personal prestige in tourism studies. Subsequently, it will systematically review empirical evidence into prestige-motivated consumption of leisure travel, and lastly summarize findings of the few existing studies concerned with prestige benefits of leisure travel.

3.1   The two theories of the leisure class

Already the Grand Tour in the 17th and 18th century was deeply entangled with relations of power, status and prestige. For young European aristocrats, travelling to the most renowned places in Europe was an obligation to obtain status (Cohen, 2001: 133). The Grand Tour was an endeavour exclusive to young male aristocrats, and was principally a demonstration of power, status and prestige (MacCannell, 1976), showing that the connection between prestige and tourism was already rooted in the early beginnings of travel.

Perhaps the first theoretical case for prestige-motivated leisure consumption was made by Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class (1899). Following his arguments on the pecuniary struggle of the classes, he claims that leisure is essentially a resource of the upper classes defined as the non-productive consumption of time. While lower class members were bound to expend time for labour to assure a livelihood, upper class members held financial resources freeing them of the duty of undignified work and enabling them to spend leisure time. As such, leisure was essentially reserved to the upper classes which results as a consequence of 'pecuniary emulation' (Veblen, 1899: 12), the accumulation of wealth.

Veblen further claimed that leisure, as an intangible means of conspicuous consumption, needs to be transformed into something noticeable, as 'the honourable life of leisure as is not spent in the sight of spectators can serve the purposes of reputability only in so far as it leaves a tangible, visible result that can be put in evidence' (Veblen, 1899: 24). Activities like learning dead languages, musical instruments, painting or breeding animals were common among the Leisure Class (Scott, 2010), showing that conspicuous leisure required effort and followed social conduct.

Veblen's observation of the noble society at the time was published over 120 years ago, yet, his general thesis that leisure activities reflect social status and create prestige is still true today and continues to be a classic theory of consumer behaviour. For Veblen, time is a resource free for the upper classes to use for conspicuous leisure. Leisure time has in the meantime become more available to larger masses of people as working hours decreased and wages increased. With a growing middle class, the basic distinction between proletariat and bourgeoisie blurred, leisure time was not a resource in itself any longer. MacCannell (1976) continues on Veblen's theory and reconceptualizes the Leisure Class and the tourist for modernizing Western societies of the 1970s. His basic assumption was that with

modernization and the breaking up of traditional societal structures, people felt increasingly alienated and detached from traditional order. The motivating factor for spending leisure time, according to MacCannell, is not the representation of status as in Veblen's theory, but a 'quest for authentic values and his true self' (MacCannell, 1976: 152).

The two theories of the Leisure Class of Veblen and MacCannell hold some similarities and differences that are fundamental premises for this dissertation. MacCannell's development of the theory of the leisure class was an adaptation of the theory to changing societal structures. Even though MacCannell is essentially progressing on Veblen's theory, the two conceptualizations of the Leisure Class in different eras consolidate some basic assumptions relating to prestige and leisure travel that are valid for society today. Both theories claim that people make use of leisure time to attain a certain goal, so travel is seen as a means to fulfil needs and achieve an improvement of a state. However, the two theories are distinct concerning the goal itself: While Veblen would say that leisure travel is undertaken for socially perceived prestige, MacCannell would say it is essentially the search for an authentic (i.e., positive) self in terms of self-perceived prestige.

The overarching claim of this thesis is that is does not have to be either or, because people are always in touch with both self-identity and social identity (Brewer, 1991; Turner et al., 1979) and personal prestige is evaluated both by tourists and their social environment: The way we spend our holidays and the travel experience we gather affect both, and travel is a means to consolidate self-identity or approach an ideal self, *and* to represent the self in the social environment and obtain social prestige.

3.2   *Empirical evidence on prestige-motivated leisure travel*

The idea that people travel motivated by the need for prestige has been entrenched in the tourism literature since the 1970s and prestige enhancement has repetitively been brought forward as one motivating factor for leisure travel. Yet, it is doubtful that large masses of tourists *consciously* select a holiday due to prestige motives for a number of reasons. The following chapter will assess empirical evidence into the prestige motivation to travel as presented in Table 2, and evaluate the relevance and level of awareness people hold this motive when deciding to travel and sharing travel experience.

Prestige as a motive for travel has been suggested by Crompton (1979), Hanqin and Lam (1999), Liu et al. (2011). Similar motives relating to prestige are ego-enhancement (Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994), recognition (Correia et al., 2020; Correia and Kozak, 2012; Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002b; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Pearce and Lee, 2005), esteem (Correia et al., 2020; Fodness, 1994; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014), social return and ideal social self-concept (Beall et al., 2021; Moran et al., 2018), and self-development (Pearce and Lee, 2005; Rocha and Seabra, 2016; Swanson and Horridge, 2004). Here, prestige was found to be a motive to participate in leisure travel in general (Chiang and Jogaratnam, 2006; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Pearce and Lee, 2005), affecting purchase decisions and tourist behaviour (Bansal and Eiselt, 2004; Beall et al., 2021; Correia et al., 2007,

2020; Correia and Kozak, 2012; Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002a; Hanqin and Lam, 1999; Liu et al., 2011; Moran et al., 2018), or leading people to share travel experience with others (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Rocha and Seabra, 2016; Swanson and Horridge, 2006; Wilkins, 2011). In this way, the notion that people travel to 'become better', or to self-improve in terms of self-perceived and socially perceived prestige has become an established judgement in tourism research and has been repeatedly identified as a relevant travel motive.

However, the dominant approach taken in research into travel motivation might have led to an overvaluation of prestige motives' relevance and a misevaluation of the level of tourists' awareness. For a large part, the methodological approach toward travel motivation was surveying non-representative samples of respondents of various backgrounds, applying pre-defined items and survey questions, and in this way is prone to suggestion bias. The dominance of quantitative methods toward travel motivation resulted in a number of slightly differing motivation typologies, yet qualitative studies and mixed methods approaches specifically into prestige motives remain scarce (Table 2). A problem with quantitative research into prestige motivations is vulnerability for social desirability bias and acquiescence bias. People who consciously hold prestige motives are generally reluctant to admit prestige enhancement as a motive for travel (Correia and Moital, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Fodness, 1994), and those who do not consciously deliberate about the motive might not be able to answer survey questions appropriately. The pertinent approach would have been to precede with qualitative research into travel motivations, in order to expose motives "grounded in the data" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and subsequently verify results of the qualitative studies in a quantitative approach (Boeije, 2014; Dolnicar, 2013). In survey studies, respondents have no other option than answering the questions given to them by the researcher, and subsequent factor analyses would result in a cluster of these previously selected items. Only few qualitative or mixed methods approaches have pointed out prestige motives for leisure travel, suggesting that the repetitive ascertainment of prestige as one factor of travel motivation might have been result of lacking methodological triangulation with qualitative and observational research.

Table 2 Overview of reviewed literature on the prestige motivation to travel

Prestige motivation to…	Methodology	Author(s)	depiction of prestige motive
select a type of trip/destination	mixed methods	Correia et al., 2020	enhance status, enhance self-esteem, conspicuous display
	quantitative	Bansal and Eiselt, 2004	prestige, exploration and evaluation of self, facilitation of social interaction, group conformity
		Beall et al., 2021	social return
		Correia et al., 2007	socialization, social motives
		Correia and Kozak, 2012	enhance social status, snob motives and bandwagon motives
		Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002a	be successful, attain status, independence, self-expression
		Hanqin and Lam, 1999	knowledge, prestige, enhancement of human relationship
		Liu et al., 2011	prestige, enhancement of relationships
		Moran et al., 2018	social return, social norms, ideal self-concept
travel	mixed methods	Fodness, 1994	value-expression, self-esteem, ego-enhancement
	qualitative	Crompton, 1979	exploration and evaluation of self, prestige, facilitation of social interaction
	quantitative	Chiang and Jogaratnam, 2006	social motives (sharing)
		Dann, 1977	anomie, ego-enhancement
		Pearce and Lee, 2005	personal development, self-actualization, recognition
	theoretical case	Iso-Ahola, 1982	seeking personal and interpersonal rewards
		MacCannell, 1976	enhance status
share travel experience	mixed methods	Munar and Jacobsen, 2014	gain respect and recognition, increase social ties, self-esteem
	quantitative	Rocha and Seabra, 2016	develop personal and spiritual aspects, self-realization, purify oneself, have a higher social status, display wealth
		Swanson and Horridge, 2006	developing skill, learning and enrichment
		Wilkins, 2011	Evidence of having been somewhere

Again, quantitative approaches toward travel motivation can only detect conscious opinions of respondents, while qualitative methods have potential to shed light on both conscious and unconscious thoughts (Boeije, 2014). As motives and motivations can be both conscious and unconscious (McClelland, 1988), it is crucial to triangulate methodological approaches using both qualitative and quantitative methods to validate the existence and level of consciousness toward a motive for leisure travel. The application of quantitative approaches might either leave respondents unable to answer questions appropriately, as they are expected to give conscious answers to unconscious constructs leading to acquiescence bias (Dolnicar, 2013, 2020), or with respect to prestige motives, might be prone to social desirability bias and the hesitance to admit prestige motives (Correia et al., 2020; Domanski, 2015; Riley, 1988; Tiefenbacher et al., 2000). One of the few qualitative studies into travel motivation conducted by Crompton frames prestige as one of seven socio-psychological travel motives, namely exploration and evaluation of self, prestige, and facilitation of social interaction (Crompton, 1979: 416). In this, prestige is a subordinate motive, which he explains by increasing availability of leisure travel and, hence, decreasing prestige-worthiness, or the reluctance to admit prestige motives on the side of respondents.

Therefore, numerous researchers have found prestige motives as a relevant driver for travel participation, the selection of a specific type of trip or destination, or the decision to share travel experience with social others. Yet, the almost singular application of quantitative survey methods resulting in the definition of the prestige motivation to travel is based on the assumption that people are conscious about their own prestige motives, and has probably led to an overvaluation of the relevance of this motive for travel decision-making. Nonetheless, the general tendency of people to positively self-present (Goffman, 1959), the popularity of sharing travel experience with social others (Elsrud, 2001; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Noy, 2004; van Nuenen, 2016), more specifically conspicuous consumption of tourism products (Correia et al., 2016; Kerr et al., 2012) and self-extension through travel experience (Belk, 1992; Belk and Hsiu-yen Yeh, 2011) show that a general neglection of this motive is unreasonable. Against the background of the above summarized literature, it is sensible to assume that prestige motives play a role in travel decision-making and (conspicuous) display of travel experience to a varying degree of intensity and level of consciousness.

The aim of this dissertation is not to proof the existence of prestige motives, but to investigate personal prestige benefits of travel. Whether or not people are consciously motivated to travel by prestige is not of crucial relevance for this research endeavour, but the dominance of quantitative research into travel motivation as summarized above has pointed out methodological pitfalls with regards to prestige research and indicated a critical research gap. The lack of qualitative research into this topic has left the question unanswered, whether tourists actually aim to positively self-present through their travel experience, and what people express about themselves when displaying travel experience to others. An

answer to this question would reveal the types of self-messages expressed as well as dimensions of the personal prestige concept touched upon through touristic self-presentation.

3.3   Empirical evidence for personal prestige benefits of travel

As outlined in Chapter 2.2, there are two types of prestige benefits depending on the perspective, more plainly on who perceives prestige. So far, prestige benefits have been studied rather unilaterally in terms of self-perceived prestige of tourists, so that knowledge on social evaluations of tourists' personal prestige is virtually non-existent and there is a lack of adequate methodological approaches toward the topic. The following paragraph will review both studies on self-perceived as well as socially perceived prestige benefits of leisure travel as presented in Table 3.

There is a considerable body of literature providing evidence that tourists 'feel better about themselves' due to travel experience in terms of enhanced status, positive self-identity, social distinction, accumulation of capital, and experience of competence. Findings that adventure travel leads to experiences of competence (Boudreau et al., 2020; Houge Mackenzie and Hodge, 2019) suggest that travel can be regarded as an accomplishment adding to personal prestige. Further, tourists remark the accumulation of capital (Bourdieu, 1984) in terms of self-development, a sense of social distinction, and growth in social, cultural and symbolic capital (Bui and Trupp, 2019; Bui and Wilkins, 2017). Travelling, and representation of travel experience, can increase self-esteem (Todd, 2001), lead to perceptions of a transformed self and identity (Savener, 2013; Wearing and Neil, 2000; Wearing and Wearing, 2011). These findings show that travel experience affects self-perception of tourists, and that some tourists interpret their trips as a positive attribute they attach to themselves.

Few researchers have explicitly linked their results to the concept of 'prestige'. This is probably due to fact that people tend to be discreet talking about their own accomplishments and prestige to avoid inappropriate bragging (Kerr et al., 2012). Plainly asking respondents to assess how travel would affect their personal prestige would lead to unreliable and invalid results due to limitations through social desirability and response bias. Researchers have focused on perceptions of 'self-betterment' of individual tourists in terms of increased self-esteem, sense of competence, accumulation of capital and perceived positive resonance, predominantly applying qualitative methodologies in avoidance of suggestion bias. Thus, it is not surprising that 'prestige' does not explicitly emerge as a concept from the data, yet it is reasonable to assume that tourists perceive prestige benefits due to their travel experience, at least sometimes and to a certain degree.

Riley (1995) examined perceptions of prestige-worthy travel behaviour in a qualitative interview study and found that tourists predominantly determine travel's prestige potential by perceived exclusivity, namely such trips that are 'minimally accessible, out-of-the-ordinary, or sometimes unique' (Riley, 1995: 639). His respondents evaluated personal prestige at hand of the resources enabling them to travel

as well as the desirability of their travel experience. Even though the focus here is on determinants of prestige-worthy travel behaviour, Riley ascertains that a fulfilment of these determinants would lead to self-perceived prestige enhancement for tourists. O'Reilly (2006) states that, even though the relative exclusivity of backpacking decreased in the past decade, backpackers still interpret gap-years as a status-enhancing activity and take notice of enhanced prestige after their trips.

The predominantly qualitative research endeavour into self-perceived prestige benefits has provided reliable evidence that tourists perceive self-enhancement because of travel experience. As such, we can assume that the effect of prestige enhancement is perceived by some tourists, demonstrating that this psychological benefit of leisure travel is a factor that contributes to psychological well-being and positive self-perception of tourists. Yet, this knowledge on self-perceived prestige benefits can only yield a partial picture of the overall prestige benefits of leisure travel.

There is little insight to socially perceived personal prestige benefits of travel for individual tourists. The dominant approach so far was to examine the perceptions regarding the prestige of different destinations and tourism products (Correia and Kozak, 2012; Kock, 2021; Pappas, 2014; Riley, 1988) through quantitative survey studies. In this way, the socially perceived prestige-worthiness of specific destinations and types of trips was measured, yet *personal* prestige of tourists was generally neglected.

Table 3 - Overview of reviewed literature on prestige benefits of travel

Type of prestige benefit	*Author(s), Year*	*prestige in terms of…*
self-perceived prestige benefits	Boudreau et al., 2020	competence
	Riley, 1995	prestige, intra-social group comparison
	Noy, 2004	self-actualisation
	Todd, 2001	positive self-identity, self-esteem
	Wearing and Neil, 2000	positive self-identity
	Wearing and Wearing, 2011	positive self-identity
	Bui and Trupp, 2019	social distinction, accumulation of capital
	Bui and Wilkins, 2017	social distinction, accumulation of capital
	O'Reilly, 2006	prestige, status enhancement
	Pappas, 2014	status enhancement
socially perceived prestige benefits	Boley et al., 2018	the traveller
	Correia and Kozak, 2012	destinations
	Riley, 1995	destinations and behaviours
	Correia et al., 2016	destinations, types of trips
self- and socially perceived prestige benefits	Kim and Tussyadiah, 2013	the traveller

One of the few research projects aiming attention at personal prestige of the study of social return by representation of tavel experience, and the development and application of the social return scale (Boley et al., 2018; Moran et al., 2018). The aim is to 'evaluate whether social media posts from that destination make the traveller look cool, popular, unique, stand out, and savvy' (Boley et al., 2018: 122). The scale examines travel prestige one-dimensionally with a focus on conspicuousness and snob-effects. Measuring personal prestige of the tourist rather than that of destinations or types of trips, the study applies a novel approach, however the scale requires respondents to specifically link social media posts from a specific destination and the traveller, which might result in response bias and limited external reliability of the study context. Another application of the social return scale focuses on "tourists" as a non-defined collective noun rather than individual tourists (Moran et al., 2018). A study examining personal prestige conducted by Kim and Tussyadiah (2013) found that positive feedback from other users on social media during a holiday positively affects the experience, and that positive self-presentation of tourists online, compared to honest self-presentation, generates stronger positive feedback. This is evidence for conveyed personal prestige to tourists due to representation of travel experience.

Methodologically, research into personal prestige of tourists is limited by two major constraints. For one, a crucial limitation is vulnerability for response bias. The usage of rather suggestive study designs explicitly asking respondents to indicate the prestige-worthiness of a destination or a kind of holiday is common in most studies toward the phenomenon (Boley et al., 2018; Correia et al., 2016; Correia and Kozak, 2012; Pappas, 2014). Second, previous research has largely focused on self-perceptions of tourists' self-improvement, or on socially perceived prestige of touristic products, rather than personal prestige of tourists. Yet, tourists seek to enhance *personal* prestige through representations of travel experience (Cohen, 1979; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994; Riley, 1995), so we can conclude it is necessary to study *personal* prestige of people, rather than brand prestige or product prestige in terms of destinations or types of trips.

3.4   Sharing travel experience: conspicuous self-extension?

The intangible travel experience, in order to be perceived by others for recognition and prestige enhancement, needs to be rendered into something noticeable (Belk, 1988; Veblen, 1899). Tourists commonly engage in a number of activities to make travel experience noticed by others, both in real-life situations and in the online environment. The following chapter will show that many of these sharing activities are often performed by tourists to convey self-messages through representations of travel experience.

One way of making travel experience noticeable by others is storytelling. It is obvious that people enjoy talking about their travel experience and holiday-storytelling is a frequent activity people engage in during or after their trips (Kuhn et al., 2019; Noy, 2004). Specifically, the stories of young travellers

have experienced considerable research interest in this context. Narratives of tourists are identity claims (Elsrud, 2001), they serve for construction, reconstruction and representation of self-identity (Desforges, 2000; Ourahmoune, 2016). Noy (2004) found that, rather than merely talking about experiences and locations, backpackers construct and communicate self-identity. The backpacking trip as a 'collective rite of passage' (Noy, 2004: 81) is a phase of personal change and reconstruction of identity, and narratives of young travellers touch upon idealized selves, authentication and validation of a transformed self, rather than events or places. More recently, Ourahmoune (2016) showed that tourist narratives are deeply related to identity construction, self-transformation and the accumulation of cultural capital over longer timeframes, and that both self-identity and the tourist experience are renegotiated when talking about travel experience.

Representations of travel experience are not only shared in face-to-face communication but are plentifully posted online on social media. Blogs enable tourists to carefully construct self-narratives before posting them (Azariah, 2016; Bosangit et al., 2012; van Nuenen, 2016). Numerous researchers have found that travel blogs communicate idealized selves, idealized identity, are used for impression management and self-branding (Azariah, 2016; Kim and Tussyadiah, 2013; Liu and Suh, 2017; van Nuenen, 2016). This is not singular for travel content shared on social media, but is one of the main functions blogs and social media sites are used for in general (Gandini, 2016; Hogan, 2010; Page, 2012), yet the fact that considerable parts of uploaded contents touch upon travel experience is intriguing (van Nuenen, 2016).

Perhaps the most popular way to turn travel experience into something noticeable is photography (Urry and Larsen, 2011). Photos can be printed and displayed at home, shown to an audience after the trip, or be posted online to be noticed by others. As such, travel photos are tangible and enduring materializations of the intangible and ephemeral travel experience as part of the extended self (Belk, 1988). Travel photography is a 'means of conveying internal tales of the self rather than as a means of, beyond the immediate family, communicating with others' (Belk and Hsiu-yen Yeh, 2011: 345). In a study on self-branding on social media, Liu and Suh (2017) found that the largest part of travel photography shows self-portraits or selfies, namely 63% of the photos they analysed, compared to only 6% landscape photos. This again signifies that, rather than the destinations or events, the tourist is at the centre of many travel representations. Sharing travel photos online is a strong tool for ideal self-presentation and impression management, especially among younger tourists (Lo et al., 2011), and tourists are very much aware of the potential to present an idealized or desired self-image (Lo and McKercher, 2015) for which they apply different types of strategies (Lyu, 2016).

Another visible demonstration of travel experience is a fine collection of souvenirs, and 'it is apparent that such items provide evidence of the conspicuous side of tourism consumption' (Todd, 2001: 188). Buying, collecting and displaying souvenirs is a common activity, and accounts for billions of dollars of revenue (Swanson and Timothy, 2012). People deliberate about how and where to display their

collections to be seen by others (Peters, 2011). Souvenirs have the ability to 'absorb' tourists' narratives, and express something about their holders (Hume, 2013a; Muecke and Wergin, 2014): They are proof of having been somewhere (Wilkins, 2011), but are also connected to self-identity and ideal self (Belk, 1988; Morgan and Pritchard, 2005).

Sending postcards is another way to let other people know about travel experience. They can be sent to friends and family at home, as a 'visual authentic verification' (Hillman, 2007: 135) of having been somewhere. Postcards have been found to be self-representative (Markwick, 2001). The popularity of postcards has decreased with the rise of social media, yet they are still an important tourist material and are collected and sent en masse (Nyffenegger and Steffen, 2010). Interestingly, people do not tend to write a lot of text on postcards: The message 'I am here, and it is nice' is the main message conveyed through this tourist material. Bourdieu describes postcards as material objects with 'petit-bourgeois aestheticism' (1984: 58) in strive for social distinction.

Concluding, tourists devote a lot of time and energy to make their travel experience noticeable. They talk to others about their trips, write stories and share them online, send postcards, take photos to show around, display at home or post on social media, buy, collect and display souvenirs. All of these activities are popular and engaged in by a large percentage of tourists (Kuhn et al., 2019; Lo and McKercher, 2015; Noy, 2004). A striking finding of research into travel representations is that tourists tend to express them*selves* rather than sharing information about the places, cultures or events. Assuming that people generally want to present themselves in a positive light (Goffman, 1959), the travel experience is a form of self-decoration or positive attribute that people present themselves through in pursuance of enhanced personal prestige.

The above review has shown that we can assume perceived self-improvement through travel on the side of some tourists, however, a comprehensive picture of the content of self-messages revealed through travel representations is still lacking. The question, *what* people actually want to express about themselves – or in theoretical stance – which dimensions of personal prestige are touched upon when presenting travel experience is yet to be answered.

4 Empirical part of the dissertation

The following chapter lays out the empirical studies conducted for this dissertation as published in three research articles to answer the main research question of this dissertation: "Does the presentation of travel experience affects personal prestige of tourists?" The articles are set out to answer the following research sub-questions developed from the above chapters:

- How do tourists make use of representations of travel experience (souvenirs) to self-present in a positive way?
- What dimensions of self-messages does touristic self-presentation address?
- How can we measure personal prestige in a tourism context?
- Does the presentation of travel experience have an effect on the evaluation of tourists' personal prestige?
- Are there measurable changes in personal prestige evaluations of tourists depending on changing public discourse on leisure travel?

4.1 Conspicuous Souvenirs: Analysing touristic self-presentation through souvenir display

Abstract: Holiday travel offers the opportunity for self-definition and enhancement of social prestige. Due to the growing importance of self-expressive values within the ongoing course of individualization, tourists increasingly make use of their travel experience to self-present in a positive way. Yet, tourism studies have not investigated what tourists actually want to communicate about themselves when representing their travel experience through the display of souvenirs. Using semi-structured qualitative interviews, this study examines touristic self-expression and exposes the self-concepts attached to and communicated through the display of souvenirs as material symbols of travel experience. Results show that tourists often have a clear intention to express positive self-messages when showing their souvenirs to others. Souvenirs are used to represent personal character traits, social affiliation to in-groups and neo-tribes, and to demonstrate individual travel history. This article adds to the discussion of individual ascription of meaning to the tourist experience and souvenirs, and gives an insight to the function of souvenirs for self-expression and social exchange.

4.1.1 Introduction

Holiday travel is a commodity that offers potential for conspicuous consumption and a leverage point for self-definition and self-consolidation in the social hierarchy (Boley et al., 2018). Positive self-representation grows more and more important in the process of individualization (Krings, 2016), and values of self-expression progressively gained prominence in the past four decades (Orehek and Human, 2017). This value shift leads to changes in orientation towards leisure activities and holiday travel, whereat the tourist experience is increasingly rendered an activity for self-definition and a medium to enhance social prestige by strategic positive self-presentation (Hales, 2006). Even though the idea that tourists are partly motivated by prestige needs has long been established (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994; MacCannell, 1976), touristic self-presentation after holiday travel has only recently entered the focus of tourism research (Bui and Trupp, 2019; Bui and Wilkins, 2017; Urry and Larsen, 2011), so there is large potential for further research into touristic self-presentation and prestige enhancement.

Positive self-presentation requires an active and reflective performance of self-identity (Goffman, 1959; Swann, 1983). Accordingly, tourists need to carefully construct the 'ideal self' (Higgins, 1987; Rogers, 1959) regarding their role as a tourist, and develop strategies to communicate this idealized self appropriately to the social environment. Due to the popularity of social media and its potentials for positive self-presentation, it is not surprising that recent investigations of tourists' self-presentation strategies have focused on touristic self-expression online (i.e. Azariah, 2016; Huang et al., 2010; Lyu, 2016). Yet, positive self-presentation does not depend on virtual media channels alone. In fact, the social media platform is just one specific opportunity for self-presentation provided by today's technology. An examination of real-life settings and touristic self-presentation through material souvenirs offers a direct person-to-person approach to capture meaningful value ascription and self-expression in the context of the tourist experience (Büscher and Urry, 2009).

In this context, souvenirs are a useful material symbol of travel experiences for tourists to disclose self-messages and to construct positive self-representations. As a tangible remnant of a travel experience, souvenirs 'are seen to encode individuals' personal histories, ideal selves, significant others and self-expression' (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005: 32) and thus serve as a vehicle to transmit messages about self-identity (Gibson, 2014) within the strive for social prestige. Shopping for souvenirs is a common holiday activity and accounts for billions of dollars of revenue for the tourist industry (Swanson and Timothy, 2012). Souvenirs often have a sacred character and are cherished by their owner; they are collected, arranged at home, or carried out into the world (Peters, 2011). Hence, they serve as a symbolic materialization of tourist experience and its perceived implications on self-identity. Symbolic values attached to souvenirs have been examined in a number of studies (Hume, 2013b; Morgan and Pritchard, 2005; Nyffenegger and Steffen, 2010; Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2015; Wilkins, 2011), yet the self-

expressive value of souvenirs and underlying dimensions of intentional touristic self-presentation have not been explicitly studied.

This paper adds to the discourse of self-expression through travel experience and in more detail addresses the utility of souvenirs for positive self-presentation and prestige enhancement in the social environment. Using exploratory qualitative interviews, touristic self-expression through souvenir display in real-life settings is examined. This paper argues for a closer investigation of touristic self-presentation and prestige effects of holiday travel. The findings expose specific dimensions of touristic self-expression through souvenir display and offer an insight into the way in which tourists make use of souvenirs to self-present in a positive way.

4.1.2 Literature Review

Holiday travel and prestige enhancement

Literature on the prestige motivation to travel suggests that holiday travel is a commodity to demonstrate financial wealth and a measure for ego-enhancement (Pappas, 2014) with a value-expressive function (Fodness, 1994), for attaining personal rewards (Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987), or as status symbol potentially satisfying prestige needs (Correia and Moital, 2009). For a long time, a considerable focus in tourism research was set on the prestige motivation rather than on processes of prestige exchange and perceived prestige effects, so that individual interpretations and social processes resulting from prestige-driven travel motivations were long neglected. Only recently, perceived prestige effects have experienced increased interest of tourism scholars, whereat holiday travel is examined as a medium for positive self-presentation and a means of social distinction, conspicuous consumption and prestige enhancement (Boley et al., 2018; Bui and Trupp, 2014, 2019; Chua and Chang, 2016; Kim and Tussyadiah, 2013; Lyu, 2016).

Prestige is given to someone by someone, and as such signals a transaction between the giver and the recipient of prestige (Domanski, 2015). This process is often set equal to an economic transaction with a straightforward predictable exchange of money and status symbols against prestige, grounded in the theory of conspicuous consumption from Veblen (1899). Prestige is hereby being reduced to a measure of financial status, drawing a one-dimensional image of the concept. It has been argued that a growing living standard and material abundance would diminish the value of products for conspicuous consumption and decline their role as status symbols (Todd, 2001). Yet, foundations of prestige do not reside merely in economic capital, but in social, cultural and symbolic capital generated through habituation and acquired during socialisation processes (Bourdieu, 1984). Social capital and distinctive features like experience, skills, behaviour, knowledge and beliefs are a substantial basis for prestige (Domanski, 2015). The habitus, as 'a necessity internalised and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170), determines

which behaviour – including travel behaviour – is prestige-worthy. Apparently, the social transaction of prestige is not as straightforward and tacit as an economic transaction: It is based on the subjective values of both the givers and recipients of prestige, and are subject to constant change (Domanski, 2015).

Tourism studies have largely focused on the prestige motivation on the basis of the simplistic conceptualisation of prestige as an economic transaction based on financial status (i.e. Pappas, 2014; Riley, 1995; Swanson and Horridge, 2004; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999), and hereby disregarded the social and cultural capital symbolised by representations of tourist experience as a basis for distinction and prestige enhancement. Correia and Moital (2009) adapt socially constructed values and different prestige foundations in their model on the prestige motivation, in which they distinguish between subjectively perceived antecedents and social consequences of holiday travel. Their model is based on five values of holiday travel rendering a tourist experience worth sharing with social others in pursuance of prestige, which is outlined in the following paragraph.

According to Correia and Moital (2009), the unique value of a specific touristic product, as well as the quality in terms of perceived performance determine the prestige-worthiness of a tourist experience. The conspicuous value refers to the degree to which a tourist experience signals financial wealth. These values rely heavily on the conceptualisation of tourism as a commodity, in which the holiday trip is seen as a product acquired and consumed for representation of status. Further, the perceived emotional and hedonic values of a holiday lead tourists to express their experiences to others, and the social value of a holiday facilitate the social affiliation as a member of a group (Correia and Moital, 2009). Travel is hereby depicted as an element of social closure organising the belonging to specific social in-groups. As such, prestige-worthy values of holiday travel entail all foundations of prestige mentioned above: Self-expression through travel experiences can lead to prestige transactions based on financial values and product quality, on social in-group affiliation, and on ideological values like hedonism and uniqueness. The model of antecedents and consequences of the prestige motivation to travel has therefore combined the individual and social component of the prestige phenomenon as well as different kinds of travel related foundations of prestige determined by perceived ideological values. However, the types and content of self-messages conveyed when representing travel experiences is not addressed in the model and need to be further examined using exploratory methods.

Touristic self-expression

Self-expression in pursuance of prestige is organised through idealised roles and narratives and often performed deliberately and reflectively (Domanski, 2015; Goffman, 1959). In the context of holiday travel, tourists are required to reflect upon a touristic role for individual self-expression (Week, 2012) and upon an appropriate stage for self-presentation (Goffman, 1959). Research into positive self-presentation in the context of the tourist role has become especially prominent on the 'virtual stage' (Urry and Larsen, 2011) of social media. Numerous studies have examined strategies for sharing travel

34

photos and blog narratives online and found that tourists make use of social media for strategic positive self-presentation (Lyu, 2016; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014), to attain social support and positive resonance (Kim and Tussyadiah, 2013), for positive self-branding (van Nuenen, 2016), to create a positive 'online self' (Azariah, 2016: 942) or for peer comparison (Chua and Chang, 2016). However, social media is but one of the stages for tourists to self-present. On the stage of the 'real world', verbal narratives and the placement of souvenirs are often strategically deliberated in order to be seen and noticed by social others (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005; Peters, 2011). Souvenirs are an enactment of a materially extended self (Belk, 1988), and are therefore deeply entangled with processes of identity construction and consolidation. Bearing in mind that tourists are partly motivated by prestige reasons, the assumption here is that they can make use of souvenirs to draw a positive picture of themselves and enhance their social prestige. Humans communicate and send messages to others through their very existence, and so does the mere existence of souvenirs as components of the extended self (Belk, 1988, 1992): They are possessions that 'give us a sense of who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going' (Belk, 1992: 37). Consequently, it is necessary to further investigate tourists' positive self-presentation through material souvenirs in everyday life settings. This in turn sheds light onto the "ideal self" (Higgins, 1987) in the tourist role, and how meaning is created with regards to the ideal self-concept of tourists.

'Material things have a particular value in the leisure and tourism markets as they are absolutely necessary for human agency and performativity in them' (Muecke and Wergin, 2014: 228). Souvenirs can symbolise and materialise the tourist experience, they have the ability to "absorb" tourists' narratives and express individual travel experience to social others (Hume, 2013) induce conversations about travel experience in a social setting. Yet, it is the tourists' task to present the souvenirs and convey self-messages adequately, and 'it is apparent that such items provide evidence of the conspicuous side of tourism consumption' (Todd, 2001: 188). Such objects, as self-representative symbols 'must be noticed by others, they must characteristically evoke certain specifiable reactions from others, and they must be in control of the individual' (Swann, 1983: 37) in order to be effective vehicles for self-expression. This study depicts souvenirs as any material objects that are purposefully taken home by the tourist for reminiscence and representation of the tourist experience. As to the issue of what renders an experience, or a symbol representative of the experience, prestige worthy, tourists have to rely on perceived values of a holiday (Hume, 2013b), 'filtered through subjective perceptions of objective characteristics, stereotypes and colloquially comprehended norms and values' (Domanski, 2015: 12). Therefore, the collective knowledge on what is worth to be collected and represented is determined by subjective interpretation of collective, societal values (Bourdieu, 1984).

The symbolic messages attached to and represented by souvenirs are, for example, the value of 'the extraordinary' (Gordon, 1986), travel history and evidence of having been somewhere (Wilkins, 2011), understandings of authenticity (Chang et al., 2008; Hashimoto and Telfer, 2007), group conformity

(Anderson and Littrell, 1996), or aesthetics (Stanley, 2000). Hume (2013) suggests a model for an analysis of 'the language of souvenirs' along five axes 'that are present, to some degree, in the expression of all souvenirs' (Hume, 2013b: 121). The model constructs a souvenir's expressive pattern as a composition of the object's raw material (*medium*), the level of human intervention to the item becoming a souvenir (*marker's mark*), the relation to people and places (*relational*), the capacity of an item to absorb a narrative (*invitational*), and the inherent values of a souvenirs' narratives (*iconofetish*). Hume's model sets strong emphasis on souvenirs' capacity to express narratives; however his analysis conceptualises these narratives as expressive patterns of an objective reality and quantifies the level of expression of three ideal types of souvenirs. The reflective process or the active construction of self-messages by the tourist are not specifically analysed here. Thus, even though research into the meanings and values behind souvenirs has gained increased interest in past years, the specific contents of self-expression through souvenirs have not been extensively investigated so far.

An attempt to elaborate on self-messages conveyed through souvenir display is made by Morgan and Pritchard, who find a close link between materiality and self-expression. They term souvenirs 'signifiers of self' (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005: 37) which, by being displayed at home or on the go, symbolise self-identity, state of mind and social position. More specifically, they find that revealed aspects of identity and social position refer to social relationships, travel history, privilege and touchstones of memory. Yet, their auto-ethnographic approach concludes in rather abstract findings of what they personally express through their own souvenir display, but results lack the specific aspects of personal identity signified by souvenirs. Thus, their study offers a starting point for the self-expressive function of souvenirs, yet a comprehensive understanding of the content of self-expression through souvenir display is not put forward.

The literature review found a number of economic, symbolic and ideological values attached to souvenirs, a proportion of which is focused on values of self-identity. Yet, these findings are incomplete and address abstract and theoretical implications of self-expression referring to terms like 'identity', 'self' or 'state of mind' (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005). Swanson and Timothy (2012) criticise the narrow and atomistic way in which value expression through souvenirs has been researched and call for a deeper examination of the object-person-place relationship of souvenirs. The present study aims at a more thorough understanding of the person-dimension in this relationship framework and exposes specific contents of self-messages expressed through souvenir display.

4.1.3   *Methodology*

Sampling procedure and interview method

Data collection took place in Lueneburg, Northern Germany in June 2018 using semi-structured qualitative interviews. Respondents were sampled via the university participant platform 'Sona

Systems' of Leuphana University Lueneburg. The study description invited respondents to sign up for an interview about their most cherished travel souvenirs.

The purposive sampling procedure was informed by two respondent characteristics. For one, respondents were filtered regarding their involvement with holiday travel overall. Reflective self-presentation is a performative act depending on individually and socially ascribed values and roles (Azariah, 2016; Goffman, 1959). A condition for such a reflective performative act is the relative importance that a person ascribes to these values and roles (Walsh and Tucker, 2009). Related to self-expression through the travel experience, a high involvement with holiday travel is expected to induce more reflective symbolic self-presentation through travel souvenirs. To ensure that all interviewees set importance on holiday travel, they were asked about their perceived importance, perceived pleasure and sign-value of holiday travel before the interview (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). Only those respondents that indicated strong approval with respect to their involvement with holiday travel were considered for data analysis. Due to lacking involvement, three interviewees were ruled out for data analysis.

Second, values of self-expression have risen especially in the younger age groups in the past four decades (Inglehart, 2008; Inglehart and Oyserman, 2004). Thus, the focus is set on younger cohorts aged between 19 and 29 years, as the shift of traditional values towards expressive and post-modern values centred upon personal lifestyle choices is most evident in this age group. Selecting young interviewees from the University respondent platform therefore resulted in more reflective and meaningful interpretations of 'experts' in the field of self-presentation. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that the homogeneity of the sample also limits the generalisability of the findings: Even though the focus on young, educated Western tourists provides a valuable insight to this specific group of people, the results of this study cannot unequivocally be applied to the larger population of tourists.

Relying on interpretive methodologies, this study centralises subjective meanings and perceptions of tourists and seeks to unveil their own perceived usage of and self-expression through material souvenirs in real life-settings. Despite the focus on perceived self-expression, the interview should not solely be disembodied and de-materialised, but take into account the socio-materialistic experience that souvenirs bring about. The self-expressive agency of humans is 'co-constituted by various material agencies, of clothing, tools, objects, paths, buildings, machines, paper, and so on. And thus we have never been simply 'human'[…]' (Büscher and Urry, 2009: 100). Consequently, respondents were asked to 'collect those things that strongly remind you of a holiday and that are something very special to you. Please assemble those items that directly come into your mind when thinking about your most cherished souvenirs' (Invitation message). Further, the definition of a souvenir was left to the interpretation of respondents: 'A "souvenir" you can take to the interview can be anything – there is no right or wrong. Just make sure that it is a material item that you brought from a holiday and that you sometimes come across in everyday life'. This open definition enabled interviewees to focus on material things related to

tourist experiences that hold significant meaning to them and are of relevance for the purpose of this highly interpretive study.

The interview guide was structured in three main blocks of questions. The first block of the interview guide began with an open question, namely '*Tell me about your souvenir*', which often resulted in long narratives from respondents. Follow-up questions concerned the time, place and rationale of the souvenir purchase, the current usage, placement and conspicuous display of souvenirs to others and other peoples' reaction to the souvenir display, be it compliments or resentments. A third block of questions focused on the values and roles assumed to be represented through the souvenir. Here, the aim was to tap into the manner and interpretation of self-messages and self-revelation through souvenirs. Therefore, this block constitutes the main section of the interview, unveiling the way in which souvenirs reveal messages about their holder.

Materially enriching the interview 'enabled access to participants' in-the-moment experiences' (Dowling et al., 2016: 4), as they cause deep and meaningful recollections of the travel experience within respondents. The sensory experience of holding a souvenir, touching the material and sensing its smell or sound induced long narratives after the first open question of the interview guide was posed. Through the presence of the souvenirs during the interviews, respondents were reminded of their trip, the time and place of souvenir purchase, the everyday usage of souvenirs and situations of talking to social others about a specific souvenir. Including souvenirs in the interview situation is a means of tackling the 'major research challenge to get inside such private worlds […] through often complex and difficult conversations' (Büscher and Urry, 2009: 107).

Data analysis

Data was analysed following Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Even though the literature review brought about a number of expected contents of self-expression through touristic souvenirs (Correia and Moital, 2009), this coding procedure for data analysis was selected due to its openness for new concepts emerging from the data, and in order to enable a constant comparison of codes, and to maintain theoretical sensitivity and analytical induction (Boeije, 2014; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The axial coding process resulted in the concept of 'self-revelation' emerging as the key category, around which the remaining codes were analysed in the selective coding procedure. This approach enabled an exploratory analysis of the data and the completion and integration of concepts for self-expression through the tourist experience additional to the values suggested by Correia and Moital (2009) and aspects of self-signification (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005). However, the reviewed literature introduced some self-expressive values assumed to be conveyed through souvenir display, so these theoretical backgrounds were kept in mind and later related to the findings resulting from data analysis.

Data collection was completed after 19 interviews, when a point of saturation was reached and codes repeatedly appeared without new content coming forth during the interviews (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The 19 interviewees were all of German nationality and aged between 19 and 29 years, with the sample exhibiting an average age of 21 years. Concerning the gender split in the sample, 11 interviewees were female, and 8 interviewees were male. In total, 93 souvenirs were brought to the interviews, with each respondent bringing between 3 and 8 cherished touristic remnants. Out of the 93 souvenirs, 76 have at some point actively been shown to friends, family, visitors or study colleagues. With this study focussing specifically on self-expression, the 17 souvenirs that were not presented to anyone before were ruled out for data analysis.

As neither the number, nor the type of souvenirs was specified in the interview invitation, a variety of material objects were brought. The souvenirs all hold special symbolic value to their owners and are bound up with positive memories and emotions. Table 4 exhibits the types of souvenirs, their current usage and location, and the type of holiday they were taken home from.

Table 4 - Overview of analysed souvenirs

	Analysed souvenirs	
	(%)	*N*
Type of souvenir		
photos (print)	34.2	26
clothing/jewellery	25.0	19
interior decoration	18.4	14
articles of daily use	14.5	11
information brochures and tickets	7.9	6
total	100	76
Location		
displayed at home	53.9	41
worn on the body	26.3	20
stored for usage	15.8	12
memory box	3.9	3
total	100	76
Type of trip		
year/semester abroad	32.9	25
city trip	23.7	18
family holiday	19.7	15
round trip	14.5	11
ski trip	2.6	2
other	6.6	4
total	100	76

A large part of the souvenir sample consists of printed photos. Even though photos are not a typical kind of souvenir, the 26 photos were all printed and mostly framed, thus constituting material objects as opposed to merely digital photos. Further, 19 articles for self-decoration like clothing and jewellery were brought, which were obviously worn on the body of participants as mobile souvenirs that can be noticed by others at the given time the tourist decides to wear them. The 14 items of interior decoration were objects like blankets, paintings, figurines and small statues. All these items were placed at a prominent location at home and also shown to visitors to represent the tourist experience. The 11 articles of daily use were keychains, glasses and cups or sports gear and were placed according to their function – stored in the kitchen cupboard or used during sports classes. The smallest cluster consists of material reminders of touristic attractions or activities, like information brochures and flyers, entrance- and flight-tickets. These were either pinned on a wall, and 3 of them were stored in a memory box for future presentation.

Concerning the types of trips the souvenirs were taken home from, a large part, namely 25, were brought back from a year or semester abroad. Considering the sample of respondents, this is not surprising as many students engage in a year away from home after finishing school, and these experiences are intensively bound up with emotions and the construction of personal identity (Noy, 2004). Another 18 souvenirs were taken home from city trips of short duration, 15 from a family vacation, 11 souvenirs were acquired during a round trip to different cities, and 2 souvenirs were brought from ski trips. Another two items were taken home from a honeymoon and 2 souvenirs were parts of a collection from different types of trips.

4.1.4 Results

Souvenirs' level of conspicuousness

Overall, tourists clearly evaluate the level of prestige potentially garnered by the display of their souvenirs and reflect on the way in which they are positioned and displayed to social others. The conspicuousness of a souvenir is subject to the tourists' perception. There appears to be a clear distinction between 'showing off' and 'revealing' self-messages through tourist experiences. This distinction is closely linked to the place and placement of souvenirs: Tourists contemplate the relevance and meaning of a holiday, subsequently decide on the placement of each souvenir (Peters, 2011) and make assumptions on the souvenirs' level of conspicuousness. Those souvenirs with substantial meaning for the holder are presumed to be displayed more candidly and conspicuously than those with little or shallow meaning. This is also a matter of the souvenirs' material agency, as perceived by their owner, and their assumed capability to attract attention of social others (Walsh and Tucker, 2009). The same type of placement of souvenirs is interpreted differently depending on the subjective meaning ascribed by the tourist.

A number of souvenirs were deliberately displayed to be noticed by an audience as large as possible: *'I am kind of showing it [a painting] off, because I hung it centrally into my room. And I am asked about*

it a lot, because people want to know who [the person is] and where [it] [the background] is. And then I love talking about it. I really like that, which is why it is hanging on my wall as an eye-catcher' (Petra). At the same time, however, some souvenirs placed at a similar location were not assumed to hold a high level of conspicuousness: *'Well, it [bow-tie] is hung up centrally above my bed. When I look at it actively, I think about the trip, but I don't look at it every time I go to bed. You sort of overlook the things [in your room] that never change. You don't notice them as much anymore'* (Sina). Even though both souvenirs were displayed centrally on a wall, their level of conspicuousness is interpreted differently by their owners and is highly dependent on the subjective meaning ascribed to the item. This goes in line with Peters' (2011) findings that regardless of the perceived symbolic values of souvenirs, the level of conspicuousness of souvenirs is not dependent on the placement itself, but on the interpretation of the level of conspicuousness on the side of the tourist.

Some souvenirs were not considered to convey meaningful self-messages, while others even became a characteristic that a tourist is identified with by social others. Hannes' cappy from Australia serves as a unique feature and even gave rise to a soubriquet. *'And when I was new at University, I was [called] "the guy with the Australia Cap" when people didn't know my name. People sort of defined me by it, because apparently the most prominent feature that I had was that cappy'* (Hannes). On the other side, Wencke, who wears her Canada shirt relatively often, states that: *'I think it is pretty inconspicuous. [People just think]: Okay, she is wearing a Canada shirt'.* Thus, even though both souvenirs are able to reveal the tourist experience and are regularly worn by their owners, they appear to hold varying levels of conspicuousness and representativeness.

Some souvenirs are also not displayed just after the holiday trip, but are collected for future presentation. *'I really kept this [football ticket] as a memento. And then I also found it cool that when I have children, I can show it to them. I think it doesn't have a material value for anyone, but as I said my kids might be happy about it.'* (Dennis). As such, a souvenir does not only express messages about the 'current' self, but also signifies what a tourist wants to represent in the future. This relates to Goffman's (1959) idealised role and Higgins (1987) idealised self, whereat the tourist reflects upon potential future selves and depicts the holiday experience as a feature for future identity consolidation.

Expressing character traits

Tourists make use of souvenirs to express their perceived character traits. The character traits are hereby just as diverse as the tourists themselves: Souvenirs are symbols of interpersonal differences; their meanings are related to the individual identity and perceived singular experience of the tourist. Reoccurring concepts in data analysis concern adventurousness, spontaneity, sentimentalism, practicality, perseverance, straightforwardness and hedonism – traits that encompass typical notions of holiday travel as an escape of the ordinary or a sacred period of time (Graburn, 1989). The self-revelation expressed by each souvenir is closely related to either perceived characteristics of the tourist experience or to characteristics of the item itself. This shows that, to make use of souvenirs for self-presentation,

tourists have to engage in multiple reflective processes of representation: Meaning has to be reciprocally ascribed to the tourists' self-concept, the travel experience and the souvenir.

Souvenirs are metaphors and meaningful symbols for self-identification with personal characteristics. During a holiday, Franziska found that a sailing boat is a self-representative metaphor, stating: *'It is kind of like, the symbol says a whole lot about me, because it shows that I love to be on the move, and discover new things. This metaphor behind it, too, that I like to leave safe harbour, I'd say. […] That is also why I got a tattoo of it after the holiday'*. In this, a necklace with a sailing ship pendant symbolises venturesomeness and openness for novelty. This openness for adventures can also signify a daring character: '*It [a bow-tie] symbolises my interest in other cultures. And also […] it kind of shows that I dared to go there. […] It really took some overcoming, and I did it anyways because it interested me so much*' (Sina). This character trait emerged as an intended self-revelation of many souvenirs, as they express '*[…] that I like getting out of Europe sometimes*'(Jonas), or '*that I love travelling and getting to know new things'* (Wencke). Here, the perceived characteristics of the holiday are internalised as a personal character trait and projected onto the souvenir, which serves as a vehicle to represent the intended self-message and idealised tourist role.

Another character trait emerging from the data is sentimentality and a proclivity for nostalgia. For example, Jonas states: *'It [flyer] expresses, that I keep some really trivial things. So maybe I am a little nostalgic – which I am – and yes, that's what it expresses'* (Jonas). Petra's friendship bracelet signifies '*that many things are important to me. So for one, it is the memory of the trip, and also that I cherish my friends. I think that's what it would express about me*', and therefore addresses her sentimentality. With many souvenirs, especially printed photos, tourists intend to express the fact that they are very caring of relationships or have a friendly and loving character. This goes in line with the expression of social affiliation towards travel companions suggested by Correia and Moital (2009). The importance placed on relationships is represented by many souvenirs, exemplified by statements like: '*I think it [printed photo] shows what I am like in my relationships*' (Franziska); or '*it [printed photo] shows that I am a family person'* (Dennis). These self-expressions address personal characteristics of the tourists rather than characteristics of the touristic product itself, setting focus on people rather than place.

Other souvenirs are expressive through their function. Finn anticipates about his pocketknife: *'About me personally, yes. It says that I like to be prepared for everything, for every possibility. And also that I don't like planning everything, but that I am more of a practical kind of guy'*. Here, the knife is a practical item, revealing the practical nature and straightforwardness of its holder. The meaning is ascribed to the item itself rather than the travel experience; however, narratives are still closely linked to the holiday: *'I took it to some festivals, and when we used it I also told the story behind it and where it is from*' (Finn).

Linking this finding back to prestige foundations, the character traits represented by souvenirs address the charisma dimension regarding personal 'central features of a man's existence and the cosmos in

which he lives' (Shils, 1968: 107). The he display of souvenirs serves the purpose of identity construction and self-extension (Belk, 1992) as tourists shape self-perceptions and express these perceptions through souvenirs. The reflective process of respondents in terms of value ascription was specifically interesting with regards to character traits: Meaning is ascribed to the tourist experience, the tourist experience is attached to the self-concept, and the souvenir brought home from the trip is seen to symbolise both the experience and the self-concept. Even though souvenirs were identified as 'signifiers of self' (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005) before, character traits were never specifically exposed as part of this signified self in the tourism literature and bear numerous leverage points for further research into touristic self-expression.

Expressing social affiliation

Another prevailing self-revelation is the affiliation to a social group expressed by souvenirs. This concerns either the relationship and affection towards travel companions, or the belonging to certain interest communities, also termed 'neo-tribes' (Cova and Cova, 2001; Thompson and Holt, 1996).

Regarding the relationship to travel companions, souvenirs reveal the tourists' love and affection towards the people they travel with. This is not far-fetched considering that the sample implied a lot of holiday photos depicting traveller and companions, which are often printed and displayed at home. Franziska states: '*This photo makes me very happy, especially because of my friend. We had just moved to different cities. And because of that it is a memory that we had a good time together even though we don't see each other that often anymore. [...] I think it shows what I am like in my relationships. Here, it shows a very deep friendship that I really cherish and want to maintain'*. Displaying the souvenir, she expresses the way in which she appreciates friendships and cherishes the time spent together. For Timo, a souvenir table tennis ball reveals his pride of being a member of a narrow circle of friends: '*It kind of makes me proud somehow. Having a group like that, that I went on a holiday with. I mean nothing specific happened that I could be proud of, but that I was there with an awesome group like that'*. Therefore, the self-revelation signified through souvenirs is closely connected to the social value of a trip (Correia and Moital, 2009), deepening relationships and immersing the tourist into a group of travel companions.

Social affiliation is also expressed through souvenirs regarding the belonging to a neo-tribal community. Such neo-tribes are groups of people 'held together through shared emotions, styles of life, new moral beliefs and consumption practices' (Cova and Cova, 2001: 67), also termed the linking values of such communities. This linking value is subject to change, is inherently fluid and allows members to be part of numerous neo-tribes at once, such as the communities of surfers, snowboarders, hippies or backpackers. Neo-tribes are often analysed through a lens of postmodern consumption (Cova and Cova, 2001), whereat the value of specific products is not reduced to the mere use-value but is seen in numerous ideological and emotional linking values. Holiday travel, through its ability to arouse memorable emotions and affective states, appears as an optimal product for such social affiliation in

neo-tribal communities. Hannes refers to a keychain as a symbol of his belonging to the neo-tribe of the surfers. *'Mentawai [Indonesia] is a small and popular archipelago among surfers, because it has a lot of good waves. […] And it's truly off-grid. And people say either 'Oh, where is that from?' or, in case they are surfers, too, [they say] 'Oh Mentawai, have you been there?' […] So, people can infer that I am a surfer-dude'.* Here, the keychain is a symbol that only members of the community in question can accurately interpret: Only surfers know about the peculiarity of Mentawai and its ideological implication and linking value for the surfers' community, whereas outsiders of the tribe do not know the meaning and value of this particular destination. Hannes herein interprets the souvenir keychain as a symbol of neo-tribal consumption, signifying his affiliation to the neo-tribe of the surfers and expressing his affiliation to this community to others.

Evidence of 'having been there'

Souvenirs are also signifiers of travel biography, manifesting the fact that a tourist has actually physically been to a destination. As such, a souvenir provides proof of the tourists' travel accomplishments at different destinations (Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2015; Wilkins, 2011). This is closely related to either conspicuous or unique values of holiday travel suggested by Correia and Moital (2009).

The conspicuous value of holiday travel derives from a 'Veblenian' travel motivation (Correia and Moital, 2009: 19) signalling and representing financial wealth through conspicuous consumption of a tourist destination. Among others, Sofia is well aware of this aspect: '*It [beach towel] tells others a lot about me on different levels. Just the fact, that I had the possibility to go to Costa Rica at the age of 13 shows that I am quite privileged and that I was lucky*'. This does not imply that a souvenir as a piece of travel evidence is always consciously displayed to represent financial wealth; however it is an aspect that tourists are often aware of and sometimes actively express when exhibiting souvenirs.

Displaying various souvenirs from the same region, Birgit anticipated the unique value of her travel experiences in South America as a self-revelation performed through her collection of souvenirs. '*It reveals that I was there. And I think you can see that in my room. My friend also told me that when she visited my home. She said I really have a theme there, because there is so much stuff from the South American area, because I have been there a lot. You can really see it*'. Birgit's collection of Southern American souvenirs becomes a theme in her apartment, and represents the unique value of her meaningful relationship to the region as a proof of her travel experience.

Michaela also focuses on the conspicuous and unique value of her experience in Italy, even though she did not particularly enjoy the experience at the time. '*In retrospective, I reckon it is pretty cool to have seen an Italian opera in Italy. Being able to say that about myself and having experienced it. At the time, it was just an annoying event that my parents dragged me to. It isn't special or unique for an Italian, but here in Germany, for me or others, it is something unique*'. Even though Michaela did not participate

in the activity for prestige enhancement, the value she ascribes to it has changed over time (Collins-Kreiner and Zins, 2011) and now holds a unique value for her, proving that she has been to an Italian opera in Italy. She ascribes meaning to the souvenir posterior, even if the experience did not hold particular hedonic value at the time.

The uniqueness of a tourist experience is closely linked with its prestige-worthiness and its conspicuous value. It addresses the prestige foundation of achievement (Wegener, 1992), implying that going to a specific destination is somewhat of a conquest made by the traveller, and being able to consume a specific – unique – travel destination is a prestigious performance, and a self-expression mediated through display of souvenirs.

4.1.5 Theoretical implications and limitations

Theoretical implications

This study examined touristic self-expression through souvenir display with a focus on positive self-presentation regarding the prestige motivation to travel. The expressed self-messages as well as the level of a souvenirs' conspicuousness are determined by the perception of the tourist: Individual ascription of meaning and the relative importance of the holiday affect the way in which tourists intend to express self-messages through a souvenir to social others for positive self-presentation and prestige enhancement.

The ascription of meaning

The findings enhance the understanding of tourisms' impact on the traveller's idealised self-concept as a precondition for positive self-presentation through souvenir display. Considering Belk's notion of the extended self that 'we are the sum of our possessions' (1988: 139), the study offered an insight into the reciprocal process of appropriation and attachment, in which the individual constructs meanings and values, and attaches this meaning to the *possession*. The attached meanings and values are also appropriated, namely embedded in the personal interpretation of an individuals' self. For positive self-presentation, an 'ideal self', that embodies one's hopes, aspirations, and wishes (Higgins, 1987) is constructed.

The tourist experience is especially interesting in this context: It is a product that is constituted by an intangible experience so that a number of self-reflective thought processes and value ascriptions are required from travellers. For one, the tourist needs to reflect on and ascribe individual meaning to the travel experience itself, and deliberate on the capacity of the tourist experience to reflect the self-concept and an idealised touristic role. Further, the souvenir needs to represent the tourist experience and its perceived values respectively. At last, the souvenir is used to represent the perceived self-concept attached to the tourist experience. This shows, how 'the world of meaning that we create for ourselves, […] creates ourselves' (Rochberg-Halton, 1984: 335) in turn. As such, this study enhances our

understanding of reflective performances of value ascription to the tourist experience, to the self-concept, and to the souvenir as a material representation of both tourist experience and self-concept.

Holiday travel has emerged as an expedient product for identity consolidation and positive self-presentation. Through the reciprocal reflective ascription of meaning, travel experience can represent character traits and moral beliefs, commitment to relationships and social belonging to specific groups, and our experience with the world. It therefore is a versatile product with perfect prospects for self-expression. Hence, souvenirs are more than a collection of reminders: They materialise ideological values we hold about ourselves and the symbolic meanings ascribed to travel experience, and serve as a medium to represent these values and meanings to others.

The self-expressive value of souvenirs

The study found empirical evidence of symbolic values attached to souvenirs derived from the literature, such as social affiliation (Correia and Moital, 2009; Paraskevaidis and Andriotis, 2015) into in-groups and neo-tribes and a tangible evidence of having been to a destination (Swanson and Timothy, 2012) in terms of an achievement or a symbol of financial wealth (Pappas, 2014). Additionally to these previously established values, souvenirs serve the purpose of consolidating and communicating character traits to social others. Tourists make use of souvenirs to express what they are like as a person and to reveal personal moral virtues with touristic self-expression. In this study, the picture of adventurous, open-minded, extroverted, and practical tourists was represented, but also sentimental and melancholic personality traits were expressed by souvenirs. Thus, the types of self-messages found were related to prestige foundations of prosperity, experience and social belonging (Domanski, 2015), achievement and charisma (Wegener, 1992).

Concluding, this study exposed an important utility of travel souvenirs. Depending on the individual subjective meaning ascribed to a holiday and the tourist's self-concept, souvenirs are a vehicle for self-expression and positive self-presentation. The findings added to the discussion of souvenir expression, provided empirical evidence on intended self-presentation of tourists making use of their souvenirs for social prestige enhancement, and exposed some concrete values addressed when people represent their travel experience. Positive self-expression is a need that grows more important in the ongoing course of individualisation (Inglehart and Oyserman, 2004; Krings, 2016). This study has shown that the symbolic meanings of souvenirs as representations of travel experience enable tourists to reflect on and communicate self-concept, idealised touristic roles and symbolic beliefs to social others.

Limitations

Self-expression through souvenirs is deeply entangled with subjective meanings and values attached to the travel experience. Even though reflective self-presentation is a performative act determined by individually and socially ascribed roles and values (Azariah, 2016; Goffman, 1959), it is apparent that we do not reflect upon how we present ourselves in each and every moment of our lives. 'Activity or

inactivity, words or silence all have message value: they influence others and these others, in turn, cannot not respond to these communications and are thus themselves communicating' (Watzlawick et al., 2007: 275). In other words: We communicate ourselves to others, even if we do not mean to do so.

The present study set focus on tourists' personal reflection on what their souvenirs tell others about them. For most items in the sample, messages were actively constructed and reflected upon, whereat other souvenirs were not actively shown to anyone and were therefore ruled out for data analysis; however participants were conscious that any souvenir tells others something about them. Thus, even though not all souvenir display is actively and reflectively conducted, tourists are aware of the fact that their behaviour is noticed and valuated by social others.

This study set focus on a small, homogeneous group of young tourists, who are presumed to be 'experts' in the field of self-presentation due to the rise of self-expression values in this age group (Inglehart, 2008; Orehek and Human, 2017). Therefore, the picture drawn of touristic self-presentation through souvenirs in this study is limited to interpretations of young, Western students and cannot be unequivocally applied to the larger population of tourists. As different kinds of people engage in different types of tourism (Dolničar, 2004) and younger tourists differ in their behaviour from older ones (Carr, 2002; Lawson, 1991; Pizam et al., 2004), further research into other cohorts could expose additional aspects of self-presentation through souvenir display.

At last, it needs to be taken into account that the prestige motivation is a subordinate travel motivation. It can hardly be assumed that people travel primarily for self-enhancement and prestige gain (Crompton, 1979; Veblen, 1899), but it is rather a consequence of personal ascription of meaning and importance toward the travel experience, as well as involvement with holiday travel that leads people to hold this travel motivation and conspicuously display souvenirs in their everyday life. In short: People actively represent what is of personal value to them. If a trip is not considered special, souvenirs are rarely actively displayed. Further research should also focus on the perception of the social environment and investigate whether intended self-messages actually reach their audience. This would be a leverage point for an examination of actual prestige effects of tourist experiences.

4.2   The impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on tourists' personal prestige– an experimental study

Impact Statement: This article contributes to the discussion of socio-psychological effects of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on customer benefits of leisure travel. It exposes possible impacts of the pandemic on tourism's value for conspicuous consumption and prestige enhancement. A decrease of customer benefits can ultimately affect tourist motivations, consumer decision-making and behaviour, and is therefore highly relevant knowledge for the tourism industry. The paper underlines the impact of the pandemic and changes in public discourse on basic social processes beyond questions of economic effects.

Abstract

Purpose: The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has drastically affected the public discourse on tourism in news reporting and on social media, potentially changing social perceptions of travel and its utility for conspicuous consumption. Prestige enhancement is a common tourist motivation, yet, as tourists have been portrayed as irresponsible and even dangerous during the pandemic, benefits of travel for personal prestige may have been affected. The purpose of this study is to monitor changes in tourists' personal prestige during the early pandemic in 2020.

Design: We developed an innovative study design implicitly measuring personal prestige of tourists shown on experimentally manipulated social media posts. Three measurement waves were issued to compare personal prestige of tourists just before, during, and after the first lockdown situation in Germany.

Findings: Differences regarding evaluations of tourists' prestige were found for prestige dimensions of hedonism, achievements, wealth and power, suggesting that prestige ascription to tourists has been affected by the changing discourse on leisure travel.

Originality: This article contributes to the discussion of socio-psychological effects of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on customer benefits of leisure travel. It exposes possible impacts of the pandemic on tourisms' value for conspicuous consumption and prestige enhancement.

Keywords: prestige enhancement, tourism discourse, pandemic, Covid, social effects

4.2.1 Introduction

With the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and the shutdown of international tourism in 2020, the public discourse on leisure travel has drastically switched focus across the globe. The restriction of tourist arrivals in many countries (Salcedo et al., 2020), the depiction of tourists as potentially dangerous and infectious carriers of the virus (Wilson and Chen, 2020), and public discrimination of travelers at tourist destinations (Janke, 2020; Karkossa-Schwarz, 2020) have been central topics on international news and on social media, so that the public discussion on tourism has shifted from positive to negative perceptions in a short period of time. News headlines coining tourists as 'irresponsible' (Lemkemeyer, 2020), 'antisocial' (Skowronek, 2020), or even 'terrifying' (Rappold, 2020) exemplify such negative portrayals of tourists, which can possibly change the way 'the tourist' is perceived, and consequently alter tourist motivations and benefits of travelling in the future.

Leisure travel has long been a form of conspicuous consumption in pursuance of prestige benefits (Veblen, 1899). Prestige enhancement is both a frequent motivation to participate in leisure travel and a perceived benefit of travelling (Bui and Trupp, 2019; Correia and Moital, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Riley, 1995). Usually, changes in prestige benefits of product types occur within processes of long-term societal changes (Bourdieu, 1984; Domanski, 2015). Yet, the vigorous impact of the pandemic on international tourism and the change of public discourse raise the question, whether this will lead to a change of the perception of travelling and resulting benefits for consumers (Zheng et al., 2020): The danger of infection, responsibility for spreading a disease, and increasing tension between local residents and tourists could change the perception of mass-travel participation (Zheng et al., 2020). Travelling, and what it means to be a tourist, may be regarded differently in a pandemic or post-pandemic era (Zenker and Kock, 2020), potentially also diminishing the role of travel as a form of conspicuous consumption. On the other hand, the factors leading to the prestige power of travel like experience or wealth did not suddenly vanish and are still present.

This paper aims to answer the main research question, whether the presentation of travel experience has an effect on the evaluation of tourists' personal prestige. Additionally, we monitor changes in prestige evaluations at three timepoints of the pandemic, in order to examine the effect of changing public discourse on the customer benefit of prestige enhancement. In two studies, we developed a scale measuring personal prestige and an innovative experimental design testing prestige of tourists shown on social media posts with manipulated photographic backgrounds at different timepoints of the ongoing pandemic. As data was collected just before, and during the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany, it offers the one-time chance to analyze changes in prestige benefits of travel during different stages of a crisis. Results show differences in a number of personal prestige dimensions depending on the type of tourist destination and the timepoint of the pandemic. This paper adds to the discussion of socio-psychological effects of leisure travel, and more specifically exposes possible impacts of the global crisis on travel's value for conspicuous consumption and prestige benefits.

4.2.2   Literature Review

Self-extension and prestige benefits

The idea that leisure activities play a role in the social exchange of esteem and prestige has long been established (MacCannell, 1976; Veblen, 1899). The basic assumption underlying prestige benefits in consumer research is that the purchase and consumption of products can enhance one's social esteem through self-extension. Presuming that 'we are the sum of our possessions' (Belk, 1988: 139), personal belongings can help in the construction and management of self-identity. Self-extension is not limited to tangible products only, but involves the integration of both tangible and intangible product characteristics through cognitive and social processes (Belk and Hsiu-yen Yeh, 2011; Sartre, 1943). The tourist experience, as an essentially intangible product, offers leverage for different strategies of self-extension and functions as a vehicle for conspicuous consumption in many ways.

The self is organized in multiple layers (Belk, 1988) with the most basic distinction in levels of self-constructs being self-identity and social identity. Concerning social identity, leisure consumption functions as a vehicle for affiliation into social in-groups (Han et al., 2010) such as 'the backpackers', (Riley, 1988), 'the adventurers', 'green travelers' (Week, 2012), or the 'elitist tourists' (Correia et al., 2016). Empirical research into social identity and prestige enhancement coined the term 'bandwagon effects' (Leibenstein, 1950) in which consumption serves social immersion. On the other hand, consumption helps to construct self-concept and distinction of the self from social others. In this way, conspicuous consumption leads to so-called 'snob effects' (Leibenstein, 1950). The tourist experience is used to self-extend through symbolization and materialization of perceived personal traits. This, in turn, assumes that prestigious properties are also ascribed to its possessor. While research has found ambiguous results regarding the one-to-one ascription of commodities' characteristics toward their owner (Belk, 1988), it is not far-fetched that, as travel decisions entail a high level of self-involvement (Kyle et al., 2007), they represent personal traits of the traveler to others.

Social distinction works through the accumulation of cultural, social, economic and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). The tourist experience represents all these forms of capital and hence provides multi-faceted opportunities for social differentiation, reflecting cultural and language learning, mobility, financial resources, social relationships as well as symbolic and moral values. Altogether, we know that consumption patterns serve as a vehicle for self-extension and prestige enhancement through the symbolization of different types of capital, and the tourist experience is a perfect means to represent personal capital in pursuance of prestige.

There is no universal apprehension of prestige-worthy consumption, as subjective interpretations of socially constructed values shape individual perceptions of prestige-worthy behaviour. The habitus, 'a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170) is acquired and formed during socialization processes and reflected through lifestyle choices and

consumption patterns slowly changing within economic and societal changes (Bourdieu, 1984; Lee et al., 2014) or over the life-course of a person (Chatterjee and Scheiner, 2015; O'Regan, 2016). Thus, changes in the perception of a product's prestige-worthiness occur gradually, which is also the case for the tourist experience (Urry and Larsen, 2011). Yet, the question arises whether radical changes in public discussions on a product would also result in changes of the perception of consumers of the respective product. In this case, the relation between travel and tourism and the spreading of the virus together with the negative depiction of leisure travel in the news during the pandemic might impact the perception of prestige-worthy tourism behavior, and respectively evaluations of 'the tourist'.

Travel prestige in tourism studies

Even though prestige research has a long tradition in tourism research, empirical studies into measurable prestige benefits of leisure travel remain scarce and only a partial picture has been drawn of the phenomenon so far. Early research has largely focused on psychological needs and travel motivations, finding that tourists participate in leisure travel for personal ego-enhancement (Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994), self-evaluation (Crompton, 1979), personal rewards (Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987), or self-development (Cohen, 1979; MacCannell, 1976). As a result, there is an extensive body of literature examining subjective perceptions of the prestige motivation to travel.

The more recent studies examining prestige benefits of leisure travel focus on tourists' subjective interpretations rather than social effects of enhanced prestige through travel participation. Bui and Trupp (2019) find that tourists understand travel as a means of representing social, cultural and economic capital and gain a sense of achievement through leisure consumption. Further, tourists display travel experiences with a clear intention to positively self-present and enhance personal prestige (Kuhn, 2020). Bui and Wilkins (2017) examine perceptions of young Asian travelers during their holidays and depict social distinction as a subjectively perceived imagination. They further suggest future research to analyze post-travel evaluations as well as social effects regarding distinction.

Others investigated characteristics of tourism products and prestige-worthy consumption choices. For example, the destination, its distance from home, the exoticness of the local culture, or overall expenditure are variables expressing social status (Pappas, 2014). Boley et al. (2018) examine the social response toward a trip to Cuba, focusing on the prestige-worthiness of a specific destination, and Correia and Kozak (2012) determine factors contributing to the prestige of the Algarve area in Portugal. These studies explicitly ask respondents to evaluate prestigious characteristics of destinations, so that results give insight to prestige of tourism products rather than tourists themselves.

A crucial limitation of research into prestige benefits of travelling is its vulnerability for response bias. The usage of suggestive study methods explicitly asking respondents to indicate the prestige-worthiness of tourism products is common in most studies toward the phenomenon (Boley et al., 2018; Correia et al., 2016; Correia and Kozak, 2012; Pappas, 2014). Thus, there is no insight to prestige ascription to

tourists so far. Previous research has focused on either motivational aspects, subjectively perceived prestige benefits of tourists or on social evaluations of tourism products. Yet, the question, whether the social environment ascribes prestige to tourists due to travel experience has widely been neglected, posing a critical knowledge gap in the field. The first assumption tested in this study is that travel experience affects evaluations of tourists' personal prestige. We hypothesize:

H1: There is an effect of travel experience on the perceived personal prestige of a tourist.

Corona pandemic and travel prestige

International crises like the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic might negatively impact perceptions of tourism and respectively affect tourist motivations and benefits of prestige enhancement in the future. Of course, the role of the tourist is not unequivocally that of a prestigious person. The tourist has been described as 'a metaphor for shallowness, contamination, and inauthenticity' (Week, 2012: 186), and this metaphor gained prominence with the course of the pandemic. Apart from the public discussion on the pandemic's impacts for the tourism industry from an economic stance, headlines on tourists' role in the global dispersion of the virus repeatedly appeared in the media and reinforced negative perceptions of tourism and tourists. This leads to the question, whether the recent discussion on the pandemic and tourism has reduced prestige benefits and intensified the negative notion of contaminated and infectious tourists.

Usually, the general assessment criteria for personal prestige, such as achievements, wealth, or authority remain stable over time (Bourdieu, 1984), but they are estimated based on particular situations and contexts (Domanski, 2015: 58). With the outbreak of Covid-19, this context has changed for leisure travel worldwide, and the public discussion on the pandemic and tourism has rapidly induced the usual long-term changes of prestige assessment criteria. Suddenly, travelling appeared as a dangerous activity putting tourists at risk of catching or dispersing SARS-CoV-2 (Huynh, 2020). The notion that travelling implies danger is not new, and has previously been linked to positive attributes like adventurousness and thrill-seeking (Bansal and Eiselt, 2004; Houge Mackenzie and Hodge, 2019). Yet, this positive implication of risk and leisure travel has shifted due to the negative illustration of leisure travel in times of the pandemic. While adventurousness and thrill used to be positive connotations of travelling, the risk and danger of travel during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has essentially flipped these positive connotations toward the negative.

The re-opening of the borders for international tourists fuels concerns about negative effects on tourism like a reputational crisis, host–guest conflicts, and xenophobia (Kock et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2020). As a result, people's perception and response to tourists might change in the future. 'Specifically, some destinations (e.g., Austria, Italy, Spain, New York or parts of China) were suffering from high infection rates, and this may have altered the images that potential tourists attribute to them' (Zenker and Kock, 2020: 2). Considering Belk's theory of self-extension, these altered images of destinations would be

attributed to tourists travelling to those regions and would diminish the prestige-worthiness of leisure trips to these areas.

Further, tourists were recurrently held responsible for the global dispersion of the virus (Wilson and Chen, 2020), deeming them 'guilty' for irresponsibly spreading the disease. Tourists were held accountable for either taking the virus abroad and endangering the local community at the destination (Farzanegan et al., 2020) or of bringing the virus home and exposing the population at home (Rachmawati and Shishido, 2020). As such, leisure travel is depicted as an antisocial behavior, selfishly and irresponsibly putting people at risk for personal enjoyment. In this way, representation of travel experience in this time could also be perceived as arrogant and induce emotions of envy (Sung and Phau, 2019).

There were two prevailing examples in the German news: For one, tourists were blamed for the dispersion of the virus in Northern Italy (Beaumont and Sample, 2020; Merlot, 2020), and on the island of Mallorca with headlines coining: 'Since tourists celebrated without face masks and social distance, bars have to close for two months' (Dugge, 2020), or 'Corona-chaos at the Ballermann: Tourist parties without protective measures shock the Islanders' (Rappold, 2020). The German health minister explicitly commented on German 'Ballermann-tourists' and stated 'Party holidays are just irresponsible during this pandemic' (Lemkemeyer, 2020).

We assume that the rapid shift of focus in the public discussion on tourism during the SARS-CoV-2 had an impact on prestige benefits of travel to Italy and Mallorca. In this context, we expect that personal prestige of tourists travelling to Rome would exhibit significant differences before and after the pandemic outbreak, and hypothesize:

H2: The perceived personal prestige of travelers to Rome differs before and just after the severe outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in Europe.

While travelling was labelled irresponsible behavior during the ongoing pandemic, 'staying at home' became an activity with a positive connotation of social responsibility and thoughtfulness. The hashtag '#stayathome' has been shared on Instagram around 18 million times between March and September 2020. Staying at home became a socially desirable activity worth looking up to and having respect for. Although it was essentially possible to travel again with the end of the lockdown in June 2020, German politicians and other officials suggested citizens should refrain from travelling altogether, or travel domestically within Germany to minimize the risk of catching and dispersing the virus (Spahn, 2020). As a result, both the perception of what it means to participate in leisure travel and be a tourist, as well as perceptions of the tourist role have taken a dramatic turn since the beginning of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. We assume that this change in public discourse has affected associations toward

representations of travel experience online and respectively the evaluation of tourists, leading to the hypotheses:

H3: Personal prestige dimensions of a person are rated lower for travel-related representations during the pandemic crisis compared to home-related content.

H4: Personal prestige dimensions of a person are rated higher for travel-related representations with domestic destinations compared to international destinations.

Further, reports on overcrowded destinations, conflicts between hosts and guests due to lack of social distance or face-masks appeared almost daily, drawing the picture of negative and antisocial behavior of tourists. Even though domestic travel was portrayed as more responsible than international travel, reports on overcrowded domestic destinations in Northern Germany appeared in the news regularly (Amtmann, 2020; Janke, 2020). Therefore, we assume that the adherence to safety regulations, such as avoiding crowds, socially distancing or wearing a face-mask might affect the evaluation of a tourist on a social media post. We hypothesize:

H5: Personal prestige dimensions of a person are rated lower for travel-related representations with a crowded compared to a deserted location.

H6: Personal prestige dimensions of a person are rated higher for travel-related representations when a face-mask is present.

The question, 'how travel and tourism will evolve as a socio-economic activity in our society' (Gretzel et al., 2020: 188) is of major concern for the future of the international tourism industry. It is necessary to understand how a crisis can impact perceptions of what it means to be a traveler and how this affects tourist motivations and benefits with regards to prestige enhancement in the future. This highlights the importance of a deeper insight into how 'the tourist' is perceived in a pandemic era, seeing that the change of focus on tourism could impact the utility of leisure travel for prestige enhancement on a long-term basis.

4.2.3   Methods

Study design

We conducted two studies with a one-factorial design to test the assumption that travel experience affects evaluations of personal prestige of a traveller. The between-subjects factor 'travel experience' was conceptualized and operationalized in three levels, whereat operationalizations differed between study 1 (see Table 5) and study 2 (see Table 6). Additionally to two travel-related conditions, each experimental group was presented with a stimulus with a non-travel-related social media post as a zero-

condition. We performed repeated measurements at different timepoints of the pandemic development to compare effects of the changing discourse on tourism in a within-subjects design. As such, experiments are designed as a one-factorial online field experiment, with an additional examination of a natural factor, namely changing discourse during the pandemic in 2020. Questionnaires were structured in three blocks: A pre-experimental block levied sociodemographic information, followed by the experimental block, in which respondents were presented with experimentally manipulated social media posts showing fictitious persons to be evaluated regarding their personal prestige. The post-experimental block enquired personal travel behaviour and measures for data quality control.

The external frame of this experiment is the social media environment. Posting travel contents is a common tourist activity (Liu et al., 2019), and prestige enhancement is a prevailing motivation for people to share their travel experiences online (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014). The design holds characteristics of a field experiment, as participants fill in the survey online and the stimuli are designed in an Instagram format, as well as characteristics of a laboratory experiment, because stimuli were obviously manipulated, and participants knowingly participated in the experiment.

Research population

The research population consists of the Millennial generation, as this cohort is the most active in peer-to-peer communication on social media and in sharing travel-related contents (Liu et al., 2019). We drew homogenous samples, because assessments of prestige depend on interindividual differences of the evaluator (Wegener, 1992). Respondents were approached via a student research participation system at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany. The system entails 7000 students, who are incited to participate by credit points. The purposive sampling process was informed by two characteristics: For one, participants should be born between 1981 and 1996 to be considered 'Millennials', and secondly should have at least moderate involvement with leisure travel. Those participants eligible for the study were invited to a survey entitled 'Evaluation of people on Instagram' and instructed to 'evaluate people on fictitious Instagram posts only using the information they get from the post'. The experiment was framed, as participants were aware that stimuli were manipulated and digitally edited. We designed online experiments to test perceived personal prestige of tourists without explicitly disclosing the tourism context of the study in order to reduce response bias.

Variables

The independent variable, travel experience, was operationalized and manipulated through the design of the social media posts serving as stimuli. We developed stimuli using an Instagram format, which is likely to be familiar to respondents and its primary function is uploading photos and creating an online-reputation (Marwick, 2015). Faces were digitally edited into social media posts showing the same person with different tourism and non-tourism backgrounds. In order to direct respondents' focus on the

background of the photos without disclosing the tourism background of the study, we described the social media posts as 'fictitious' and 'manipulated'. The digital manipulation was realized so that the photos looked 'faked' and drew attention toward the background of the picture. In each stimulus, a comment by the person on the photo is added to direct focus on the travel context. Comments reacting on the post and the number of likes obtained were pixelated and held constant across experimental conditions.

For the operationalization of the dependent variable, personal prestige, we developed a multidimensional scale applied in the experiments. Personal prestige of tourists is conceptualized along five dimensions, namely *hedonism, social, achievements, wealth,* and *power.* As the tourist experience can characterize a traveler as fun, cheerful, and holding a positive attitude towards life (Correia and Moital, 2009), the *hedonic* dimension touches upon personal eudaemonic characteristics of a person (Parsons, 1940). The *social* dimension refers the immersion into a group of travel companions or affiliation towards consumption groups (Cova and Cova, 2001; Kuhn, 2020; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). The tourist experience can further give a sense of mastery and control (Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987), symbolize and strengthen travelers' knowledge, actions, skills, and abilities (Riley, 1995) and accordingly represent personal *achievements* as a basis of personal prestige (Parsons, 1940; Wegener, 1992). Obviously, the *wealth* dimension represents monetary resources of an individual as the economic basis of personal prestige. At last, the *power* dimension of personal prestige refers to honour and respect of a person's status (Domanski, 2015; Wegener, 1988). The tourist experience is entangled with conceptions of power-relations between actors (Beritelli and Laesser, 2011), and the tourist exerts power over host-communities and cultures (Larsen and Urry, 2011).

Items for each dimension were measured on a 7-point scale and composite indices were calculated for each of the five dimensions. A detailed documentation of theoretical backgrounds for scale development, a literature review table, and reliability and validity analyses are specified in Appendix V.I.

4.2.4 Results

Study 1

Operationalization: In order to test H1 and H2, we operationalized 'travel experience' through the photographic background pictures of a Western European, common destination for Germans to travel to (i.e., Rome, Italy) and an Asian long-haul destination that comparatively few Germans travel to (i.e. Brunei Darussalam). Additionally, the experimental zero-condition showing a person in a neutral, white room, serves as a control measurement.

Instagram posts of two fictional persona were presented to respondents, namely a young female we called 'Maddie' and a middle-aged man named 'John' as shown in Figure 3. The experimental conditions and information displayed on the stimuli are shown in Table 5. For both travel-conditions, the type of trip was described as a city trip, so that only the destination shown in the background was experimentally manipulated and all other factors were held constant.

Table 5 - Conditions of Study 1

Persona		**Stimulus 1** **zero-condition**	**Stimulus 2** **travel-condition**
John or Maddie	*condition*	non-tourism background	common destination
	geo-tag	'at home'	'Rome, Italy'
	comment	'spending a nice relaxing day at home	'Absolutely enjoying my city trip to Rome. Finally got to see the Colosseum.'
John or Maddie	*condition*	non-tourism background	unique destination
	geo-tag	'at home'	'Brunei Darussalam'
	comment	'spending a nice relaxing day at home	'Absolutely enjoying my city trip to Brunei. Finally got to see the Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque.'
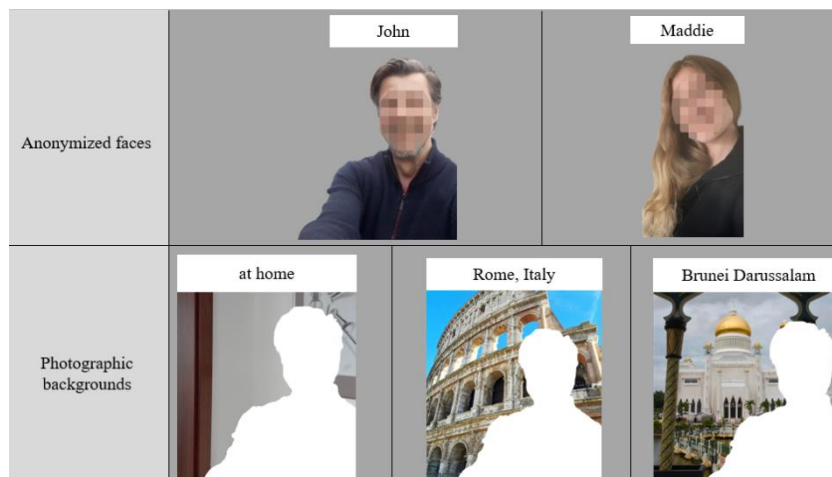
Figure 3 - Faces and backgrounds of stimuli for Study 1

Data collection and sample: Data was collected at two timepoints: The first measurement (T1) was issued in February 2020, when Covid-19 still appeared to be a remote problem to European countries and there were only few travel-related news concerning the spread of the virus. The second measurement (T2) took place during the lockdown situation in Germany in April/May 2020 when leisure travel was restricted nationally and internationally (Spahn, 2020). T1 and T2 used a related sample (Table 6), and as such allow for a direct comparison of tourists' personal prestige before the international SARS-CoV-2 outbreak and during the lockdown situation in a within-subjects analysis across measurement points.

Table 6 - Sample descriptives of Study 1

	T1		T2	
	N	*%*	*N*	*%*
measurement period	24.02. – 13.03.2020		24.04. – 18.05.2020	
gender				
female	81	80.2	55	83.3
male	18	17.8	9	13.6
diverse	2	2.0	2	3.0
age				
<20	40	39.6	27	40.9
20-25	46	45.5	28	42.4
26-30	13	12.9	9	13.6
>31	2	2.0	2	3.0
total	101	100	66	100

Data analysis and results: Hypothesis H1 was tested with analyses of variance for overall prestige and its individual dimensions. Before analysis, data was tested for normal distribution within-groups, homogeneity of variance, multicollinearity of dependent variables, and the independence of measurements to meet assumptions for analyses of variance. Results show ambiguous effects of travel experience for the two persona shown on the stimuli as presented in Table 7. Basically, there are differences between the conditions, but they are small. As expected, travel experience seems to be related to the prestige assessment, but does not cause as a singular variable.

For the middle-aged man 'John', no significant differences were found regarding personal prestige across the three experimental conditions. A closer look at the descriptive statistics shows that, for both travel-conditions, the hedonic dimension is slightly higher compared to the home-condition. Further, both the achievements and the power dimension of personal prestige are slightly lower for both travel-conditions than for the home-condition. For Maddie, both travel-conditions were rated more positively concerning the overall personal prestige, hedonism, achievements, wealth and power dimension compared to the home-condition. Here, we found significant effects of travel experience for the overall personal prestige at $F_{(2,98)}= 3.21$, $p=0.04$ with a medium effect (partial $\eta2 = 0.06$). Further, results show significant differences for the wealth dimension at $F_{(2,98)}=7.67$, $p=0.01$ with a large effect size (partial $\eta2 =0.14$). Planned simple contrasts reveal that the differences for both dimensions are significant between the condition 'at home' and 'in Brunei' ($p=0.01$). Thus, hypothesis H1 can neither be unequivocally be rejected nor accepted, as the two persona shown on the stimuli were evaluated differently concerning personal prestige dimensions depending on travel experience represented on the stimulus.

Table 7 - ANOVA results of T1

		home		Rome		Brunei				
		N = 49		N = 26		N = 26		F	sig.	partial η2
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	df = 2;98		
Persona										
John	overall prestige	4.85	0.60	4.70	0.62	5.02	0.70	1.67	0.19	0.03
	hedonism	4.92	0.74	4.94	0.70	5.24	0.82	1.64	0.20	0.03
	social	4.54	0.73	4.54	0.67	4.81	1.02	1.11	0.33	0.02
	achievement	5.14	0.72	4.83	0.79	5.09	0.98	1.29	0.28	0.03
	wealth	4.79	0.96	4.73	0.89	5.15	1.07	1.96	0.15	0.04
	power	4.86	0.79	4.46	0.88	4.81	0.91	1.67	0.19	0.03
Maddie		N = 52		N = 24		N = 25		df = 2;98		
	overall prestige	4.47	0.62	4.56	0.63	4.84	0.57	3.21	0.04	0.06
	hedonism	5.32	0.66	5.51	0.85	5.60	0.72	1.48	0.23	0.03
	social	4.91	1.01	4.63	0.83	4.97	0.69	1.10	0.34	0.02
	achievement	4.40	0.79	4.49	0.72	4.71	0.67	1.39	0.25	0.03
	wealth	3.54	0.79	3.81	0.91	4.38	1.01	7.67	0.00	0.14
	power	4.16	0.88	4.39	0.82	4.56	0.81	1.99	0.14	0.04

H2 was tested using related-samples t-tests to compare personal prestige of travelers before and during the first lockdown situation in Germany. Results in Table 8 show the differences of evaluations of tourists travelling to Rome before and after the pandemic outbreak. The descriptives show consistent differences of means between the two timepoints, whereat John's personal prestige was rated higher for all dimensions at T2, and Maddie's prestige was lower for all dimensions except for the social. Though non-significant, it is insightful to consider marginally significant values due to the small sample size. Here, evaluations of overall prestige and the wealth dimension for 'John' are slightly higher at timepoint T2. Significant differences in evaluations occur for the power dimension of personal prestige for both persons shown on social media posts. Here, the middle-aged male 'John' holds significantly more power at measurement point T2 ($t(19)$= -2.34 at p= 0.03). Interestingly, the contrary is the case for the young female 'Maddie', who holds significantly less power at T2 compared to T1 ($t(11)$= 2.28 at p= 0.04). Concluding, H2 can be accepted for the power dimension of personal prestige, whereat other prestige dimensions did not show significant differences between the two timepoints.

Table 8 - Results of related-samples t-tests (condition: in Rome)

Persona	Dimension	M T1	M T2	Diff.	t df = 19	sig.	Cohen's d
John	overall prestige	4.73	4.92	0.21	-2.04	0.06	-0.46
	hedonism	4.93	5.04	0.11	-0.76	0.46	-0.17
	social	4.5	4.63	0.13	-0.75	0.46	-0.17
	achievement	4.90	5.03	0.13	-1.81	0.09	0.18
	wealth	4.76	5.0	0.24	-1.81	0.09	-0.17
	power	4.54	4.93	0.39	-2.34	0.03	-0.52
Maddie					df =11		
	overall prestige	4.77	4.61	-0.16	0.98	0.35	0.28
	hedonism	5.85	5.73	-0.12	0.63	0.54	0.18
	social	4.98	5.13	0.15	-0.87	0.40	-0.25
	achievement	4.64	4.56	-0.12	0.28	0.79	0.08
	wealth	3.73	3.48	-0.25	0.72	0.49	0.31
	power	4.65	4.17	-0.48	2.28	0.04	0.66

Study 2

Operationalization: To test hypotheses H3 to H6, we created Instagram posts of three fictional personas, namely 'John', 'Maddie' and 'Mary' and digitally edited them in front of photographic backgrounds. The conditions and operationalizations of travel experience shown on the stimuli are shown in Table 9. The Island of Mallorca illustrates the photographic background of a popular international destination with extensive news coverage during the pandemic (Rappold, 2020; Skowronek, 2020). Likewise, the domestic destination St. Peter-Ording (at the North Sea) experienced similar news coverage and is a common destination for Germans. Additionally, we designed stimuli showing a person at St. Peter-Ording with and without a facemask present, and a person in Mallorca at a crowded location versus a deserted location.

Table 9 - Conditions of Study 2

Persona		zero-condition	travel-condition 1	travel-condition 2
Maddie	*condition*	non-tourism background	international destination non-crowded	international destination crowded
	geo-tag	'at home'	'Palma de Mallorca, Spain'	'Palma de Mallorca, Spain'
	comment	'spending a nice relaxing day at home	'Visiting Mallorca for a few days. It is really quiet here due to Corona!'	'Visiting Mallorca for a few days. It is really busy here despite of Corona!'
John	*condition*	non-tourism background	domestic destination no face-mask present	international destination non-crowded
	geo-tag	'at home'	'St. Peter-Ording, Germany'	'Playa de Palma, Mallorca'
	comment	'spending a nice relaxing day at home	'At the beach in St. Peter-Ording. What a lovely holiday!'	'At the beach Palma de Mallorca. What a lovely holiday!'
Mary	*condition*	non-tourism background	domestic destination no face-mask present	domestic destination no face-mask present
	geo-tag	'at home'	'St. Peter-Ording, Germany'	'St. Peter-Ording, Germany'
	comment	'spending a nice relaxing day at home'	'Spending a nice relaxing day at the beach! Enjoying my holiday despite Corona.'	'Spending a nice relaxing day at the beach! Enjoying my holiday despite Corona.'

Data collection and sample: Another sample from the student participation system was drawn for data collection, excluding participants of study 1. The measurement took place during the re-opening phase of – predominantly domestic – tourism in Germany in August/September 2020 using the same experimental design as study 1 and additional experimental conditions. Sample descriptives of study 2 are listed in Table 10.

Table 10 - Sample descriptives of Study 2

	N	%
measurement period	20.08. – 10.09.2020	
gender		
female	120	80.5
male	27	18.2
diverse	2	1.3
age		
<20	3	2.0
20-25	97	65.1
26-30	32	21.5
>31	17	11.4
total	149	100

Data analysis and results: Hypotheses H3 to H6 were tested with analyses of variance for the overall prestige and its individual dimensions. Results for the three persona shown on the stimuli are shown in Table 11. For John, all dimensions of personal prestige for both travel-conditions were slightly lower compared to the home-condition. A significant effect was found for the wealth dimension at $F_{(2, 146)}=4.19$, $p= 0.02$ with a small to medium effect size (partial $\eta2 = 0.05$). Planned simple contrasts expose significant differences between the home-condition and the national destination St. Peter-Ording $(p=0.01)$ as well as the home-condition and the international destination Mallorca $(p=0.01)$. Further, the means for all prestige dimensions except for achievements were slightly lower for the post showing John in Mallorca compared to St. Peter-Ording, suggesting that tourists' prestige is lower when travelling to an international destination compared to a domestic destination in times of a pandemic. These results, apart from the wealth dimension, are not statistically significant, yet there is consistent and plausible variance between the travel-conditions with regards hypothesis H4.

On both travel-related social media posts, Maddie's personal prestige was lower compared to the home-related post on dimensions of achievements and power. The effect of travel experience for the achievements dimension is significant at $F_{(2,146)}= 3.06$, $p=0.05$ with a small effect size (partial $\eta2 = 0.04$). Results of planned simple contrasts show a significant difference between the crowded destination compared to the home-condition at $p = 0.02$. All other prestige dimensions, namely hedonism, social, wealth, power, and the overall prestige were higher for the travel-related social media posts. Here, the effect is significant for hedonism at $F_{(2,146)} = 5.41$, $p=0.01$ with a medium effect (partial $\eta2 = 0.07$). Planned simple contrasts reveal that both travel-conditions differ significantly from the home-condition

(p>0.01). Further, there are small differences in prestige dimensions between the experimental conditions showing Maddie at a crowded location compared to a deserted location, implying that the crowdedness of a location does not have an effect on prestige evaluations. The social and wealth dimensions are rated slightly higher with more people in the background of the photo, yet the achievements dimension is rated lower with more people present on the social media post. For Maddie, we can conclude that H3 is true only for the achievements dimension of prestige. Hypothesis H5 is rejected based on the results of the analysis of variance for the persona 'Maddie'.

At last, H3 and H6 were tested using the stimuli showing 'Mary' at home, at a domestic destination without and without a face-mask. Mary's personal prestige is higher for the home-condition compared to the travel-conditions for all prestige dimensions except hedonism. Significant differences were found for the dimension of achievements at $F(2,146) = 4.78$, p=0.01 with a medium effect (partial $\eta2 = 0.06$), and for the power dimension at $F(2,146) = 4.93$, p=0.01 with a medium effect (partial $\eta2 = 0.06$). Planned simple contrasts show that achievements are significantly lower when a face-mask is not present on the stimulus (p<0.01), and power is rated significantly lower for both travel-conditions compared to the home-condition (p<0.05). Based on the results of evaluations of 'Mary', H3 can be accepted for the dimensions of achievement and power. Hypothesis H6 is rejected due to non-significant differences between the two travel-conditions.

Table 11 - ANOVA results of Study 2

Persona	home N = 46		national destination N = 50		international destination N = 53		F 2;146	sig.	partial η2
John	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
overall prestige	4.64	0.73	4.33	0.80	4.30	0.95	2.49	0.09	0.03
hedonism	5.04	0.80	4.96	0.99	4.93	1.12	0.16	0.85	0.00
social	4.42	0.93	4.24	1.00	4.32	1.20	0.36	0.70	0.00
achievement	4.83	0.99	4.42	1.01	4.35	1.17	2.78	0.07	0.04
wealth	4.57	1.08	3.99	0.99	3.97	1.31	4.19	0.02	0.05
power	4.36	1.08	4.04	1.06	3.93	1.09	2.10	0.13	0.03

	home N = 53		international destination (deserted) N = 46		international destination (crowded) N = 50		F 2;146	sig.	partial η2
Maddie	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
overall prestige	4.07	0.79	4.11	0.78	4.17	0.83	0.20	0.82	0.00
hedonism	4.77	1.18	5.40	1.03	5.33	0.95	5.41	0.01	0.07
social	4.53	1.02	4.54	1.12	4.83	1.04	1.24	0.29	0.02
achievement	4.14	1.00	3.80	0.93	3.66	1.08	3.06	0.05	0.04
wealth	3.25	0.97	3.38	0.88	3.52	1.09	0.94	0.39	0.01
power	3.65	0.97	3.43	0.92	3.51	1.03	0.63	0.54	0.01

	home N = 50		domestic destination (no face-mask) N = 53		domestic destination (face-mask) N = 46		F 2;146	sig.	partial η2
Mary	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
overall prestige	4.31	0.86	4.05	0.88	4.12	0.85	1.19	0.31	0.02
hedonism	4.19	1.04	4.58	1.18	4.34	0.99	1.73	0.18	0.02
social	4.11	0.84	4.04	1.08	4.10	0.97	0.07	0.93	0.00
achievement	4.47	0.99	3.84	1.04	4.21	1.07	4.78	0.01	0.06
wealth	4.52	1.18	4.24	1.28	4.14	1.27	1.22	0.30	0.02
power	4.27	1.29	3.57	1.09	3.82	1.02	4.93	0.01	0.06

4.2.5   Conclusion and Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study examined personal prestige of travellers during the progress of the global SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The assumption that travel experience affects evaluations of personal prestige was not unequivocally ascertained by the results. Yet, we found some significant differences in personal prestige dimensions depending on travel experience and the timepoint of the pandemic, suggesting that there is an effect on personal prestige. We draw three main implications that enhance scientific understanding on prestige benefits of tourism and give insights for further research into the topic.

First, results indicate that prestige evaluations are not based on a type of travel experience alone, but on the person in combination with the experience. Theory suggests that characteristics of products are attached to self-concept and represented to others via self-extension, however empirical research into the one-to-one ascription of product characteristics to people found inconclusive results (Belk, 1988, 1992). In this study, the differences in prestige evaluations were ambiguous for the different persona shown on social media posts, indicating that prestige benefits of specific travel experiences are not universal for all consumers. The fact that different people were evaluated differently in the same travel context is a sensible result: Results show that a leisure trip to Rome would induce different prestige-ascriptions toward a middle-aged man compared to a young woman. This ambiguity was also present for the power dimension of prestige of travellers to Rome measured at different timepoints of the pandemic. This suggests that there is no such thing as a universal prestige-worthy travel experience: Prestige benefits of travel are not only dependent on the travel experience itself, but on the match between the tourist and the travel experience.

Second, a comparison of prestige evaluations at different timepoints of the pandemic implies that, after months of negative discussions on tourism in Germany considering irresponsible and antisocial tourists, the prestige ascription to tourists on social media posts essentially decreased. Usually, changes in prestige benefits of product types develop within long-term societal changes (Bourdieu, 1984; Domanski, 2015; Lee et al., 2014), yet the differences in tourists' personal prestige as measured at different timepoints of the crises indicate that a rapid change of public discourse leads to a change of the perception of travelling and evaluation of tourists. Results of study 2 show that most prestige dimensions of the three personas were rated lower for social media posts with travel-content than home-content after the re-opening of the borders in August 2020. These small, yet plausible differences in personal prestige of tourists depending on the measurement timepoint during the pandemic suggest that radical changes in public discussions on tourism would also affect the evaluation of tourists. In a broader perspective, the results underline the impact of the pandemic and the measures taken against its further spread on basic social processes, far beyond questions of health care systems or economic effects.

Third, we found that the prestige dimension most affected by presentation of travel experience was hedonism. The hedonic dimension of both personas' personal prestige was rated slightly higher under travel-conditions in study 1, suggesting that travel experience serves as a symbol of hedonic values also ascribed to the tourist by the social environment. Overall, the most evident differences of evaluations of tourists' personal prestige across measurement timepoints and experimental conditions were found for the dimensions of achievements, wealth and power, and as mentioned, hedonism. Yet, the only prestige dimension consistently rated higher on travel-related posts in study 2 was hedonism, suggesting that leisure travel participation is a sign of hedonic personality also in times of a pandemic crisis.

Practical Implications

Prestige-enhancement has long been a common tourist motivation and a relevant customer expectation of leisure travel, and there is no reason to believe that this will change in the future. Seeing that a global crisis like the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and negative discussions on tourism can impact the valuation of leisure travel and implications for prestige benefits, it is crucial to examine the development of tourists' personal prestige in the near future. As stated earlier, a change in public discourse on tourist destinations heavily affected by the pandemic can alter the images that tourists attribute to these destinations (Zenker and Kock, 2020), potentially also affecting the image of tourists to those destinations (Zheng et al., 2020). Negative perceptions of destinations and tourists can result in a decrease of customer benefits which will ultimately affect tourist motivations, consumer decision-making and behavior, and is therefore relevant knowledge for the tourism industry.

Limitations and further research

This study was conducted using an innovative experimental design, and thus holds a number of constraints. For one, the scale measuring personal prestige is not ultimately validated yet. We developed the scale as a measurement tool and conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to ensure reliability and validity based on the samples used in this study. The conspicuous dimension of personal prestige had to be excluded from data analysis due to low standardized factor loadings. In doing so, the reliability of the subsequent analysis and subsequent interpretation of results is statistically ensured, however the context of conspicuousness as a relevant dimension of personal prestige is omitted.

Further, the effects of analyses of variance exposed in this study were found to be very small. We did expect small effect sizes before conducting the experiments for two reasons. For one, prestige evaluations depend on interindividual differences of evaluators. Depending on respondents' perceived importance of prestige and involvement with leisure travel, prestige evaluations with regards to travel experience might differ (Correia and Moital, 2009). To counteract this limitation, we focused on a very homogeneous population of young German students to minimize interindividual differences and measured involvement with leisure travel using the modified involvement scale (Kyle et al., 2007),

which showed similar results for the three samples. Even though the focus on a homogeneous population to reduces interindividual differences as uncontrollable factors in the experiment, the availability of respondents in the short timespans of measurement was low resulting in very small sample sizes and therefore limited statistical power ranging between 68% and 79%.

However, for very homogeneous samples, even small effects can be considered meaningful (Jawale, 2012), so we are confident the results are accurate for the examined cohort of young, Northern German students. Another reason for small effect sizes is the fact that prestige of a person is rarely attributed to only one factor like travel experience, but is dependent on a multitude of other factors like physical appearance, clothing, cultural background, profession, education and so forth. The experimental stimuli were constructed so that only information on travel experience differed between groups, random factors depending on clothing or appearance were held constant and further information on the persona presented on the stimuli, such as education, age or profession was not given. Thus, we reacted on constraints for the validity of results by selecting a very homogeneous sample and holding other factors in the experiment constant. Yet the low statistical power of the results, reflecting the multi-determination of prestige judgements, needs to be acknowledged.

Additionally, the design holds a number of limitations for internal and external validity. Data was collected in three measurement waves during an ongoing, naturally occurring pandemic, so confounding variables were controllable, which in turn reduces internal validity (Viglia and Dolnicar, 2020). To counteract this limitation, we drew homogeneous samples in order to minimize the number of potential confounding variables. Further, the experiment was framed as respondents were consciously participating, and the obviously manipulated stimuli lowered external validity.

We conclude with two suggestions for future research: For one, we suggest to put the tourist at the centre of prestige research instead of measuring prestige-worthiness of destinations or types of travel. Essentially, tourists are motivated to enhance their personal prestige and make travel-decisions respectively. Analysing whether or not a destination is perceived as prestigious does not answer the question, whether the personal prestige motivation is actually translated into measurable prestige effects. Second, we strongly advocate for non-suggestive study designs implicitly measuring prestige effects of leisure travel, as implicit study designs have the potential to expose more relevant and meaningful insights to socio-psychological prestige effects of leisure travel.

4.3 Personal prestige through travel? – Developing and testing the Personal Prestige Inventory in a tourism context

Abstract: Leisure travel has long been seen as a means of conspicuous consumption in pursuance of personal prestige, yet, there is no empirical evidence that travel affects personal prestige of tourists. The aims of this study are to develop a scale measuring personal prestige, and to experimentally test prestige evaluations based on amount of leisure information, tourism participation and different types of leisure. In an experimental online survey, 477 respondents were presented with a manipulated social media profile and asked to evaluate personal prestige of the person on the profile. Results present evidence that representation of travel experience has a positive effect on personal prestige evaluations of tourists. We found significant differences in personal prestige depending on experimental variations. This study advances methodological approaches toward the study of tourists' prestige by providing a reliable, multidimensional measurement scale for personal prestige. The findings yielded by subsequent application of the scale in an experimental setting provide empirical evidence that sharing travel experiences has measurable and experimentally testable personal prestige benefits for tourists.

4.3.1 Introduction

Leisure travel has long been seen as a means of conspicuous consumption in pursuance of personal prestige (MacCannell, 1976). Tourism researchers have exposed the prestige motivation as a frequently held motivation to travel (Correia and Moital, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Fodness, 1994), and found that the motivation is translated into subjectively perceived prestige benefits on the side of the tourists (Bui and Trupp, 2019; Kuhn, 2020).

With the rise of social media in the past decade, sharing travel experiences and uploading photos has become a habitual activity among tourists. Social media, especially platforms with the main function of sharing visual content, are increasingly used for positive self-presentation in pursuance of positive resonance and social honour (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014). The market leaders are Facebook with 2.8 billion active monthly users (Tankovska, 2021a), and Instagram with 1 billion active monthly users as of 2021 (Tankovska, 2021b). The hashtag '#travel' was among the top 20 of most frequently used hashtags on Instagram in the last five years (Best-Hashtags, 2021). The multitude of travel photos online signifies the high popularity of travel photography for both posters and audience, and is a demonstration of how frequently people make use of their travel experience to present themselves in a positive light and receive positive social return. Yet, with the abundance of travel photos online, tourists need to carefully construct self-presentation of tourist experiences for optimal distinctiveness in social groups (Brewer, 1991) and to achieve personal prestige enhancement (Lyu, 2016).

However, the focus in prestige-related tourism research was set on perspectives of tourists only, hereby neglecting the perspectives of the audience, namely the social environment of the tourist. While the prestige motivation to travel was extensively researched since the 70s (Dann, 1977; MacCannell, 1976) studies on social prestige effects of leisure travel have only recently entered the field of interest (Boley et al., 2018; Bui and Trupp, 2019). In this, mostly the subjective perception of tourists and their interpretations of prestige worthy tourism were explored, while prestige evaluations of the social environment have not been examined so far. The question whether prestige is actually ascribed to tourists depending on their leisure experiences and the way they spend their holidays poses a critical knowledge gap in tourism research.

Closing this knowledge gap is relevant for both tourism research and marketing: Seeing that prestige enhancement is a motive of many tourists for travelling and sharing their experience with others, it is crucial to know whether this expectation can be fulfilled by representations of tourist experiences. Second, as social media serve as inspiration for travel and affect the intent to travel to certain destinations (Wong et al., 2020), it is relevant to understand the social evaluation not only of an experience, but also how the consumer of the experience, the tourist, is evaluated.

Examining personal prestige depending on travel experience gives the possibility to gain insights to how the consumption of products and brands affects the social evaluation of a consumer. This paper

will bring forth two major contributions for tourism research and marketing: For one, a standardized measurement tool is developed to measure multidimensional personal prestige of individual consumers. The personal prestige inventory (PPI) is a valid and reliable scale measuring personal prestige, and is applicable both in tourism studies and in marketing research in general.

The second major contribution is the exposition of causal effects of travel representations on tourists' personal prestige, as we experimentally test personal prestige gained through travel related self-presentation on social media. Results will expose the effect of tourism participation and type of leisure presented on social media on the evaluation of tourists' personal prestige.

4.3.2   Theoretical Background

Travel prestige and optimal distinctiveness

Prestige is a means of social stratification in group identity formation (Wegener, 1992). As Brewer (1991) suggests, group identity can satisfy two basic human needs and their associated motives: the needs for social inclusion and for social differentiation. The paradox herein is that the two needs are subject to a fundamental tension of 'opposing forces' (Brewer, 1991: 477). On one hand, humans need similarity to others and inclusion to social in-groups.(Baumeister and Leary, 1995). On the other hand, there is an innate need for distinction, uniqueness and individuation within social in-groups. Each person is in a conflict in life of 'being same and different at the same time' (Brewer, 1991) to establish a state of optimal distinctiveness, an ideal state of assimilation and differentiation from social others.

Relative to the opposed needs for inclusion and differentiation, prestige works into the two contrary directions of social closure and hierarchy. The distinguishment between 'prestige as a hierarchy of positions and prestige as an attribute of socially closed groups' (Wegener, 1992: 261) harbours the struggle for the individual to self-present as a member of an in-group with perceived prestigious attributes to social out-groups, and to represent prestigious symbols to stand out within the group.

Shared symbols of consumption styles are one of the key ways to define and express group membership (Belk, 1988; Boorstin, 1973) and to obtain social prestige (Vigneron and Johnson, 1998). Consumer theorists have translated the struggle of assimilation and differentiation into two consumption motives: The snob-motivated consumers seek exclusivity, uniqueness and luxury, while the bandwagon-motivated consume to symbolize group membership and social affiliation (Leibenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). The snob motivation hereby is antecedent to the bandwagon motivation: Snob consumers seek innovation and uniqueness, so they are generally the first to consume new products while they are scarce and exclusive. Subsequently, more and more bandwagon consumers follow the lead and consume the same product for a sense of affiliation toward a high-status group (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999), which in turn decreases a products value for social distinction, usually over the course of a few years or even decades (Domanski, 2015: 13).

This process was similar for leisure and tourism participation. In the early beginning of travel in the 17th century, the Grand Tour through Europe was exclusive and restricted to only young, supposedly snob-motivated aristocrats (Hume, 2013b), and 'leisure' was a good in itself. However, in todays globalized and industrialized societies, the exclusivity of 'leisure time' is diminished: In most industrial countries, employees are entitled to vacation days off from work, so 'having spare time' in itself is not a privilege anymore. Additionally, the increased mobility of many individuals and mass-participation in tourism, the mere factor of 'taking a trip' is not special anymore. The high availability of a product in turn decreases its exclusivity and value for social distinction and affiliation (Riley, 1995; Wegener, 1988). The social group of 'the tourists' is too diverse and unspecific to facilitate neither group identity nor personal identity.

As a result, numerous consumption style sub-groups of tourists with particular shared symbols have evolved, such as 'the backpackers', 'the adventurers', or 'the luxury travellers', each of whom have a system of shared meanings and a group identity (Riley, 1988). Thus, tourist group identity and personal prestige enhancement through tourism are not a mere question of *whether* someone travels or not, but of *how* someone travels. To achieve a state of optimal distinctiveness and enhance personal prestige, the tourist needs to carefully deliberate on consumption choices and construct ideal representation of the tourist experience. Here, the struggle is to self-present in such a way that immersion into the in-group is facilitated at the same time as uniqueness within this group.

Even though there is a huge body of literature on tourism's potential for prestige enhancement and social in-group formation through shared symbols like travel photography, the question of how touristic self-presentation is perceived by social others and how prestige evaluations are based on a person's travel experience has received extremely little research interest so far. There is an abundance of scales measuring the prestige of brands and products (Vigneron and Johnson, 1998, 2004), the prestige motivation (Correia et al., 2016, 2020), or travel representations (Boley et al., 2018), yet, there is no measurement tool for the social evaluation of a consumer's personal prestige. The prestige motivation, in fact, is not only the motivation to buy a product that holds prestige, but to enhance *personal* prestige, assimilate with a specific group, and be distinct from another (Correia and Moital, 2009). To draw a more conclusive picture of how consumption of leisure leads to prestige benefits of people, we need to assess prestige of consumers, not of products. The first aim of this paper is to develop a reliable and valid, multi-dimensional scale measuring personal prestige, including both snob- and bandwagon dimensions for inclusiveness and distinctiveness. This scale will be used in an experiment to test prestige effects of different types of leisure and travel.

Touristic self-presentation on social media

Social media platforms are exceptionally useful for positive self-presentation, as they enable users to carefully construct an idealized self in role of a tourist (Goffman, 1959; Marwick, 2015; Urry and

71

Larsen, 2011) and strategically self-present through sharing stories and photos with their followers (Huang et al., 2010; Lyu, 2016). Millions of travel photos are uploaded, shared, seen, liked, and commented on every day, rendering the social media space an ideal means for touristic self-presentation in pursuance of prestige.

Positive social recognition is a prevailing motivation for people to share stories and photos of their travel experiences online (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014), and a personal social media site also functions as documentation of collected travel experience and a proof of "having been somewhere" (Lyu, 2016; Selke, 2016). Caring for and managing one's possessions also signifies their usage as a vehicle for self-extension (Belk, 1988). Therefore, a well maintained social media page with frequently uploaded content shows that a person is highly involved with the travel experience and conveys the experience to an audience in search of social resonance. Self-presentation online even appears as a personal marketing strategy, as 'attention-getting techniques employed by consumer brands have trickled down to individual users, who have increasingly […] used them to increase their online popularity' (Marwick, 2015: 138).

Social-media posts marked with a travel-related hashtags were among the 20 most frequent in 2020 (Best-Hashtags, 2021), so travel-related representations are prevailing content uploaded on social media. The abundance of repetitive travel posts might also be at the expense of their prestige-enhancing potential. The higher the availability of something, the lower the chances of gaining prestige with it (Riley, 1995; Wegener, 1988). This decrease in exclusivity due to rising availability applies to both the abundance of travel selfies online and the affordability of holiday travel. As content shared on social media becomes increasingly repetitive and banal, potential for individual self-presentation and distinction might decrease. The Instagram account 'Instarepeat' aims to reveal the repetitive and non-individualistic motives of travel photos shared on social media and collects typical images of travel representations in collages (Reuter, 2019) This banal and repetitive nature of many travel photos gives reason to doubt that positive self-presentation through travel experience online can achieve the goal of personal prestige enhancement. Rather than within-group distinction, these representations can aim at inclusion to the group of 'the travelers' and prestige evaluations based on group belongingness. This further refers to belongingness to specific consumption-style groups, also termed neo-tribes (Thompson & Holt, 1996). These consumption style groups are 'held together by shared emotions, styles of life, new moral beliefs and consumption patterns' (Cova & Cova, 2001:67).

So far, there is no evidence on how travel representations affect personal prestige of tourists, even though the prestige motivation for both travelling (Correia and Moital, 2009) and for sharing photos on social media (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014) has extensively been ascertained. The second aim of this paper is to answer the research question, whether online representations of tourist experiences lead to measurable personal prestige benefits. It further addresses the assumption that this prestige evaluation differs between the types of leisure undertaken during a vacation.

Conceptual framework and hypotheses

In order to answer our research question, we formulate three hypotheses with respective sub-hypotheses for each dimension of personal prestige.

Rationale H1: Theory suggests that the consumption of leisure has an effect on the evaluation of a consumer's personal prestige (Belk, 1988; Belk and Hsiu-yen Yeh, 2011; Veblen, 1899). This leads to the most basic assumption of this study, namely that people evaluate a person differently when they have information on how he/she spends leisure time, compared to when they lack this information. This is to be tested with the first set of hypotheses:

> **H1a-d:** Evaluations of personal prestige dimensions significantly differ depending on the amount of leisure information about a person.

Rationale H2: If consumption symbolizes prestige (Belk, 1988; Leibenstein, 1950; Veblen, 1899; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998), this should also be the case for participation in leisure travel as consumption of a product or service. Further, if positive social resonance is a consequence of tourism participation (Boley et al., 2018; Correia and Moital, 2009), the representation of travel experience should affect personal prestige evaluations. To test this assumption, we formulate the following hypotheses:

> **H2a-d:** Evaluations of personal prestige dimensions are significantly higher for content exhibiting tourism participation.

Rationale H3: Third, we assume that the way in which a person spends leisure time has an effect on evaluated personal prestige. The assumption is based on the theoretical background that, when exclusivity of a product decreases, consumption style becomes representative of status additionally to the mere consumption of a product (Riley, 1988; Wegener, 1988). Thus, as the exclusivity of travel decreased, the type of travel becomes representative of personal prestige rather than mere tourism participation (Riley, 1995). This effect is to be tested with the following hypotheses:

> **H3a-d:** Evaluations of personal prestige dimensions significantly differ depending on type of leisure.

4.3.3 Methods

Experimental design

The study is designed as an online experiment using a 2x2 factorial design with repeated-measures. The within-subjects factor, amount of leisure information, is operationalized by two stimuli – a social media profile with very little information about a person, and a photo album of the respective social media profile with leisure information about the person.

Further, two between-subjects factors with two factor levels are examined regarding their effects on the dependent variable. For one, the factor 'tourism participation' holds two levels and is operationalized as 'spending leisure time at home' and 'spending a holiday trip in Naples, Italy'. The second between-subjects factor, type of leisure, is operationalized in the two factor levels 'outdoor travel' and 'luxury travel'. The design includes a total of four experimental groups, each obtaining one manipulated condition. Participants were randomly allocated to experimental groups. The tool 'SoSci survey' (Leiner, 2019) is used to construct and issue the questionnaire. The survey is organized in three main blocks:

The first block enquires some sociodemographic information and screening questions for inclusion or exclusion of participants from the data set. The second block is the experimental part of the questionnaire. Here, the first stimulus – a main profile page of a social media profile – is shown for an initial measurement of 'personal prestige'. This stimulus is equal for all respondents and includes little information about the person, namely a photo, current place of residence and birthdate. Based on this – very scarce – information, respondents were asked to evaluate the person on the profile according to the personal prestige scale.

Afterwards, a media prime with two travel advertisements on outdoor travel and luxury travel is shown to all respondents, in order to induce associations for the types of trips presented in the experimentally manipulated stimuli. Subsequently, each respondent is confronted with a photo album of the respective social media profile showing one experimental condition, and asked to re-evaluate the person.

The third block enquires additional control variables, namely travel involvement as adapted from Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and social return (Boley et al., 2018) for the destination shown on the stimuli, along with some additional control variables for sample description (e.g. having engaged in outdoor/luxury travel before).

Scale development

Developing a scale to measure personal travel prestige is necessary for three reasons: For one, the previous one-dimensional focus on prestige benefits in tourism research resulted in a number of scales tapping into different aspects of the construct without including neither the multidimensionality of prestige, nor the two different directions of social inclusion *and* differentiation of social groups. As such, our knowledge on prestige evaluations of tourists is impartial and does not reflect research on the multidimensionality of the prestige motivation to travel (Correia and Moital, 2009; Kuhn, 2020).

Second, previous scales were focused on the prestige-worthiness of specific tourism products, namely destinations, rather than prestige of the persons, i.e., tourists, travelling to those destinations. The methodologies applied in extant research into prestige benefits of leisure travel are prone to suggestion, as respondents are explicitly asked to evaluate prestigious qualities of travel products. Thus, we do not know whether leisure travel actually contributes to enhancement of *personal* prestige. Measuring

75

prestige of people without referring to the experimental manipulation gives way to a more implicit mode of measurement. Therefore, the methodology applied in this experimental study, in addition to the newly developed scale, will enable a more thorough examination of prestige benefits of travel for the consumers.

Third, a scale for personal prestige is necessary to go beyond measures of product prestige and self-interpreted prestige of tourists. Seeing that people acquire prestigious travel products to self-present in a positive way, it appears odd that the social evaluation of travel representations has experienced such little research interest so far. The development of the Personal Prestige Inventory and its application in a non-suggestive study design will allow an answer to the question: Does travel have empirically measurable prestige benefits for tourists?

The initial item battery was developed according to the results of qualitative interviews as published in Kuhn (2020), in which positive self-presentation through the display of souvenirs was examined. Further, an extensive literature research of prestige theory (Bourdieu, 1984; Eisenstadt, 1968; Goldthorpe & Hope, 1974; Parsons, 1953; Parsons, 1937, 1940; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wegener, 1988) and existing standardized prestige scales was undertaken (Berl et al., 2019; Boley et al., 2018; Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998; Wegener, 1992). We retrieved a total of 71 items[2] from existing scales which tap into the prestige dimensions of hedonism, social inclusion, achievements, distinctiveness, wealth, and power. For a first step of item selection, repetitive items and those with low face and content validity were deleted, and those items measuring perceived quality of products were neglected (Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004), leaving 18 remaining items.

For the initial exploratory factor analysis, we collected data on a student sample of 100 participants at a German university. Additionally to the experimental stimuli shown in Figure 4, we asked participants to self-assess using the scale in the last step of the questionnaire for a test-retest reliability check. Using IBM SPSS Statistics V26 (IBM, 2019), we performed three principal component analyses with direct oblimin rotation for the measurements of personal prestige. Each analysis met the KMO criterion and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The three analyses suggest either a 4 or 5 factor solution for further consideration. Comparing test-retest reliability over the three measurements, we found plausible differences in the data depending on the object of evaluation: Participants' assessments tend to converge with increasing amounts of information provided on the person to be assessed. This became apparent as the exploratory factor analysis for self-assessment was more straight-forward and interpretable compared to the initial measurement of prestige with very little information about the person on the profile.

---

[2] See Appendix V.II

Subsequently, we went through four steps to delete items from the scale: First, we checked standardized factor loadings and deleted items with values lower than 0.51 as determined by the sample size (Kass and Tinsley, 1979). We checked for high correlations between items to reveal redundant items. For items that correlated above 0.6, we retained the item with higher face-validity. We deleted 6 items, re-ran the exploratory factor analysis with the remaining items, and extracted four factors (Table 12). A subsequent test of composite reliability showed that the deletion of additional items does not lead to an improvement of the scale. The iterated chi-square difference test for model fit shows that the deletion of additional items did not increase the adjusted goodness-of-fit index.

Table 12 – Results of exploratory factor analysis [condition: self-assessment]

Item	*factor name*	*factor loading*	*CR*	*AVE*
…enjoys life	hedonism	0.648	0.73	0.47
…has a lot of fun		0.662		
…has gained lots of experience		0.746		
…has a large friend circle	social inclusion	0.898	0.88	0.71
…is very popular		0.842		
… integrates well into a group		0.780		
…is extraordinary	distinctiveness	0.823	0.80	0.58
… stands out		0.794		
… is superior to others		0.652		
…is wealthy	prosperity	0.877	0.79	0.56
…enjoys exquisite products		0.783		
…has achieved something in life		0.544		

Following Churchill's (1979) paradigm for scale development, we collected further data on a larger sample to test scale reliability and validity with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). We sampled 477 respondents using the respondent panel 'Respondi' via the Leibniz Institute of Psychology (ZPID) and performed a CFA using IBM AMOS (Arbuckle, 2014). Results of the analysis for scale validation are shown in Table 13. Standardized regression weights for the items range between 0.52 and 0.91. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) was met for all dimensions, thus indicating discriminant validity for the dimensions of personal prestige.

Table 13 - Results of confirmatory factor analysis (travel condition)

factor name	std. factor loadings	CR	AVE
hedonism	<u>0.864</u>	0.82	0.61
…enjoys life	0.834		
…has a lot of fun	0.789		
…has gained lots of experience	0.709		
social inclusion	<u>0.845</u>	0.83	0.63
…has a large friend circle	0.781		
…is very popular	0.905		
… integrates well into a group	0.672		
distinctiveness	<u>0.750</u>	0.81	0.59
…is extraordinary	0.754		
… stands out	0.870		
… is superior to others	0.663		
prosperity	<u>0.375</u>	0.80	0.59
…is wealthy	0.949		
…enjoys exquisite products	0.774		
…has achieved something in life	0.522		

Model fit: $\chi^2(df) = 576.896(50)$**; CFI = 0.819; RMSEA = 0.154

Stimuli

A fictitious social media profile of a person named 'Julia' was digitally edited using a Facebook format. The first stimulus shows a main page of the profile, including a photo, name, age and place of residence. On the subsequent page of the questionnaire, two stereotypical advertisements for holidays (outdoor travel and luxury travel) as they would appear on social media are shown, in order to induce thoughts on travel in respondents. Further, for the second experimental stimulus, we created four variants of a photo album including experimentally manipulated photos with leisure content. Five manipulations were realized on each stimulus to operationalize the two between-subjects factors. Each of the stimuli shows an album title and 4 photos of leisure content, namely 'accommodation', 'transportation', 'activity' and 'food', which differed between experimental groups. The content of each photo album is described in Table 14. Photos for the stimuli were established according to Kerlinger's (1973) max-min-con principle. They were selected to be a) as similar as possible in terms of content, colour, and perspective in order to minimize error variance, and b) as expressive as possible in terms of leisure content, in order to maximize experimental variance. All stimuli were pre-tested using the free associations method. All stimuli, including the advertisements, were pretested with the free associations method.

Table 14 - Factor levels and content of stimuli

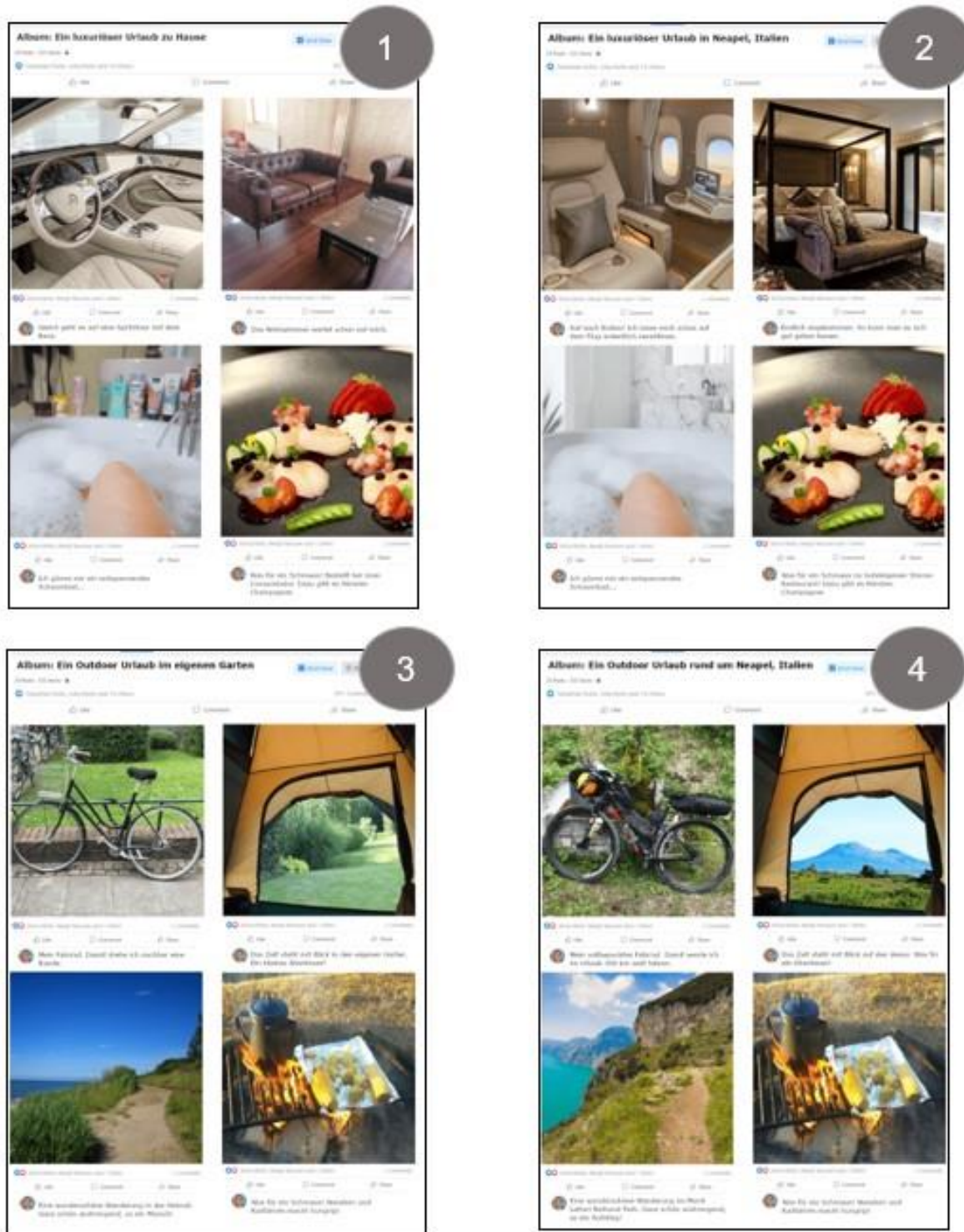|	Factor: tourism participation			
	No, at home		Yes, trip to Italy	
Factor: type of leisure	*outdoor*	*luxury*	*outdoor*	*luxury*
album title	"An outdoor holiday in my own garden"	"A luxurious holiday at home"	"An outdoor holiday in Naples, Italy"	"A luxurious holiday in Naples, Italy"
accommodation	tent with garden view	luxurious living room	tent with view on Vesuvio	luxurious hotel room
transportation	city bike	luxurious car interior	trekking bike with baggage	first class flight seat
activity	hiking trail 'at home'	wellness/bathtub	hiking trail in Italy	wellness/bathtub
food	barbeque	fine dining	barbeque	fine dining

Figure 4 - Overview of experimental stimuli[3] (Chapter 4.3)

---

[3] Top left: luxury condition/no tourism participation; top right: luxury condition/tourism participation; bottom left: outdoor condition/no tourism participation; bottom right: outdoor condition/tourism participation

Participants

As the reliability and validity of the developed scale was proven for the sample of 477 respondents with a CFA, we decided to use the same data set for hypothesis testing, which will further give insights to the nomological and criterion validity of the scale. In order to be eligible for this study, participants need to satisfy four criteria: a) born between 1981 and 1999, b) frequent user of social media websites, c) gone on holiday within the last three years and at least moderate involvement with leisure travel, d) resident to a Northern German federate state. The age range of 22 to 40 years was chosen because participants should belong to the Millennial generation, be experienced social media users and be full of age and able to make their own travel decisions. The criterion of residency ensured a similar financial understanding of the costs of travelling the distance to Italy and a similar cultural interpretation of Naples' 'exoticness' as a destination (Pappas, 2014). The sample descriptives are shown in Table 15.

Table 15 - Sample descriptives for hypothesis testing

	N	*%*
gender		
female	339	75.8
male	108	24.2
total	447	100
age group		
18-25	91	20
26-30	109	24
31-35	148	33
36-41	99	22
total	447	100

Data analysis

Before hypothesis testing, we tested for assumptions of normal distribution both at item level and for composite indices using the z-test, for homogeneity of variance using Levene's test, for equality of covariance matrices using Box's tests. For some dimensions, normality and equality of covariance matrices were violated. However, analyses of variance are robust for non-normally distributed data when group sizes are roughly equal. For the interpretation of results, we refer to Greenhouse-Geisser corrected values, which are more conservative to react to the violation of equality of covariance matrices.

Hypotheses were tested using a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA with the within-subjects factor 'amount of leisure information' and two between-subjects factors, 'tourism participation' and 'type of leisure'. We interpret critical F-values and respective p-values using traditional thresholds for interpretation of hypotheses. Additionally, we examine partial eta² for an assessment of the effect size.

4.3.4 Results

Results show significant differences in a number of prestige dimensions depending on amount of leisure information, tourism participation and type of trip. Descriptive statistics of prestige measurements,

namely means and standard deviations, as well as a demarcation of significant differences are shown in Table 16. Exact F-values, indicators of significance and effect sizes of partial eta² are presented in Table 17.

Table 16 - Results of analyses of variance: means and SDs indicating significance level

			tourism participation			
			no		yes	
	amount of leisure information		type of leisure		type of leisure	
condition	no leisure information available	leisure information available	outdoor	luxury	outdoor	luxury
	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)	mean (SD)
hedonism	**5.12** [a] (0.92)	**5.61**[a] (0.99)	**5.54** [b] (1.01)	**5.32** [b] (1.03)	**5.93** [b] (0.85)	**5.66** [b] (0.97)
social inclusion	**5.04** [a] (1.01)	**4.68** [a] (1.10)	4.67 (1.00)	4.49 (1.15)	5.01 (1.02)	4.56 (1.16)
social distinctiveness	**3.56** [a] (1.03)	**4.11**[a] (1.19)	3.87 (1.12)	4.08 (1.29)	4.20 (1.13)	4.26 (1.19)
prosperity	**4.17** [a] (0.89)	**4.79** [a] (1.34)	**3.78** [c] (1.00)	**5.40** [c] (1.17)	**4.00** [c] (0.97)	**5.77** [c] (0.98)

[a] highly significant differences supporting H1 a - d
[b] highly significant differences supporting H2 a
[c] significant differences supporting H3 d

The within-subjects factor 'amount of leisure information' has a significant effect on all dimensions of personal prestige. These effects are highly significant at $p < 0.001$ with large effect sizes of partial eta² ranging from 0.11 to 0.27. For all prestige dimensions except for social inclusion, personal prestige is higher when leisure information is provided. This indicates that sharing information on leisure and travel behaviour increases prestige for tourists and serves the function of social distinction. The presentation of travel experience online does affect how tourists' personal prestige is evaluated, and it does make a difference whether online users know whether another person travels compared to having very little information about the person. We can therefore accept hypotheses H1a-d. Here, the effects are positive for the dimensions of hedonism, social distinctiveness and prosperity. Interestingly, the social inclusion dimension was negatively affected by representations of travel experience in this sample. This might be due to the fact that sharing leisure information online is seen as 'bragging' (Kerr et al., 2012), inducing a perception of another person as more distinctive rather than assimilated to social others.

Further, the question of whether someone travels or decides to spend a vacation at home has an effect on prestige evaluations of hedonism. The factor 'tourism participation' has a significant positive effect on prestige evaluations of hedonism at $F=7.26$, $p=0.007$ with a small effect of partial eta² = 0.02. As such, the presentation of travel photos abroad contributes to personal prestige in terms of hedonism compared to photos of leisure time spent at home. A traveller is evaluated as more fun, experienced and in-love-with life compared to someone who does not participate in tourism and spends vacations at home. We can therefore accept hypothesis H2a.

For both travel conditions of luxury travel and outdoor travel, the prosperity dimension was rated slightly higher compared to the leisure condition at home. The difference is non-significant at F=2.91, p=0.089, yet the trend of differences between means indicates that travelling is seen as an expensive product, signalling financial wealth of a person. The luxury condition was plausibly rated higher overall, and also the difference between travel and home condition was slightly higher for the luxury condition (.37) compared to the outdoor condition (.22).

The type of leisure presented on a social media post has a positive effect on evaluations of personal prestige in terms of prosperity at F=133,74, p<0.001 with a large effect of partial eta²= 0.23. Plausibly, the prosperity dimension of personal prestige is rated much higher for luxury leisure and travel compared to outdoor leisure and travel. The difference is 1.77 for the luxury and outdoor travel condition, and 1.62 between the luxury and outdoor home condition. We can therefore accept hypothesis H3d, and reject H3a, b, and c.

Overall, the results of our hypotheses tests have shown that the amount of leisure information, tourism participation and type of leisure presented on social media have significant effects on evaluations of personal prestige dimensions. Here, the effect sizes of 'tourism participation' and 'type of leisure' are relatively small compared to the effect sizes of 'amount of leisure information'.

Table 17 - Results of analyses of variance: F and eta² indicating level of significance

dimension	*amount of leisure information*		*tourism participation*		*type of leisure*	
	F	partial eta²	F	partial eta²	F	partial eta²
hedonism	161.96**	0.27	7.26**	0.02	1.00	0.00
social inclusion	55.32**	0.11	1.76	0.00	1.97	0.00
social distinctiveness	125.00**	0.22	0.56	0.00	1.78	0.00
prosperity	141.08**	0.24	2.91	0.01	133.74**	0.23

Greenhouse-Geisser corrected values are reported

*significant at p<0.05

**significant at p<0.001

4.3.5   Discussion and Implications

General discussion of results

The present study has shown that travel experience has an effect on personal prestige evaluations of a tourist, and thus established first empirical evidence that sharing travel experiences has measurable and experimentally testable personal prestige benefits for tourists. Here, the factor with the highest influence on personal prestige evaluations was the amount of leisure information given about the person on the social media page. This shows that the presentation of leisure information has an effect on personal prestige evaluations of other people, and it makes a difference whether people share their travel and leisure experience with others. Sharing information about travel or leisure experience gives social others

a hint and some directions to evaluate a person, compared to when this information is lacking, and it affects how they subsequently assess personal prestige.

Further, the most apparent differences in prestige evaluations depending on type of leisure, namely luxury travel or outdoor travel, were found for the dimension of prosperity. Even though previous research found that tourists attach symbolic self-values and intend to represent them to others (Kuhn, 2020), the perception of the different types of leisure by the social environment online here becomes apparent in the economic capital symbolized by the way in which someone spends time. The selection of luxury and outdoor leisure might have inflated this difference, yet this methodological decision was intentionally made to maximize experimental variance (Kerlinger, 1973).

Finally, the question of whether someone decides to participate in international travel or not has an effect on personal prestige in terms of hedonism. In the experiment, the person shown on the social media posts was rated as more fun, in-love-with life and experienced compared to posts showing leisure time spent at home. As such, travel experience serves the function customer prestige benefits in relation to hedonic personal characteristics. This paper has shown that travelling, and sharing travel experience with others, affects how we are perceived by our social environment and has shown that tourism holds empirically measurable prestige benefits for consumers.

Theoretical implications

This study was one of the first to experimentally *personal* prestige of tourists depending on travel experience, instead of the widely applied strategy of measuring perceived prestige-worthiness of tourism products. The methodology is innovative and lead to the establishment of a parsimonious, reliable and valid scale to measure personal prestige. The results have exposed the prestige-enhancing customer benefit of leisure travel. Evaluations of personal prestige are affected by the representation of travel experience, showing that this long-time assumed benefit of leisure travel is existent not only as a motivational variable, but as a an empirically measurable effect in the social environment.

The unique contribution, not only to tourism research but marketing research in general, is the Personal Prestige Inventory (PPI). The PPI includes four dimensions of hedonism, social inclusion, social distinctiveness, and prosperity, and entails two opposing directions of prestige, namely social immersion and differentiation. It can therefore assess bandwagon- and snob-effects of consumption at the same time, however individual dimensions would have to be interpreted in relation to the product and person the measurement is conducted with.

The prestige motivation to travel, enrooted in tourism research since the1970s, suggests that tourist participate in travel and make specific travel decisions with prestige-motives in mind (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Fodness, 1994). The effect exposed in the experimental setting reported here shows that informing others about personal travel experience is related to a change in prestige perception. Selfie-

taking and posting during holiday has become habitual (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Urry and Larsen, 2011), and is not necessarily related to the motivation of enhanced prestige. So, as people share travel experience online by habit, they might not expect their personal prestige to be affected, yet it inevitably will be assessed by others. Therefore, the effect of altered personal prestige through travel does not only strike those who are motivated by prestige motives, but everyone who shares personal travel experience with others.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

In the results of our experiment, neither tourism participation, nor type of leisure, have a significant effect on distinctiveness nor social inclusion. As such, the function of sharing travel and leisure experience online for social immersion and differentiation is not exposed by our results. This might support the idea that, as leisure travel is an available resource to most of the respondents in our sample, the exclusivity and prestige-worthiness of travel is not perceived by participants, and goes in line with previous arguments on decreasing prestige-worthiness due to higher availability of a product (Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). However, some of the open comments have shown that respondents already perceived the person on the social media page as self-portraying, conspicuous and distinctive. Thus, the experimental manipulation might have not made a difference because participants already perceived the person as socially distinctive beforehand.

Additionally, the stimuli constructed for hypothesis testing were limited to showing one young Northern German person in two leisure conditions, luxury and outdoor leisure, in Naples or at home, and the results did expose significant effects on evaluations of personal prestige. Yet, this effect cannot be generalized for other types of people, too. For example, if the outdoor holiday in Naples would have been combined with a 70-year-old woman, the measurements of personal prestige depending on the experimental conditions might have taken completely different turns.

Type of leisure and tourism participation were of course only one aspect of many that respondents made use of to evaluate the person on the social media page. When a tourist represents travel experience, the audience will always evaluate multiple determinants before making up an opinion (Gordon, 2017). Gender, age, culture, clothing, physical appearance, occupation, voice and multiple other characteristics are assessed at the same time, most of them unconsciously (Bourdieu, 1984). When evaluating a person, travel experience is only one of multiple factors considered, and will only contribute to small changes in personal prestige evaluations.

It will further be interesting to apply the scale to different types of people and a wider range of types of leisure or product types. Finally, the herein developed PPI can be used not only for representations of tourist photographs, but can be applied for measurements of personal prestige of consumers of wide ranges of products. Ultimately, insights into prestige-motivated consumption need to be supplemented

with research tapping into the social perception of consumers', not products, to draw a full picture of customer prestige benefits.

5   Discussion and Conclusion

5.1   Overview of Contributions

The present dissertation has made some essential contributions to the theoretical understanding and methodological research approach toward personal prestige through travel. It enhances researchers' and practitioners' understanding of personal prestige benefits of leisure travel and prepared the opportunity for further research into personal prestige benefits for consumers of a broad range of products, brands, or consumer behaviour in general. Advancing methodological approaches toward personal prestige in terms of experimental study design and the development of a standardized measurement tool for personal prestige, it provides significant contributions for further research into personal prestige through product consumption and (conspicuous) display. The results of the empirical studies add compelling theoretical insights into how consumption and representation of the tourism product can affect self-perception and social perception of tourists' personal prestige. An overview of the methodological approach, contribution and major findings of each publication is given in Table 18.

Table 18 - Overview of contributions

Publication	Methodological Approach	Contribution	Main Findings
1	qualitative, interpretive approach	Ascertainment that travel experience is used for positive self-presentation Contents of self-messages conveyed in touristic self-expression Exposition of dimensions addressed through positive touristic self-presentation; foundation for scale development	- Tourists make use of representations of travel experience to self-present in a positive way - The main aspects addressed: personal character traits, social affiliation to in-groups and neo-tribes, and to demonstrate individual travel history
2	quantitative, experimental approach	Initial development and testing of 6 personal prestige dimensions (for further scale development)	- Personal prestige evaluations of the social environment differ depending on a) public discourse; b) destination of travel representations; c) the person representing travel experience
3	quantitative, experimental approach	Finalized scale: Personal Prestige Inventory (PPI) measuring personal prestige along the dimensions of hedonism, social inclusion, social distinction and prosperity	- Personal prestige evaluations differ depending on a) amount of leisure information; b) tourism participation; c) type of leisure/travel represented

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Two major challenges of research into personal prestige as outlined in Chapter 2.1 are the consolidation of micro- and macro-level perspectives as an inherent problem of social theory (Wiley, 1988) and the dependence on the perspective taken (i.e. who perceives prestige). As a reaction to these challenges, the empirical studies of this project examine both self-perceived prestige in terms of self-messages expressed, and socially perceived personal prestige of tourists in a sequential exploratory research approach. In this way, the present dissertation has provided insightful empirical evidence enhancing theoretical understandings into a) how tourists engage in positive self-presentation through travel experience and b) how the social environment perceives personal prestige at hand of tourists' self-presentation. Together, these insights draw a basis for a more comprehensive picture of personal prestige benefits of leisure travel.

Chapter 4.1 provided answers to the research questions: "How do tourists make use of representations of travel experience (souvenirs) to self-present in a positive way?" and "What dimensions of self-messages does touristic self-presentation address?" By analysing self-expression through souvenirs, the study has ascertained that tourists attach numerous self-values to material representations of travel experience. Reciprocally, they attach perceived values to personal identity, so the attachment of values between perceived self and imagined travel experience essentially goes two ways. The study further demonstrated that travel experience is used for positive self-presentation, and sometimes even deliberate conspicuous consumption. Leisure travel is a specifically useful product for individual positive self-presentation, as its representations and narratives are in large parts 'produced' by the individual tourist. Compared to pre-produced material commodities like cars, clothing of a specific sports brand or jewellery, travel experience as an intangible product provides better opportunity for more individualised self-expression and positive self-presentation. Tourists aim to represent personal prestige in terms of character traits, affiliation to social in-groups, and individual travel history, and convey deeply emotional positive self-messages to others through the presentation of travel experience. This signifies the complexity and symbolism determining self-perceived prestige benefits of leisure travel and broaches upon the benefits that tourists get from sharing travel experience.

The Chapters 4.2 and 4.3 examined personal prestige of tourists from the other perspective, from the social environments' point of view, and were designed to answer the questions: "How can we measure personal prestige in a tourism context?", "Does the presentation of travel experience have an effect on the evaluation of tourists' personal prestige?", and "Are there measurable changes in personal prestige evaluations of tourists depending on changing public discourse on leisure travel?". Personal prestige has shown to be reliably measurable along the four dimensions of hedonism, social inclusion, social distinction and prosperity. Its subsequent application in a tourism context enhanced the scientific understanding of personal prestige benefits of travel consumption. The significant theoretical contribution herein is the consolidation of social distinction and inclusion, related to snob-effects and

bandwagon-effects of consumption (Brewer, 1991; Leibenstein, 1950; Leonardelli et al., 2010) within one empirical measurement tool. Since all human beings need to belong to a group and stand out within this group, everyone needs to be 'the same but different at the same time' (Brewer, 1991). Respectively, tourists' displays of souvenirs are intended to represent immersion into social in-groups, but at the same time represent distinction in terms of 'having been somewhere' and display of wealth and prosperity. This shows that a simplistic conceptualization of prestige as an attribute for standing out and being distinct from others falls short to illustrate the double-tracked function of conspicuous consumption. The Personal Prestige Inventory, as a reaction, addresses dimensions of both social inclusiveness and social distinction to expose bandwagon- and snob-effects of consumption.

Results of the empirical studies indicate that the dimensions of personal prestige affected by presentation of travel experience as interpreted by the tourist strongly differ from those of the social environment. While self-perceived personal prestige addresses highly emotional values, the investigation of socially perceived personal prestige has shown that the dimensions most affected by travel representations are perceived wealth and hedonism of tourists. This shows that the prestige dimensions addressed in social perception and self-perception are not necessarily corresponding. Thus, there is no such thing as a universally correct conceptualisation of personal prestige benefits of leisure travel: The dimensions of personal prestige affected strongly depend on who perceives personal prestige.

The theory of self-extension suggests that characteristics of products are attached to self-concept and represented to others, assuming that perceived characteristics of a product would be ascribed to the owner (Belk, 1988, 1992). Chapter 4.2 revealed that prestige evaluations were ambiguous for the different persona shown on social media posts, indicating that prestige benefits of specific travel experiences are not universal for different consumers, but depend highly on the type of person who purchases, experiences, or self-presents through a holiday. The finding that different people are evaluated differently in the same travel context is a sensible result: There is no such thing as the one-to-one ascription of a product characteristics to a person. Much rather than one-to-one ascription of perceived product characteristics to a person, it is the match between a person and a product that form the basis for evaluations of personal prestige. This result is very logical, if not obvious: An old man will be evaluated differently when taking an adventure holiday compared to a young man. The study has given empirical evidence for this not-far-to-seek assumption.

Against the overall background of studies into self-perceived and socially perceived prestige benefits and the findings of Chapter 4, the concluding answer to the overall research question of this thesis is the following: Personal prestige of tourists is measurably affected by the representation of travel experience, but there are differences between self-perceived and socially perceived personal prestige benefits of travel. Tourists play an active role in how they construct, represent and perceive their own prestige, and these perceptions are dependent on deeply emotional processes. On the other hand, the attribute "travel experience" is but one factor taken into account by the social environment when evaluating a tourist's

level of prestige. We can therefore assume with relative certainty that self-perceived prestige of tourists is affected to a larger extent by the representation of travel experience than socially perceived prestige.

5.3 Methodological Contributions

The Personal Prestige Inventory developed in the present dissertation is a significant methodological contribution not only for tourism research, but for other disciplines like sociology or market research as well. It is a standardized scale for the purpose of measuring *personal* prestige of consumers rather than prestige of brands or products. To summarize once again: The underlying motive of conspicuous consumption is to enhance personal prestige through the purchase and presentation of assumably prestigious products and brands (Belk, 1988, 1992; Braun and Wicklund, 1989; Veblen, 1899). It is astonishing that academic and market research has merely focused on examining perceived levels of product and brand prestige, and yet set such little interest in personal prestige of consumers. The Personal Prestige Inventory offers the opportunity to experimentally test, whether socially perceived personal prestige of consumers is enhanced through (conspicuous) consumption or display of any product, product type or brand, and in this way has made the subsequent step to establish a full picture of prestige benefits of consumption behaviour. It is a proposal to relocate the focus of prestige research onto people, not products, and provides a measurement tool applicable for this endeavour.

The experimental approach toward the study of personal prestige taken in the Chapters 4.2 and 4.3 has proven a suitable and appropriate method toward the study of personal prestige, yielding plausible results and reliable understandings of how travel experience affects social perception of prestige. Asking study respondents to evaluate a person takes focus off the product in question and sets it on to the person in question. The design has overcome the rather suggestive mode of enquiry applied in previous research studies, enables a more implicit way to measure how the feature 'travel experience' affects consumers personal prestige, and in this way limits methodological biases of suggestion regarding the product. Respondents inevitably evaluate the person with regards to multiple aspects and based on multiple values, some consciously, and others subliminally. The travel context shown on the photos in the studies conducted for this dissertation was but one aspect affecting the evaluation of the person, so that the design enabled a more implicit approach toward measuring the effect of travel experience on personal prestige. Further, the experimental context of seeing and evaluating people on photos is similar to the habitual activity of surfing on social media (Eftekhar et al., 2014), thus is a familiar situation for respondents with high external reliability. Combined with the Personal Prestige Inventory, this experimental design can give insight into personal prestige benefits of any product or brand in question. Therefore, the two publications provided a valuable methodological advancement, and a design and scale that can be applied versatilely in prestige research contexts.

5.4   Overall Limitations

Additionally to the limitations of the individual studies disclosed in Chapters 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, the methodological decisions made in the ongoing course of the sequential exploratory research project bear limitations to be kept in mind when considering the overall conclusion of this dissertation. Most importantly, it is to note that the types of travel representations functioning as objects of investigation differ between the studies issued for this dissertation. While Chapter 4.1 sets focus on material souvenirs as representations of travel experience, Chapters 4.2 and 4.3 frame social media posts as travel representations to examine the social evaluation of personal prestige. The decision to focus on two different objects of investigation bears some methodological advantages as well as limitations.

Even though the conducted studies build on each other in a sequential exploratory approach the object of investigation differ between the qualitative interview study and the experimental studies. As such, many of the inferences in Chapter 4.2 and 4.3 are based on the assumption that different types of travel representations address similar aspects of personal prestige. This might bear limitations regarding the overall conclusion that tourists' attach more meaningful values to their own representations of travel experience compared to the social environment, because the actual representation differed between the studies. A focus on material souvenirs in Chapter 4.1, however, facilitated a methodological approach capturing meaningful value ascription and self-expression, as the sensory experience of holding and touching the souvenirs activated respondents' memory of the holiday (Büscher and Urry, 2009). In this way, including material souvenirs in the interview situation increased the internal validity of the study's findings. On the other hand, aiming attention at social media posts Chapter 4.2 and 4.3 increased external validity with respect to the real-life situation of evaluating a person online.

To further counteract this limitation, a thorough literature review and review of existing scales into prestige complemented the findings of Chapter 4.1, so that the development of the Personal Prestige Inventory was not solely based on the findings of a study concerning souvenirs only but entailed a wider basis of prestige dimensions. Further, about a third of the souvenirs in the sample consisted of printed photos that might as well have been posted on social media by respondents. This further reinforces the assumption that similar prestige dimensions are addressed by different types of travel representations, though these dimensions differ between the beholders.

Another limitation is the application of the initial item battery in Chapter 4.2. The experiment does not apply the final developed scale and is limited with regards to internal validity. However, the reaction toward the external events was necessary. During the early pandemic, a methodologically clean scale development process would have been impossible due to uncontrollable interfering factors harming the validity of the developed scale (Dolnicar, 2020). Notwithstanding, the initial item battery holds appropriate model fit and reliability measures for the statistical analyses applied and yields valuable insights to a one-time research opportunity to monitor rapid changes in prestige benefits of travel.

This dissertation does not claim to have closed all relevant research gaps into personal prestige benefits of travel. The results of this research project have closed fragments of the wider gap in this field. The studies have yielded theoretical and methodological contributions which will aid further research into personal prestige benefits of travel.

5.5   Further research

The Personal Prestige Inventory developed in the course of this research project should in the future be applied toward more diverse types of consumer behaviour and conspicuous consumption. The scale provides opportunity to gain knowledge about how specific behaviours serve social inclusion and distinction and can therefore add knowledge to how the consumption of products affects evaluation of people. The experimental design proven reliable in the experiments and the developed scale for personal prestige can be applied to any type of consumer behaviour and can therefore be universally applied in other research disciplines to shed light onto personal prestige benefits of a wide range of materials or behaviours. Given the megatrend of individualisation and consumers' increasingly individualistic expectations (Hales, 2006; Krings, 2016), products that facilitate unique, self-constructed self-expression might bear advantages compared to mass-produced material items. The potential of a product for consumers to self-express should therefore be a more thoroughly studied benefit in the field of marketing research.

A specifically interesting research topic here is sustainable consumer behaviour, seeing that sustainable consumption has recently been demonstrated to be an effective tool for status enhancement (Kohlovà and Urban, 2020). The growing societal awareness about climate change and tourisms' contribution to it might also impact the way in which tourists are evaluated, or evaluate themselves, which might in turn affect tourism decision-making. And the other way round: Marketing could nudge people into travelling sustainably by the value proposition of enhanced personal prestige and contribute a small part to the overall improvement of tourisms' sustainability. Conspicuous consumption of sustainable travel has already entered the field of research interest (Beall et al., 2021), and an evaluation of personal prestige of sustainably travelling tourists should be a subsequent step.

This leads to the question of how prestige benefits of leisure travel might evolve in the future. I would like to conclude with a personal deliberation on the prospects for prestige benefits. With growing awareness for tourisms' contribution to climate change, one could assume that the image of "the tourist" and implications on prestige benefits might decline and people could even be ashamed of travel (Mkono, 2020). I rather expect that travel experience will continue be a useful and popular product for people to self-define and self-express. Representations of travel experience will endure as part of our everyday-lives, photos will be shared online, friends and family will talk about their last trip, and souvenirs will pass us by. The changing discussion about tourism might impact the image of tourists in the long run, but this might also bear a chance: If more sustainable modes of travel are to become more popular,

marketing communication addressing personal prestige of tourists regarding sustainable travel behaviour might be one nudge to change consumer behaviour in tourism.

6 References

Amtmann K (2020) Viele Anrufer melden täglich Corona-Verstöße per Notruf. *Merkur.de*, 20 May. Available at: https://www.merkur.de/bayern/corona-bayern-notruf-nachbarn-denunziation-soeder-polizei-verstoesse-abstand-zr-13753571.html.

Anderson LF and Littrell MA (1996) Group profiles of women as tourists and purchasers of souvenirs. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* 25(1): 28–56.

Arbuckle JL (2014) Amos. 23. Chicago: IBM SPSS.

Azariah DR (2016) The traveler as author: examining self-presentation and discourse in the (self) published travel blog. *Media, Culture and Society* 38(6): 934–945. DOI: 10.1177/0163443716664483.

Bansal H and Eiselt HA (2004) Exploratory research of tourist motivations and planning. *Tourism Management* 25(3): 387–396. DOI: 10.1016/S0261-5177(03)00135-3.

Barkow JH (2014) Prestige and the ongoing process of cultural revision. In: Cheng JT, Tracy JL, and Anderson C (eds) *The Psychology of Social Status*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, pp. 22–46. DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4939-0867-7.

Baumeister RF and Leary MR (1995) The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin* 117(3): 497–529. DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497.

Beall JM, Boley BB, Landon AC, et al. (2021) What drives ecotourism: environmental values or symbolic conspicuous consumption? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 29(8). Routledge: 1215–1234. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2020.1825458.

Beaumont P and Sample I (2020) From confidence to quarantine: how coronavirus swept Italy. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/10/from-confidence-to-quarantine-how-coronavirus-swept-italy (accessed 15 April 2020).

Belk R and Hsiu-yen Yeh J (2011) Tourist photographs: Signs of self. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 5(4): 345–353. DOI: 10.1108/17506181111174628.

Belk RW (1988) Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research* 15(2): 139–167. DOI: 10.1086/209154.

Belk RW (1992) Attachment to possessions. In: Brown BB, Altman I, and Werner CM (eds) *Place Attachment*. New York: Plenum, pp. 37–62. DOI: 10.1016/B978-0-08-047163-1.00543-9.

Beritelli P and Laesser C (2011) Power dimensions and influence reputation in tourist destinations: Empirical evidence from a network of actors and stakeholders. *Tourism Management* 32(6). Elsevier Ltd: 1299–1309. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.12.010.

Berl RE (2019) *Prestige: Concept, Measurement and the Transmission of Culture*. *Colorado State University*. Colorado State University.

Berl REW, Samarasinghe AN, Jordan FM, et al. (2019) The Position-Reputation-Information (PRI) scale of individual prestige. *OSF Preprints*: 1–74. DOI: 10.31235/osf.io/426n8.

Best-Hashtags (2021). Available at: http://best-hashtags.com/hashtag/travel/ (accessed 1 March 2021).

Boeije H (2014) *Analysis in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Boley BB, Jordan EJ, Kline C, et al. (2018) Social return and intent to travel. *Tourism Management* 64. Elsevier Ltd: 119–128. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2017.08.008.

Boorstin D (1973) *The Americans: The Democratic Experience*. New York: Random House.

Bosangit C, Dulnuan J and Mena M (2012) Using travel blogs to examine the postconsumption behavior of tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 18(3): 207–219. DOI: 10.1177/1356766712449367.

Boudreau P, Mackenzie SH and Hodge K (2020) Flow states in adventure recreation: A systematic review and thematic synthesis. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 46. Elsevier: 101611. DOI: 10.1016/j.psychsport.2019.101611.

Bourdieu P (1984) *Distinction - A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. DOI: 10.4324/9781315775357.

Bourdieu P (1990) *The Logic of Practice*. *Polity Press*. Cambridge. DOI: 10.1007/BF00680104.

Braun OL and Wicklund RA (1989) Psychological antecedents of conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Economic Psychology* 10(2): 161–187. DOI: 10.1016/0167-4870(89)90018-4.

Brewer MB (1991) The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin* 17(5): 475–482.

Bui HT and Trupp A (2014) The development and diversity of Asian tourism in Europe: The case of Vienna. *International Journal of Tourism Sciences* 14(2): 1–17. DOI: 10.1080/15980634.2014.11434689.

Bui HT and Trupp A (2019) Asian tourism in Europe: consumption, distinction, mobility, and diversity. *Tourism Recreation Research*. Taylor & Francis: 1–15. DOI: 10.1080/02508281.2019.1634305.

Bui HT and Wilkins HC (2017) Young Asians' imagination of social distinction. *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 23(2): 99–113. DOI: 10.1177/1356766716636927.

Büscher M and Urry J (2009) Mobile methods and the empirical. *European Journal of Social Theory* 12(1): 99–116. DOI: 10.1177/1368431008099642.

Carr N (2002) A comparative analysis of the behaviour of domestic and international young tourists. *Tourism Management* 23: 321–325.

Chang J, Wall G and Chang CL (2008) Perception of the authenticity of Atayal woven handicrafts in Wulai, Taiwan. *Journal of Hospitality and Leisure Marketing* 16(4): 385–409.

Chatterjee K and Scheiner J (2015) Understanding changing travel behaviour over the life course: Contributions from biographical research. In: *International Conference on Travel Behavior Research*, London, 2015, pp. 19–23.

Cheng JT, Tracy JL and Henrich J (2010) Pride, personality, and the evolutionary foundations of human social status. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 31(5). Elsevier Inc.: 334–347. DOI: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2010.02.004.

Chiang CY and Jogaratnam G (2006) Why do women travel solo for purposes of leisure? *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 12(1): 59–70. DOI: 10.1177/1356766706059041.

Chua THH and Chang L (2016) Follow me and like my beautiful selfies: Singapore teenage girls' engagement in self-presentation and peer comparison on social media. *Computers in Human Behavior* 55: 190–197. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.09.011.

Churchill GA (1979) A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs. *Journal of Marketing Research* 16(1): 64–73.

Cohen E (1979) A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences. *Sociology*. DOI: 10.1177/003803857901300203.

Cohen M (2001) The Grand Tour. Language, national identity and masculinity. *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education* 8(2): 129–141. DOI: 10.1080/13586840120085685.

Coleman D and Iso-Ahola SE (1993) Leisure and Health: The Role of Social Support and Self-Determination. *Journal of Leisure Research* 25(2): 111–128. DOI: 10.1080/00222216.1993.11969913.

Collins-Kreiner N and Zins Y (2011) Tourists and souvenirs: changes through time, space and meaning. *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 6(1): 17–27.

Correia A and Kozak M (2012) Exploring prestige and status on domestic destinations: The case of Algarve. *Annals of Tourism Research* 39(4): 1951–1967. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2012.06.005.

Correia A and Moital M (2009) Antecedents and consequences of prestige motivation in tourism. In: Kozak M and Decrop A (eds) *Handbook of Tourist Behavior: Theory and Practice.* New York: Routledge Advances in Tourism, pp. 16–34. DOI: 10.4324/9780203881804.ch2.

Correia A, Oom do Valle P and Moço C (2007) Why people travel to exotic places. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 1(1): 45–61. DOI: 10.1108/17506180710729600.

Correia A, Kozak M and Reis H (2016) Conspicuous consumption of the elite: Social and Self-congruity in tourism choices. *Journal of Travel Research* 55(6): 738–750. DOI: 10.1177/0047287514563337.

Correia A, Kozak M and Del Chiappa G (2020) Examining the meaning of luxury in tourism: a mixed-method approach. *Current Issues in Tourism* 23(8). Taylor & Francis: 952–970. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2019.1574290.

Cova B and Cova V (2001) Tribal aspects of postmodern consumption research: the case of French in-line roller skaters. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 1(1): 67–76. DOI: 10.1002/cb.54.

Crompton JL (1979) Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of Tourism Research* 6(4): 408–424. DOI: 10.1016/0160-7383(79)90004-5.

Dann G (1977) yesAnomie, ego-enhancement and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 4(4): 184–194. DOI: 10.1016/0160-7383(77)90037-8.

Deci EL and Ryan RM (1995) Human autonomy: The basis for true self-esteem. *Efficacy, agency, and self-esteem. Plenum series in social/clinical psychology* (July 2015): 31–49. DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4899-1280-0_3.

Desforges L (2000) Travelling the world: Identity and travel biography. *Annals of Tourism Research* 27(4): 926–945.

Dolnicar S (2013) Asking good survey questions. *Journal of Travel Research* 52(5): 551–574. DOI: 10.1177/0047287513479842.

Dolnicar S (2020) Survey research in tourism: a perspective paper. *Tourism Review* 75(1): 20–23. DOI: 10.1108/TR-05-2019-0198.

Dolničar S (2004) Beyond 'Commonsense segmentation': A systematics of segmentation approaches in tourism. *Journal of Travel Research* 42(3): 244–250. DOI: 10.1177/0047287503258830.

Domanski H (2015) *Prestige*. 14th ed. Frankfurt: Peter Lang Edition.

Dowling R, Lloyd K and Suchet-Pearson S (2016) Qualitative methods 1: Enriching the interview. *Progress in Human Geography* 40(5): 679–686. DOI: 10.1177/0309132515596880.

DTA (2015) Creative marketing case study: Expedia 'Travel Yourself Interesting' shows value of expensive holidays. Available at: http://www.digitaltrainingacademy.com/casestudies/2015/04/creative_marketing_case_study_expedia_travel_yourself_interesting_shows_value_of_expensive_holidays.php (accessed 14 May 2020).

Dugge M (2020) Schock an der 'Bierstraße'. *ARD Tagesschau*, 15 July. Available at: https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/mallorca-231.html.

Eftekhar A, Fullwood C and Morris N (2014) Capturing personality from Facebook photos and photo-related activities: How much exposure do you need? *Computers in Human Behavior* 37. Elsevier Ltd: 162–170. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.04.048.

Eisenstadt SN (1968) Prestige, participation and strata formation. In: Jackson JA (ed.) *Social Stratification*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 62–103.

Elsrud T (2001) Risk creation in traveling - Backpacker adventure narration. *Annals of Tourism Research* 28(3): 597–617.

Expedia (2013) Travel Yourself Interesting. Ogilvy&Mather.

Farzanegan MR, Gholipour HF, Feizi M, et al. (2020) International tourism and outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19): A cross-country analysis. *Journal of Travel Research* 1(6). DOI: 10.1177/0047287520931593.

Fodness D (1994) Measuring tourist motivation. *Annals of Tourism Research* 21(3): 555–581. DOI: 10.1016/0160-7383(94)90120-1.

Fonrouge C and Vigneron F (2011) Luxury brand perception for an individual investor: A scale proposal. In: *International Conference Luxury and Counterfeiting*, Geneva, 2011. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.2028310.

Fornell C and Larcker DF (1981) Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research* 18: 39–50.

Gallarza MG and Gil Saura I (2020) Consumer value in tourism: a perspective article. *Tourism Review* 75(1): 41–44. DOI: 10.1108/TR-06-2019-0227.

Gandini A (2016) Digital work: Self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge economy. *Marketing Theory* 16(1): 123–141. DOI: 10.1177/1470593115607942.

Gibson C (2014) Souvenirs, materialities and animal encounters: Following Texas cowboy boots. *Tourist Studies* 14(3): 286–301. DOI: 10.1177/1468797614536333.

Gibson H and Yiannakis A (2002a) Tourist roles: Needs and the lifecourse. *Annals of Tourism Research* 29(2): 358–383.

Gibson H and Yiannakis A (2002b) Tourist roles. *Annals of Tourism Research* 29(2): 358–383. DOI: 10.1016/s0160-7383(01)00037-8.

Glaser BG and Strauss AL (1967) *The Discovery of the Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Gnoth J (1997) Tourism motivation and expectation formation. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(2): 283–304. DOI: 10.1016/s0160-7383(97)80002-3.

Goffman E (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.

Goldthorpe JH and Hope K (1974) Occupational grading and occupational prestige. In: Hope K (ed.) *The Analysis of Social Mobility: Methods and Approaches*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 19–80.

Gordon B (1986) The souvenir: Messenger of the extraordinary. *Journal of Popular Culture* 20(3): 135–146.

Gordon LR (2017) Thoughts on two recent decades of studying race and racism. *Social Identities*. Taylor & Francis: 1–10. DOI: 10.1080/13504630.2017.1314924.

Graburn NHH (1989) Tourism: The sacred journey. In: Smith V (ed.) *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 17–31. DOI:

10.9783/9780812208016.19.

Gretzel U, Fuchs M, Baggio R, et al. (2020) e-Tourism beyond COVID-19: A call for transformative research. *Information Technology and Tourism* 22(2). Springer Berlin Heidelberg: 187–203. DOI: 10.1007/s40558-020-00181-3.

Hales R (2006) The rise of individualism. The implications for promoting relations between self,others and the environment in outdoor education. *Australian Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education* 10(2): 53–61. DOI: 10.1007/bf03400839.

Han YJ, Nunes JC and Drèze X (2010) Signaling status with luxury goods: The role of brand prominence. *Journal of Marketing* 74(4): 15–30. DOI: 10.1509/jmkg.74.4.15.

Hanqin ZQ and Lam T (1999) An analysis of Mainland Chinese visitors' motivations to visit Hong Kong. *Tourism Management* 20(5): 587–594. DOI: 10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00028-X.

Hashimoto A and Telfer D (2007) Geographical representations embedded within souvenirs in Niagara: The case of geographically displaced authenticity. *Tourism Geographies* 9(2): 191–217.

Higgins ET (1987) Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review* 94: 319–340.

Hillman W (2007) Travel authenticated?: Postcards, tourist brochures, and travel photography. *Tourism Analysis* 12(3): 135–148. DOI: 10.3727/108354207781626811.

Hogan B (2010) The presentation of self in the age of social media: Distinguishing performances and exhibitions online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 30(6): 377–386. DOI: 10.1177/0270467610385893.

Houge Mackenzie S and Hodge K (2019) Adventure recreation and subjective well-being: A conceptual framework. *Leisure Studies*. Routledge: 1–15. DOI: 10.1080/02614367.2019.1577478.

Huang Y, Basu C and Hsu MK (2010) Exploring motivations of travel knowledge sharing on social network sites: An empirical investigation of U.S. college students. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management* 19(7): 717–734. DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2010.508002.

Hume D (2013a) The language of souvenirs: Three discrete groups - The sampled, crafted and representative. In: *Tourism Art and Souvenirs - The Material Culture of Tourism*. London: Routledge Tailor and Francis Group, pp. 121–175. DOI: 10.4324/9780203771488.

Hume D (2013b) *Tourism Art and Souvenirs: The Material Culture of Tourism. Routledge Advances in Tourism*. London: Routledge Tailor and Francis Group.

Huynh T (2020) The COVID-19 risk perception: A survey on socioeconomics and media attention. *Economics Bulletin* 40(1): 758–764.

Hwang J and Lee JH (2019) Antecedents and consequences of brand prestige of package tour in the senior tourism industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research* 24(7). Taylor & Francis: 679–695. DOI: 10.1080/10941665.2019.1623274.

IBM (2019) IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows. 26.0. Armonk: USA: IBM Corp.

Inglehart R and Oyserman D (2004) Individualism, autonomy and self-expression: The human development syndrome. *International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology* 93: 74–96.

Inglehart RF (2008) Changing values among western publics from 1970 to 2006. *West European Politics* 31(1–2): 130–146. DOI: 10.1080/01402380701834747.

IPA (2014) IPA Effectiveness Awards: Expedia - Travel yourself interesting. Available at: https://ipa.co.uk/knowledge/case-studies/expedia-travel-yourself-interesting (accessed 5 May 2020).

Iso-Ahola SE (1982) Toward a social psychological theory of tourism motivation: A rejoinder. *Annals of Tourism Research* 9(2): 256–262. DOI: 10.1016/0160-7383(82)90049-4.

Janke M (2020) Fühlte mich diskriminiert und wie Aussätzige: Gütersloherin spricht über Horror-Trip. *Fokus*, 26 June. Available at: https://www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/auf-usedom-fuehlte-mich-diskriminiert-und-wie-aussaetzige-guetersloherin-spricht-ueber-horror-trip_id_12146281.html.

Jawale KV (2012) Methods of sampling design in the legal research: Advantages and disadvantages. *International Interdisciplinary Research Journal* 2(6): 183–190. Available at: http://www.oiirj.org/oiirj/nov-dec2012/23.pdf.

Kapferer J-N (1998) Why are we seduced by luxury brands? *Journal of Brand Management* 6(1): 44–49. DOI: 10.1057/bm.1998.43.

Karkossa-Schwarz S (2020) Kein Tourist. Von Beschimpfungen etc. bitte absehen. *SHZ.de*, 7 April. Eckernförde. Available at: https://www.shz.de/lokales/eckernfoerder-zeitung/kein-tourist-von-beschimpfungen-etc-bitte-absehen-id27960222.html.

Kass RA and Tinsley HEA (1979) Factor analysis. *Journal of Leisure Research* 11: 120–138.

Kerlinger FN (1973) *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. 2nd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Kerr G, Lewis C and Burgess L (2012) Bragging rights and destination marketing : A tourism bragging rights model. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 19(1). CAUTHE: 7–14. DOI: 10.1017/jht.2012.17.

Kim J and Tussyadiah IP (2013) Social networking and social support in tourism experience: The moderating role of online self-presentation strategies. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 30(1–2): 78–92. DOI: 10.1080/10548408.2013.751220.

Kluth H (1957) *Sozialprestige Und Sozialer Status*. Stuttdart: Enke.

Kock F (2021) What makes a city cool? Understanding destination coolness and its implications for tourism. *Tourism Management* 86. Elsevier Ltd: 1–16. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104317.

Kock F, Nørfelt A, Josiassen A, et al. (2020) Understanding the COVID-19 tourist psyche: The Evolutionary Tourism Paradigm. *Annals of Tourism Research*. Elsevier Ltd: 140353. DOI: 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.140353.

Kohlovà MB and Urban J (2020) Buy green, gain prestige and social status. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 69.

Krings B-J (2016) *Strategien Der Individualisierung: Neue Konzepte und Befunde zur soziologischen Individualisierungsthese*. Bielefeld: transcript.

Kuhn F (2020) Conspicuous souvenirs: Analysing touristic self-presentation through souvenir display. *Tourist Studies* 20(4). DOI: ps://doi.org/10.1177/1468797620956935.

Kuhn F, Grimm B, Lohmann M, et al. (2019) *Customer Value: Persönliche Effekte von Urlaubsreisen*. Kiel.

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021a) Personal prestige through travel? – Developing and testing the Personal Prestige Inventory in a tourism context. Consumer Behavior in Tourism and Hospitality. (manuscript accepted October 6th 2022.

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021b) *Personal prestige through travel? – Testing the personal prestige inventory in a tourism context*. DOI: https://doi.org/10.23668/PSYCHARCHIVES.4932.

Kuhn F, Kock F and Lohmann M (2021c) The impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on tourists' personal prestige – an experimental study. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and*

Hospitality Research 16(1). DOI: doi.org/10.1108/IJCTHR-02-2021-0035.

Kyle G, Absher J, Norman W, et al. (2007) A modified involvement scale. *Leisure Studies* 26(4): 399–427. DOI: 10.1080/02614360600896668.

Larsen J and Urry J (2011) Gazing and performing. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29(6): 1110–1125. DOI: 10.1068/d21410.

Laurent G and Kapferer J-N (1985) Measuring consumer involvement profiles. *Journal of Marketing Research* 22(1): 41. DOI: 10.2307/3151549.

Lawson R (1991) Patterns of tourist expenditure and types of vacation across the family life cycle. *Journal of Travel Research* 29(4): 12–18. DOI: 10.1177/004728759102900403.

Lee KH, Scott N and Packer J (2014) Habitus and food lifestyle: In-destination activity participation of slow food members. *Annals of Tourism Research* 48. Elsevier Ltd: 207–220. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2014.06.009.

Lee SA and Oh H (2017) Sharing travel stories and behavioral outcomes: A case of travel. *Tourism Management* 62. Elsevier Ltd: 147–158. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2017.04.005.

Leibenstein H (1950) Bandwagon, snob and Veblen effects in the theory of consumers' demand. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 65: 183–207.

Leiner D (2019) SoSci Survey. 3.1.06. Available at: https://www.soscisurvey.de.

Lemkemeyer S (2020) Partyurlaub ist in dieser Pandemie unverantwortlich. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 15 August. Available at: https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/spahn-verteidigt-reisewarnung-fuer-spanien-partyurlaub-ist-in-dieser-pandemie-unverantwortlich/26096736.html.

Leonardelli GJ, Pickett CL and Brewer MB (2010) *Optimal Distinctiveness Theory. A Framework for Social Identity, Social Cognition, and Intergroup Relations*. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. 1st ed. Elsevier Inc. DOI: 10.1016/S0065-2601(10)43002-6.

Leopold L (1916) *Prestige. Ein Gesellschaftspsychologischer Versuch*. Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht.

Liu H, Wu L and Li X (Robert) (2019) Social mdia envy: How experience sharing on social networking sites drives Millennials' aspirational tourism consumption. *Journal of Travel Research* 58(3): 355–369. DOI: 10.1177/0047287518761615.

Liu HW, Lee M, Kan T, et al. (2011) Marketing implications of Chinese tourists motivations to visit Penghu, Taiwan. *African Journal of Business Management* 5(13): 5210–5223. DOI: 10.5897/AJBM10.1445.

Liu R and Suh A (2017) Self-branding on social media: An analysis of style bloggers on Instagram. *Procedia Computer Science* 124. Elsevier B.V.: 12–20. DOI: 10.1016/j.procs.2017.12.124.

Lo IS and McKercher B (2015) Ideal image in process: Online tourist photography and impression management. *Annals of Tourism Research* 52. Elsevier Ltd: 104–116. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2015.02.019.

Lo IS, McKercher B, Lo A, et al. (2011) Tourism and online photography. *Tourism Management* 32(4). Elsevier Ltd: 725–731. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.06.001.

Lohmann M (2017) Urlaubsmotive: Warum wir Urlaubsreisen machen – Eine „Grundsuche" auf der Basis der Daten der Reiseanalyse aus mehr als 40 Jahren. In: Pechlaner H and Volgger M (eds) *Die Gesellschaft Auf Reisen – Eine Reise in Die Gesellschaft*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 49–69. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-658-14114-1_1.

Lyu SO (2016) Travel selfies on social media as objectified self-presentation. *Tourism Management* 54: 185–195. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2015.11.001.

MacCannell D (1976) *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. 3rd ed. Berkely: University of California Press.

Mannell R and Iso-Ahola SE (1987) Psychological nature of leisure and tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research* 14(2): 314–329.

Markwick M (2001) Postcards from Malta image, consumption, context. *Annals of Tourism Research* 28(2): 417–438. DOI: 10.1016/S0160-7383(00)00049-9.

Marwick AE (2015) Instafame: Luxury selfies in the attention economy. *Public Culture* 27(1): 137–160. DOI: 10.1215/08992363-2798379.

Maslow AH (1954) *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper.

Maslow AH (1963) Further notes on the psychology of being. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 3(1): 120–135. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/002216786300300112.

McClelland D (1988) *Human Motivation*. Cambridge University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139878289.

McGloin C and Georgeou N (2016) 'Looks good on your CV': The sociology of voluntourism recruitment in higher education. *Journal of Sociology* 52(2): 403–417. DOI: 10.1177/1440783314562416.

Merlot J (2020) Why are there so many cases in Italy? Available at: https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/coronavirus-why-are-there-so-many-cases-in-italy-a-00459ce0-bea7-482e-8a77-efe618f3b06b (accessed 14 April 2020).

Mkono M (2020) Eco-anxiety and the flight shaming movement: implications for tourism. *Journal of Tourism Futures* 6(3): 223–226. DOI: 10.1108/JTF-10-2019-0093.

Moran C, Boley BB, Woosnam KM, et al. (2018) The battle of the socials: Which socially symbolic factors best predict intent to travel? *Tourism Management* 68(March). Elsevier: 324–327. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2018.03.023.

Morgan N and Pritchard A (2005) On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality. *Tourist Studies* 5(1): 29–53. DOI: 10.1177/1468797605062714.

Muecke S and Wergin C (2014) Materialities of tourism in the twenty-first century: A very brief introduction. *Tourist Studies* 14(3): 227–230. DOI: 10.1177/1468797614536307.

Munar AM and Jacobsen JKS (2014) Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media. *Tourism Management* 43. Elsevier Ltd: 46–54. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2014.01.012.

Murray HA (1938) *Exploration and Personality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Murray HA (1964) Explorations in Personality. *Journal of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment* 28(2): 172–172. DOI: 10.1080/0091651x.1964.10120115.

Noy C (2004) This Trip really changed me: Backpackers' narratives of self-change. *Annals of Tourism Research* 31(1): 78–102. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2003.08.004.

Nyffenegger FK and Steffen D (2010) Souvenirs - local messages. An exploration from the design perspective. In: *Design and semantics of form and movement*, Luzern, 2010, pp. 135–144.

O'Regan M (2016) A backpacker habitus: The body and dress, embodiment and the self. *Annals of Leisure Research* 19(3). Taylor & Francis: 329–346. DOI: 10.1080/11745398.2016.1159138.

O'Reilly CC (2006) From drifter to gap year tourist: Mainstreaming backpacker travel. *Annals of Tourism Research* 33(4): 998–1017. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2006.04.002.

Orehek E and Human LJ (2017) Self-expression on social media: Do tweets present accurate and positive portraits of impulsivity, self-esteem, and attachment style? *Personality and Social*

Psychology Bulletin 43(1): 60–70. DOI: 10.1177/0146167216675332.

Osemeke M and Adegboyega S (2017) Critical review and comparism between Maslow, Herzberg and McClelland's Theory of Needs. *FUNAI Journal of Accounting, Business and Finance* 1: 161–173.

Ourahmoune N (2016) Narrativity, temporality, and consumer-identity transformation through tourism. *Journal of Business Research* 69(1). Elsevier Inc.: 255–263. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.07.038.

Page R (2012) The linguistics of self-branding and micro-celebrity in Twitter: The role of hashtags. *Discourse and Communication* 6(2): 181–201. DOI: 10.1177/1750481312437441.

Pappas N (2014) The effect of distance, expenditure and culture on the expression of social status through tourism. *Tourism Planning and Development* 11(4): 387–404. DOI: 10.1080/21568316.2014.883425.

Paraskevaidis P and Andriotis K (2015) Values of souvenirs as commodities. *Tourism Management* 48. Elsevier Ltd: 1–10. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2014.10.014.

Parsons T (1937) *The Structure of Social Action*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Parsons T (1940) An analytical approach to the theory of social stratification. *American Journal of Sociology* 45: 841–62.

Parsons T (1953) A revised analytical approach to the theory of social stratification. In: Bendix R and Lipset SM (eds) *Class, Status, and Power*. New York: Free Press, pp. 92–128.

Pearce PL and Lee U Il (2005) Developing the travel career approach to tourist motivation. *Journal of Travel Research* 43(3): 226–237. DOI: 10.1177/0047287504272020.

Peters K (2011) Negotiating the 'place' and 'placement' of banal tourist souvenirs in the home. *Tourism Geographies* 13(2): 234–256.

Pizam A, Jeong GH, Reichel A, et al. (2004) The relationship between risk-taking, sensation-seeking, and the tourist behavior of young adults: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of Travel Research* 42(3): 251–260. DOI: 10.1177/0047287503258837.

Pyke S, Hartwell H, Blake A, et al. (2016) Exploring well-being as a tourism product resource. *Tourism Management* 55(August). Elsevier Ltd: 94–105. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2016.02.004.

Qiu RTR, Park J, Li SN, et al. (2020) Social costs of tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Annals of Tourism Research* 84(July). Elsevier: 102994. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2020.102994.

Rachmawati I and Shishido K (2020) Travelers' motivations to travel abroad during Covid 19 outbreak. *International Journal of Applied Sciences in Tourism and Events* 4(1): 1–11. DOI: 10.31940/ijaste.v4i1.1772.

Rappold E (2020) Corona-Chaos am Ballermann: Partys ohne Schutz machen Malle Angst. *Der Nordschleswiger*, 12 July. Available at: https://www.nordschleswiger.dk/de/deutschland-international/corona-chaos-ballermann-partys-ohne-schutz-machen-malle-angst.

Riley PJ (1988) Road culture of international long-term budget travelers. *Annals of Tourism Research* 15: 313–328.

Riley R (1995) Prestige-worthy tourism behavior. *Annals of Tourism Research* 22(3): 630–649.

Rocha G and Seabra C (2016) Holistic Tourism: Motivations, self-image and satisfaction. *Journal of Tourism Research & Hospitality* s2(November): 2–10. DOI: 10.4172/2324-8807.s2-004.

Rochberg-Halton E (1984) Object relations, role models, and cultivation of the self. *Environment and Behavior* 16(3): 335–368.

Rogers C (1951) *Client-Centred Therapy*. London: Robinson.

Rogers C (1959) A theory of therapy, personality and interpersonal relationships as developed in the client-centered framework. In: Koch S (ed.) *Psychology: A Study of a Science. Formulations of the Person and the Social Context*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, pp. 184–256.

Ryan RM and Deci EL (2017) *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. New York: Guilford Press.

Ryan RM and Deci EL (2019) *Brick by Brick: The Origins, Development, and Future of Self-Determination Theory*. *Advances in Motivation Science*. 1st ed. Elsevier Inc. DOI: 10.1016/bs.adms.2019.01.001.

Salcedo A, Yar S and Cherelus G (2020) Coronavirus travel restrictions, across the globe. *The New York Times*, 16 July. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/article/coronavirus-travel-restrictions.html.

Sartre J-P (1943) *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology*. New York: Philosophical Library.

Savener A (2013) Finding themselves in San Blas, Panama. In: Reisinger Y (ed.) *Transformational Tourism: Tourist Perspectives*. Oxfordshire: CABI, pp. 136–149.

Scott D (2010) What would veblen say? *Leisure Sciences* 32(3): 288–294. DOI: 10.1080/01490401003712713.

Shils EA (1968) Deference. In: Jackson JA (ed.) *Social Stratification*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, pp. 104–132.

Skowronek M (2020) Mallorca schließt alle Lokale am Ballermann wieder. *Zeit Online*, 15 July. Available at: https://www.zeit.de/wissen/gesundheit/2020-07/tourismus-mallorca-partys-schliessungen-ballermann-coronavirus-urlaub.

Spahn J (2020) Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2: Chronik der bisherigen Maßnahmen. Available at: https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/coronavirus/chronik-coronavirus.html (accessed 1 November 2020).

Stanley N (2000) Souvenirs, ethics and aesthetics: some contemporary dilemmas in the South Pacific. In: Hitchcock M and Teague K (eds) *Souvenirs: The Material Culture of Tourism*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 238–245.

Sung B and Phau I (2019) When pride meets envy: Is social superiority portrayal in luxury adverting perceived as prestige or arrogance? *Psychology&Marketing* 36(2): 113–119. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21162.

Swann W (1983) Self-verification: Bringing social reality into harmony with the self. *Psychological Perspectives on the Self, Vol. 2* (January 1983): 33–66. DOI: 10.1126/science.218.4574.782.

Swanson KK and Horridge PE (2004) A structural model for souvenir consumption, travel activities, and tourist demographics. *Journal of Travel Research* 42: 372–380.

Swanson KK and Horridge PE (2006) Travel motivations as souvenir purchase indicators. *Tourism Management* 27(4): 671–683. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2005.03.001.

Swanson KK and Timothy DJ (2012) Souvenirs: Icons of meaning, commercialization and commoditization. *Tourism Management* 33(3). Elsevier Ltd: 489–499. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2011.10.007.

Tankovska H (2021a) Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 4th quarter 2020. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/#:~:text=How many users does Facebook,the biggest social network worldwide. (accessed 21 February 2021).

Tankovska H (2021b) Number of monthly active Instagram users 2013-2018. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/ (accessed 21 February 2021).

Thompson CJ and Holt DB (1996) Communities and consumption: Research on consumer strategies for constructing communal relationships in a postmodern world. *Advances in Consumer Research Volume* 23: 204–205.

Tiefenbacher JP, Day FA and Walton JA (2000) Attributes of repeat visitors to small tourist-oriented communities. *Social Science Journal* 37(2): 299–308. DOI: 10.1016/S0362-3319(00)00063-X.

Todd S (2001) Self-concept: A tourism application. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 1(2): 184–196. DOI: 10.1002/cb.64.

Turner JC, Brown RJ and Tajfel H (1979) Social comparison and group interest in ingroup favouritism. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 9(2): 187–204. DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.2420090207.

Urry J and Larsen J (2011) *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*. 3rd ed. Featherstone M (ed.). London: Sage.

van Nuenen T (2016) Here I am: Authenticity and self-branding on travel blogs. *Tourist Studies* 16(2): 192–212. DOI: 10.1177/1468797615594748.

Veblen T (1899) *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: The MacMillan Company.

Viglia G and Dolnicar S (2020) A review of experiments in tourism and hospitality. *Annals of Tourism Research* 80. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102858.

Vigneron F and Johnson LW (1998) Measuring the amount of prestige contained in brands. In: *ANZMAC Proceedings*, Dunedin, NZ, 1998, pp. 1083–1088. University of Otago.

Vigneron F and Johnson LW (1999) A review and a conceptual framework of prestige-seeking consumer behavior. *Academy of Marketing Science Review* 1. Available at: http://www.amsreview.org/articles/vigneron01-1999.pdf.

Vigneron F and Johnson LW (2003) Consumers' need for luxury: Scale development and cross-national validation between Australia and USA. In: *Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science Annual Conference*, Washington, 2003. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-11848-2_86.

Vigneron F and Johnson LW (2004) Measuring perceptions of brand luxury. *Journal of Brand Management* 11(6): 484–506. DOI: 10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540194.

Walsh N and Tucker H (2009) Tourism 'things': The travelling performance of the backpack. *Tourist Studies* 9(3): 223–239. DOI: 10.1177/1468797610382706.

Watzlawick P, Beavin J and Jackson D (2007) Some tentative axioms of communication. In: Craig RT and Muller HL (eds) *Communication Theory*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 275–288. DOI: 10.4324/9781315080918-7.

Wearing S and Neil J (2000) Refiguring self and identity through volunteer tourism. *Loisir et Societe* 23(2): 389–419. DOI: 10.1080/07053436.2000.10707537.

Wearing S and Wearing B (2011) Conceptualizing the selves of tourism. *Leisure Studies* 20: 37–41. DOI: 10.1080/0261436011005163.

Weber M (1922) *Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft*. 5 (1972). Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck.

Week L (2012) I am not a tourist: Aims and implications of 'traveling'. *Tourist Studies* 12(2): 186–203. DOI: 10.1177/1468797612454627.

Wegener B (1988) *Kritik Des Prestiges*. *Soziologische Revue*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag. DOI: 10.1524/srsr.1990.13.2.133.

Wegener B (1992) Concepts and measurement of prestige. *Annual Review of Sociology* 18(1): 253–280. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.soc.18.1.253.

Wiley N (1988) The micro-macro problem in social theory. *Social Theory* 6(2): 254–261.

Wilkins H (2011) Souvenirs: What and why we buy. *Journal of Travel Research* 50(3): 239–247. DOI: 10.1177/0047287510362782.

Wilson ME and Chen LH (2020) Travellers give wings to novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). *Journal of Travel Medicine* 27(2): 1–3. DOI: 10.1093/jtm/taaa015.

Wong JWC, Lai IKW and Tao Z (2020) Sharing memorable tourism experiences on mobile social media and how it influences further travel decisions. *Current Issues in Tourism* 23(14). Taylor & Francis: 1773–1787. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2019.1649372.

Wood S (2013) Prestige in world politics: History, theory, expression. *International Politics* 50(3). Nature Publishing Group: 387–411. DOI: 10.1057/ip.2013.13.

Zenker S and Kock F (2020) The coronavirus pandemic – A critical discussion of a tourism research agenda. *Tourism Management* 81. Elsevier Ltd: 104164. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104164.

Zheng Y, Goh E and Wen J (2020) The effects of misleading media reports about COVID-19 on Chinese tourists' mental health: A perspective article. *Anatolia* 31(2). Routledge: 337–340. DOI: 10.1080/13032917.2020.1747208.

VI.   *Appendix*

V.I   *Supplementary information (Chapter 4.2)*

In order to develop a scale measuring travelers' personal prestige, an extensive literature review into standardized prestige scales was conducted to expose relevant prestige dimensions (Table 19) This included prestige conceptions of brands and product types (Fonrouge and Vigneron, 2011; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, 2004), professions and status (Domanski, 2015; Wegener, 1992), personal prestige (Berl et al., 2019), and leisure travel specifically (Boley et al., 2018; Correia and Moital, 2009; Kuhn, 2020). Conceptions that were neglected for scale development in this study concerned abstract sociological constructs of capital (Bourdieu, 1984), analyses of social aggregates (i.e. classes) in stratification (Weber, 1922), the social ordering processes of prestige (Eisenstadt, 1968; Leibenstein, 1950; Shils, 1968; Wegener, 1992), or purely subjective needs and motivations for prestige enhancement focusing on self-esteem, well-being or self-identity (Coleman and Iso-Ahola, 1993; Crompton, 1979; Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987). Additionally, characteristics of brands and products that are not relatable to a person were either excluded of the scale or adapted to suit a description of a human being. For example, the dimension of 'product quality' (Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 1998) was translated into 'preference for exclusive products' in order to be applicable to personal prestige.

Table 19 - Literature review on prestige scales and dimensions

Item holding prestige	Dimensions of prestige	Sources
occupations	reputation, money, status	Wegener (1988) Domanski (2015)
brands	conspicuousness, uniqueness, quality, hedonism, self-extension	Vigneron & Johnson (1998) Fonrouge & Vigneron (2011)
	beauty/creativity/fashionability (i.e. hedonism), excellence (i.e. quality), uniqueness, exception (i.e. conspicuousness),	Kapferer (1998)
consumer behavior	conspicuousness, quality, uniqueness, social, hedonism	Vigneron & Johnson (1999, 2003)
tourism products & tourist behavior	quality, conspicuousness, social, unique, hedonism	Correia & Kozak (2012) Correia & Moital (2009)
	look cool, popular, unique, stand out, and savvy	Boley et al. (2018)
	exclusivity	Riley (1995)
	social affiliation, uniqueness, hedonism, character traits, conspicuousness, travel history	Kuhn (2020)
	knowledge and experience, social capital and distinction, personal development	Bui & Wilkins (2017)
people	achievements, possessions, authority/power, personal qualities (i.e. character traits)	Parsons (1940, 1953)
	position (i.e. status), reputation (i.e. social), information (i.e. knowledge)	Berl et al. (2019)

The literature review exposed six dimensions relevant for the measurement of personal prestige, namely *hedonism, social, achievements, conspicuousness, wealth,* and *power.* The *hedonic* dimension touches upon personal eudaemonic characteristics of a person (Kuhn, 2020; Parsons, 1940). Tourist experiences 'can lend themselves to enhancing prestige through emotional value' (Correia and Moital, 2009: 20) and positively characterize a traveler as fun, cheerful, and holding a positive attitude towards life. The *social* dimension refers to the degree to which someone immerses into social in-groups and has meaningful relationships with others (Correia and Moital, 2009; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). In terms of the tourist experience, this refers to either the immersion into a group of travel companions or affiliation towards consumption styles of neo-tribes (Cova and Cova, 2001; Kuhn, 2020). Further, personal *achievements*, previously referred to as academic and professional accomplishments (Parsons, 1940; Wegener, 1992), are a fundamental basis of personal prestige. The tourist experience can give a sense of mastery and control (Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987), symbolize and strengthen travelers' knowledge, actions, skills, and abilities (Riley, 1995) and accordingly represent personal achievements. This is also exemplified by the increased presence of tourist experiences on professional résumés for job applications (McGloin and Georgeou, 2016), framing travel as a personal accomplishment. The *conspicuousness* dimension of personal prestige relates to how much a person 'stands out', following theories on snob motivations of conspicuous consumption (Leibenstein, 1950). Being extraordinary and unique, and striking attention of others are relevant characteristics for the evaluation of personal prestige. Accordingly, the unique value of a holiday is related to such exclusivity and rarity, whereat unique travel experiences make the tourist stand out and result in snob effects and social distinction (Correia and Moital, 2009). Obviously, the *wealth* dimension represents monetary resources of an individual as the economic basis of personal prestige. Similarly, the perceived quality of a holiday is based on economic backgrounds and signifies the monetary resources available for leisure consumption. At last, the *power* dimension of personal prestige refers to honor and respect of a person's status, and is derived from research on occupations, titles and institutions (Domanski, 2015; Wegener, 1988). The tourist experience is entangled with numerous conceptions of power-relations between actors (Beritelli and Laesser, 2011), and the tourist exerts power over host-communities and cultures (Larsen and Urry, 2011). Thus, the power dimension is an indispensable foundation of personal prestige of tourists. Having reviewed the foundations of prestige, it is becomes apparent how the intangible product of the tourist experience can be related to various dimensions of the prestige construct.

For each of the six dimensions, four items were formulated and measured on a 7-point slider-scale, resulting in a total of 24 items. As the scale was developed simultaneously with data collection, we used data values of home-conditions of T1 of study 1 and study 2 for a confirmatory factor analysis. Table 20 shows dimensions and items of the developed scale, and results of the confirmatory factor analysis including standardized factor loadings and errors. As the conspicuousness dimension of prestige did not meet statistical validity requirements and the individual items did not sufficiently load on the factor, this dimension was left out for the subsequent analysis. Further, the hedonism dimension shows a small

standardized factor loading for the overall prestige construct, however we decided to include this dimension as hedonism is an indispensable theoretical aspect of travel prestige (Correia and Moital, 2009) and the items sufficiently load onto the factor of the dimension. Composite indices were calculated for individual dimensions of personal prestige and for overall personal prestige and subsequently used for data analysis.

Table 20 - Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Home-condition of T1 (Study 1) and Study 2)

Dimension	Items: This person…	N	Mean	Factor Loading	Error	AVE	CR
hedonism	enjoys life	254	5.11	0.84	0.42		
	is a cheerful person		4.94	0.69	0.76	56%	0.84
	likes to have a lot of fun		4.70	0.77	0.63		
	makes the most of life		4.51	0.70	0.84		
social	has a large friend circle	254	4.54	0.77	0.64		
	has a lot of friends		4.48	0.80	0.52	52%	0.81
	is very popular		4.04	0.70	0.72		
	is beloved		4.89	0.62	0.85		
achievements	has achieved a lot	254	4.41	0.79	0.55		
	is sophisticated		4.31	0.54	1.11	49%	0.74
	is well educated		4.96	0.74	0.62		
wealth	is wealthy	254	4.27	0.79	0.70		
	prefers exclusive products		3.76	0.74	0.99	60%	0.86
	can afford lots of things		4.37	0.84	0.49		
	enjoys exquisite products		3.98	0.72	1.07		
power	is a leader	254	4.13	0.78	0.75		
	is powerful		4.14	0.74	0.85	58%	0.85
	is superior		3.84	0.78	0.67		
	is well respected		4.83	0.75	0.60		
Construct	**Dimension**	**N**	**Mean**	**Factor Loading**	**Error**	**AVE**	**CR**
	hedonism	254	4.82	0.43	0.79		
	social	254	4.49	0.59	0.60		
overall prestige	achievements	254	4.56	0.98	0.03	60.4%	0.60
	wealth	254	4.09	0.79	0.45		
	power	254	4.23	0.95	0.12		

Model fit: $\chi^2(df) = 544.12(147)$**; CFI = 0.846; RMSEA = 0.103

V.II   Supplementary information (Chapter 4.3)

Table 21 exhibits the results of the literature research of prestige theory and existing standardized prestige undertaken for studies in Chapter 4.3. Table 22 shows Cronbach's alpha reliability indicators for Personal Prestige Inventory under two experimental conditions suggesting reliability of the dimensions as measured by the scale.

Table 21 - Initial battery of items after literature review

Source	*Construct/Dimension*	*Items*
adapted from Vigneron & Johnson (2004)	conspicuousness	Conspicuous, extremely expensive, elitist, wealthy
	uniqueness	very exclusive, precious, rare, unique,
	quality	crafted, luxourious, best quality, sophisticated,
	hedonism	exquisite, glamorous, stunning
	self-extension	leading, very powerful, rewarding, successful
adapted from Correia & Moital (2009)	quality	likes best quality, prefers exclusive products, enjoys exquisite products
	conspicuous	is conspicuous, is luxurious, is glamourous
	social	has a lot of friends, is very popular, has a large friend circle, integrate well into a group
	unique	is unique, is extraordinary, is one-of-a-kind, is exceptional
	hedonic	likes to have a lot of fun, enjoys life, is a cheerful person, makes the most of it
adapted from SRS scale (Boley et al. 2018)	one-dimensional	look cool, be more popular, look unique, make me envious, stand out, look savvy
adapted from Parsons (1940)	achievements	has achieved a lot, successful, experienced, has gained lots of experience
	possessions	is wealthy, has a lot of money, can afford lots of things
	authority/power	is powerful, is a leader, is superior
	personal qualities	hedonism, agreeableness, ambitiousness
adapted from PRI-Scale, Berl (2019)	position	wealthy, high social status, powerful
	reputation	reputable, respected
	information	educated, intelligent

Table 22 - Cronbach's alpha reliability indicator for Personal Prestige Inventory

Condition	*Item*	*Cronbach's Alpha*	*Cronbach's Alpha (std. items)*
leisure information available	hedonism	0.806	0.814
	social inclusion	0.830	0.833
	distinctiveness	0.796	0.797
	prosperity	0.762	0.762
no leisure information available	hedonism	0.732	0.734
	social inclusion	0.784	0.785
	distinctiveness	0.745	0.742
	prosperity	0.671	0.672