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Research note

Acculturation, shopping acculturation, and shopping motives of International Residential Tourists

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A B S T R A C T

The pairing of tourism and shopping, and particularly the area of tourist shopping motivations, has led to a prolific output in terms of literature. However, the related studies are fundamentally descriptive and do not discuss the background variables in detail. The aim of this study is to develop and test an explanatory structural model of the influence of socio-demographics and acculturation on International Residential Tourist (IRT) shopping motivations. The results obtained confirm the influence of certain socio-demographic variables on acculturation, of the latter on shopping acculturation and in turn on shopping motivations. Likewise, the decisive role that nationality plays when defining the sense and intensity of structural relationships can also be verified.

The model tested is foreseen to be of special interest to IRT destinations, as it allows shopping motivations to be predicted, meaning that the commercial offer can be strategically adapted.

1. Introduction

The aging population, a general increase in household income, new lifestyles, more leisure time, longer holidays, liberalization of capital flows, the possibility of investing in property abroad and the booming growth of low-cost airlines, among other factors, have led many people to buy and/or rent property abroad. State, residential tourism has benefited from these people who spend prolonged periods where the climate is certainly better than that of their country of origin (Tribe, 2015).

The development and consolidation of residential tourism has substantially influenced the geography, the ethnic mix and the economy of the area in which it has settled (Perles-Ribes, Ramón-Rodríguez, Sevilla-Jiménez, & Moreno-Izquierdo, 2016). In certain countries such as Spain, residential tourism has reached very significant figures. In 2010 the area in which it has settled (Perles-Ribes, Ramón-Rodríguez, Sevilla-Jiménez, & Moreno-Izquierdo, 2016). In certain countries such as Spain, residential tourism has reached very significant figures. In 2010 those International residential tourists (hereinafter referred to as IRTs) have become an increasingly important set of new consumers who are not strictly tourists, residents or emigrants but, at the end of the day, all three rolled into one that require specific attention and research (Chen, Silkes, & Sev- illa-Jiménez, 2014; Lyu & Noh, 2016; Saayman & Saayman, 2012; Wong & Wan, 2013). However, the majority of the studies are predominantly descriptive, not usually paying attention to the background variables influencing shopping behaviour, and not contemplating IRTs as a subject of study (Jin et al., 2017). Consequently, there is still a research gap on the consumer behaviour of IRTs.

Considering the growing significance of IRTs and with the intention of contributing to the understanding of how IRTs act as consumers at the destination level, we have proposed, developed and tested an explanatory structural model of the influence of the IRTs’ acculturation on their shopping motives at the destination. Furthermore, the model analyses the influence exerted by social and demographic variables on the IRTs’ acculturation. To test the model, an empirical study was carried out involving two nationalities (British and German), in two top international mass tourism destinations in Spain (Majorca and Alicante) with a large IRT base.

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2. Theoretical framework

The classic Motivation-Need Theory, within the framework of the general Consumer Behaviour Theory, along with Veblen’s Theory of Conspicuous Consumption (Edgell, 1999; Veblen, 1965) underly the theoretical considerations of this study. To this extent, an individual’s consumption is not related to the satisfaction of basic needs, but to the symbolism, in terms of social admiration, manifested by the possession of certain objects (e.g. property and shopping goods). According to Veblen when basic needs are covered, it is necessary to give them a meaning that goes beyond the concrete utility for which they were created, and it is necessary to give them a social meaning. In this situation, it is generally assumed that people consume depending on the environment in which they develop their interests and are guided by society as well as consumer trending (Veblen, 1965).

Taking the above considerations into account, we propose and test a model that links the shopping motives of the IRTs with their acculturation traits and the variables underlying such acculturation. The constructs considered in the model, starting from the ultimate dependent variable (shopping motives), and thereafter dealing with the concepts from right to left (see Fig. 1) are explained below.

According to Sheth (1983) and Childers, Carr, Peck, and Carson (2001), shopping motives can be described as the needs and requirements of individuals in relation to the choice of store in which they shop. Within this scope, individuals evaluate the benefits they wish, and this evaluation may result in certain shopping motives (Sheth, 1983). For decades, these motives have been considered to be one of the decisive variables in consumer shopping behaviour (e.g. Tauber, 1972; Solomon, 2014). The related literature grants them a special importance as they have a considerable influence on shopping behaviour and determine, among other things, the type of purchase, choice of store and loyalty (e.g. Park, Yu, & Zhou, 2010; Popkowski-Leszczyc & Timmermans, 1997; Tuli & Mookerjee, 2004; Yavas, 2003). Furthermore, they have been demonstrated to display great stability over time (Solomon, 2014). As a result, many authors regard shopping motives as one of the most relevant bases for market segmentation (e.g. Hafstrom, Chae, & Chung, 1992; Lysons, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1995; Sadikoglu, 2017; Sproles & Kendall, 1986; Stone, 1954; Tai, 2005; Wang, Siu, & Hui, 2004; Wesley, LeHew, & Woods;ide, 2006).

The list of shopping motives proposed by the literature is large and varied (e.g.; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Cardoso & Pinto, 2010; Childers et al., 2001; Dawson, Bloch, & Ridgway, 1990; Geuens, Brengman, & S’Jegers, 2001; Noble, Griffith, & Adjei, 2006). Based on its theoretical and empirical reliability, we have borrowed the shopping motives proposed by Noble et al. (2006), which are: information attainment and price comparison, uniqueness and assortment seeking, social interaction and browsing, convenience seeking and time, and loyalty to local merchants.

In tourism, there is significant research on what compels tourists to shop (e.g. Chang & Hsieh, 2006; Josiam, Kinley, & Kim, 2005; Lau, Sin, & Chan, 2005; Li, 2014; Lin and Chen, 2013; Moscardo, 2004). However, there is still little research in the specific case of IRTs (e.g. De-Juan-Vigaray & Garau-Vadell, 2015) and on the background variables influencing tourists’ shopping motives (Jin et al., 2017).

In this respect, acculturation is one of the variables that has been suggested, especially in the case of immigrants, to play an important role on the individual’s shopping behaviour (e.g. Penaloza, 2009; 2010). It has been defined by Maldonado and Tansuhaj (1998, p. 253) as “the changes that occur when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact”. Research into acculturation deals with the investigation of individuals’ reactions when they are in contact with cultures which, by nature, are new and strange for them (Martin, 2005). Measurement of acculturation has usually been done through indicators such as the type of press that individuals read, the radio station that they listen to, or the language that they speak (Lerman, Maldonado, & Luna, 2008). Overall acculturation is suggested to be related to the attachment that individuals show towards stores from their place of origin, or culture, referred to as shopping acculturation by some authors which, in turn, seems to influence how individuals from another culture buy (Bundy, 2016; Cornell, Wamwara-Mbugua, & Boller, 2008; Lin & Chen, 2013; Nkamnebe, 2014, p. 70).

The literature suggests that acculturation may be influenced by a variety of socio-demographic variables of those displaced from their place of origin, including age, length of residence in the host country, income level, educational background and the urban environment in which they settle. With respect to age, generally a negative relationship between acculturation and age has been suggested. In the case of immigrants, the younger they are at the time of their arrival in the new country, the less they identify themselves over time with their country of origin. Therefore, they show a higher acculturation level (e.g. Gong, Takeuchi,
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Agbayani-Siewert, & Tacata, 2003; Park, Paik, Skinner, Ok, & Spindler, 2003) due to their faster adoption of the new culture (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006) and create a new identity more easily. Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder (2001) have compared generations and found that the first generation retains its culture of origin to a greater extent. Along the same lines, Palumbo and Teich (2004) argued that “older” immigrants are less likely to acculturate (Eaton, 1995; Glasgow & Brown, 2006).

Concerning length of residence, a positive relationship is usually proposed. Instead of being a situation of short duration, acculturation is deemed to be a long-term process involving the acclimatization to the host culture (Ebin et al., 2001) and “the acquisition of skills and knowledge to engage in consumer behaviour in another culture” (Peñalozá, 1989, p. 110). Along these lines, the duration of stay in the new country has, in certain cases, been proven to positively affect acculturation (e.g. Webster & Obert-Pittman, 1993). Moreover, Lee and Tse (1994) suggested a direct correlation between consumption patterns and the time spent living in the host country. However, a few studies argue that the association between length of residence and acculturation is not clear (Peñalozá, 1994).

Regarding the influence of the individual’s income, although not many academic works exist in this topic it seems that there may be a link between these two variables (Chung, 2001). More specifically, Alvarez (2004) puts forward the idea that high earners tend to acculturate more; “throughout the analysis, it was made evident that even among Hispanics with household incomes above $35,000, that income affected their acculturation process” (Alvarez, 2004, p. 126).

Relating to the influence of the individuals’ education level, literature suggests that better-educated people are likely to acculturate to a higher degree (e.g. Peñalozá, 1994). In the ethnic buying model proposed by Chung (2001), education and another series of variables such as age at the time of arrival, time spent living in the host country, and earnings appear to be key factors that particularly influence the degree of acculturation. Seemingly, Alvarez (2004), analysing the behaviour of middle-income Hispanics vs. middle-income white non-Hispanics, suggests that education shows a positive, high degree of correlation with acculturation.

In connection with the urban environment where the individual settles, literature suggests that the place where immigrants install themselves, from a home in an apartment block in the city centre to a detached house in a more rural setting, may have an influence on the individuals’ acculturation. Specifically, some researchers interested in urban systems bring to light the influence of spatial factors in shopping behaviour (e.g. Grandbois & Schadt, 1994; Stone, 1954). In some cases, they link the urban environment with acculturation based on the intensity and variability of the commute for shopping (Walters, 1999).

Finally, literature suggests a relevant moderating role of the individuals’ nationality on their acculturation and shopping habits which helps understanding of why individuals from different nations acculturate to a higher or lower level (e.g. Berry, 2005; 2006; Bohn, 2008; Gong et al., 2003; Kwak & Berry, 2001). Furthermore, in the specific case of tourism, literature provides evidence that tourist behaviour is highly influenced by their nationality (e.g. Kozak, 2002; Pizam & Sussmann, 1995).

3. The structural model

The model (Fig. 1) is focused on IRTs’ shopping motives as the target variables at the end of the chain of relationships. It is hypothesized that a set of exogenous variables (age, length of residence, income, education level, and urban environment) are direct predictors of acculturation. In general, positive relationships are expected between length of residence, income, urban environment, educational level, and acculturation (see Fig. 1). Negative relationships are expected between age and acculturation. Acculturation would be directly and positively related to shopping acculturation. Finally, shopping acculturation is hypothesized as a direct predictor of shopping motives: 1) information attainment and price comparison; 2) uniqueness and assortment seeking; 3) social interaction and browsing; 4) convenience seeking and time, and 5) loyalty to local merchants.

Our model posited that younger IRTs with a longer length of residence, higher income, higher educational level, and living in urban areas would show a higher acculturation level, thus generating a higher level of shopping acculturation which would in turn affect their shopping motives. One of the particular aims of this research is, therefore, to estimate the correlation and magnitude of the hypothesized relationships between acculturated shopping and shopping motives. Furthermore, taking into account that the literature suggests the moderating role exerted by nationality on the tourist’s behaviour (e.g. Kozak, 2002; Pizam & Sussmann, 1995), differential relational patterns for two different nationalities, British and German, are examined (Schildt, 2010; Zasada et al., 2010). The objective of this study is to test the hypothesized model and to examine the results regarding the findings stated in previous literature.

4. Methodology

The methodological approach used interdependent models that focus on IRTs’ shopping motives. In this way, shopping motives are the target of the study, taking into account the level of acculturation of the participants at the time of obtaining the figures. The focus is not on the acculturation process, but on the shopping motives of the IRTs.

4.1. Sample and procedure

Data was acquired by personal interviews with foreign residents from the island of Majorca and the province of Alicante. Majorca is one of the most important tourist destinations in the Mediterranean with more than 9 million International visitors in 2018 (INE, 2020; Hof & Blázquez-Salom, 2013). Alicante is the second most visited tourist region in Spain with more than 5.7 million visitors in 2018 (IET, 2020). These two areas account for the highest percentage of foreign residents in Spain. Alicante 466,000 (24.15%), and Majorca 242,000 (21.69%). The largest IRT community in Alicante is British, whereas in Majorca it is German (INE, 2020).

To gather data at each tourist destination two companies specializing in market research were hired. The sampling used the random route method. The interviews were conducted every day of the week and took place at the IRTs’ homes, and places that they usually visit. Places such as supermarkets, cafés, and bars were deliberately ruled out to avoid social bias or shopping behaviour that could distort the results. 188 completed questionnaires were collected in Majorca and 212 in Alicante, taking into account the corresponding quotas for age, gender, and country of origin. See Table 1 for more details. It is important to point out that all participants provided information about their shopping behaviour using self-reported instruments (with psychometric validation).

Finally, given that a different IRT nationality predominates in each destination, and to neutralize the effects of culturally adapted offerings that could influence the acculturation of the individuals, the two sub-samples of German and British nationals include individuals from both tourist destinations with the aim of neutralizing any potential contextual bias (see also Garau-Vadell & De-Juan-Vigaray, 2016).

4.2. Instruments

Measurement of the various constructs included in this research was conducted in the following manner:

The shopping motives. Following Noble et al. (2006; 182), five major shopping motives (see Table 2) were included in our research: 1) “information attainment and price comparison”. To be precise, “information attainment” is conceived to be the motive behind searching for details
Table 1
Sample used in the study.

| Variables                          | Sample (n = 400) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Age                                |                 |
| 18–40                              | 110 (27.5%)     |
| 41–60                              | 180 (45.0%)     |
| 60 +                               | 110 (27.5%)     |
| Gender                             |                 |
| Male                               | 208 (52.0%)     |
| Female                             | 192 (48.0%)     |
| Destination                        |                 |
| Majorca                            | 188 (47.1%)     |
| Alicante                           | 212 (53.0%)     |
| Country of origin                  |                 |
| UK                                 | 239 (59.7%)     |
| Germany                            | 161 (40.3%)     |
| Education                          |                 |
| Not graduated                      | 29 (5%)         |
| High school graduate               | 64 (16%)        |
| Incomplete HE studies              | 130 (32.5%)     |
| University graduate                | 166 (41.5%)     |
| Post-graduate degree               | 20 (5%)         |
| Population density of the area     |                 |
| Low                                | 25 (6.3%)       |
| Average                            | 133 (33.3%)     |
| the IRT lives in Spain             |                 |
| High                               | 241 (60.3%)     |
| Income (respondent perception)     |                 |
| Much lower than average            | 6 (1.5%)        |
| A little lower than average         | 14 (3.5%)       |
| Average                            | 300 (75%)       |
| A little higher than average        | 67 (16.8%)      |
| Average                            |                 |
| Much higher than average            | 6 (1.5%)        |
| N/A                                | 2 (0.5%)        |

Table 2
Shopping motivations dimensions and items.

Information attainment + price comparison

- I often seek out information regarding which brand to buy
- I spend a lot of time looking for information about products and brands before I make a purchase
- I like to have a great deal of information before I buy anything
- I usually seek out product information before making a purchase
- I often find myself looking for the exact same product at different outlets to find the lowest price
- I usually find myself price comparison shopping
- I often compare product prices across retailers to get the lowest price
- Uniqueness seeking + assortment seeking
- I enjoy searching for novel items to purchase
- When I shop I enjoy finding new and different styles
- I usually find myself looking for unique products to purchase
- I like to have access to many brands when I shop
- I like to have access to a wide selection of products when I shop
- Any shop must have a large variety of products to choose from
- Social interaction + browsing
- I enjoy watching other people when I go shopping
- I enjoy interacting with others when I am shopping
- I miss the experience of interacting with people when shopping through an in-store method
- I often visit shopping malls or markets just for something to do, rather than to buy something specific
- I enjoy browsing for things in a store even if I cannot buy them yet
- In-store shopping is generally a lot of fun for me
- Convenience seeking + time
- I usually shop quickly, buying the first product or brand that appears good enough
- I really don’t give my purchases much thought or care
- Shopping in different stores is a waste of time
- I spend little time deciding on the products I buy
- Loyal to local merchants + post-test loyalty
- I shop locally to support local merchants and business districts
- I shop locally to support locally owned and operated merchants
- I shop locally to support businesses and the local environment
- I shop locally to support locally owned and operated merchants

Source: Adapted from Noble et al. (2006; 183)

from external sources regarding goods or service features. It is calculated by adjusting a scale devised by Dickerson and Gentry (1983) (α = 0.84). “Price comparison” is conceived to be the motive that all individuals have for comparing the cost of goods and services available from various types of retailers and is measured using the scale proposed by Eastlick and Feinberg (1999) (α = 0.87; 2) “uniqueness and assortment seeking”: “uniqueness seeking” is conceived to be the need to look for novelties and new products. It is calculated using a modified scale devised by Eastlick and Feinberg (1999) (r = 0.57, p < .01; 3) “social interaction and browsing” is conceived as the motivation related to an individual’s actions and the response to that by others during the shopping experience. A three-item scale is used to calculate this (Noble et al., 2006) (α = 0.71). The action of “browsing” is conceived to be the motive behind looking at products for fun or entertainment, and is measured using a scale similar to that of Dawson et al. (1990) (α = 0.74; 4) “convenience seeking and time” is conceived to be the motive for people making an effort to save time when shopping and is measured by using the scale proposed by Eastlick and Feinberg (1999) (α = 0.81) in a slightly modified version; 5) “loyalty to local retailers” is conceived to be the desire to buy products from local retailers. A three-item scale adapted by Blakney and Sekely (1994) (α = 0.85) is used to measure this.

The acculturation construct was measured based on Lerman et al. (2008) proposed scale, originally designed to gather acculturation in “permanent” immigrants. The construct was adapted to IRTs by omitting some items with irrelevant content for this study (see Table 3). The adapted scale was composed of 6 items with a 5-point Likert scale format, ranging from 1 “Totally disagree” to 5 “Totally agree”. The greater the score, the higher the acculturation level. The content of the six items are related to language skills (language used with friends, watching TV, reading news, and joking) and social relationships (local or more distant friends).

Shopping acculturation. The measurement of the IRTs’ shopping acculturation was operationalized using 6 items related to their attachment to businesses closer to their ethnic origin (See Table 4). The construct items were based on the “Acculturation to Global Consumer Culture Scale” (Cleveland & Laroche, 2007, the “Specific Consumer Acculturation Scale” (O’Guin & Faber, 1985) and the “Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale” (AAMAS by Gim Chung, Kim, & Abreu, 2004) adapted to the IRTs. With the intention of standardising the time dimension of the answers, the individuals surveyed were asked to refer to their behaviour in the week before the interview. The use of this time lapse seems to be appropriate as the weekly period is easy to remember and it is feasible that the individuals involved have regular weekly habits.

Finally, the questionnaire includes a set of queries on socio-demographic aspects of the interviewees including nationality, age, time spent living in the destination, level of income, level of education, and the urban environment in which they have settled.

4.3. Data analysis

The data matrix was pre-processed and no imputation method for missing values was applied. Protocols with missing values were discarded (8%). Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients comprised the first analytic step including the correlation matrix among the

Table 3
Shopping Acculturation items.

| Items                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I typically shop in stores where they speak my language               |
| I typically shop in stores managed by people from my country/ethnic origin/culture |
| I identify myself with the country or origin/culture/ethnic group of the stores where I shop |
| In the stores where I shop it feels like home                         |
| I prefer to go out to local cafes/bars/restaurants instead of those of my country (R) |
| I prefer restaurants from my ethnic group/country/culture rather than the local ones |

R = reverse.
observed variables. Secondly, statistical assumptions for the estimation of the SEMs were assessed to be fulfilled using the PRELIS 2 program (Shen & Takeuchi, 2001). The Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation method was applied although the multivariate normality was not strictly met by the data (all skewness and kurtosis z values remained below 1.00, in absolute value).

The goodness of fit of the structural model was tested using a multi-sample SEM approach for contrasting potential variance between the two IRT subsamples (British and German). For overall fit assessment four types of indices were used: a) Absolute fit measures: \(\chi^2\) statistic, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), and the Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual (SRMR); b) Incremental indices: the Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), the Normal Fit Index (NFI), the Incremental Fit Index (IFI), and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI); c) Parsimony indices: the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and its 90% CI; and d) Information Theory Indices: the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and the Consistent AIC (CAIC), both for the independent and the tested model.

A model yields acceptable fit to data when \(\chi^2\) is statistically non-significant, GFI > 0.95, SRMR < 0.08, NNFI > 0.95, NFI > 0.95, IFI > 0.95, RMSEA ≤ 0.05, and both AIC and CAIC the lower the better in model comparison (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). The 5% significance criterion was adopted to test single parameters. All SEM analyses were performed with LISREL 8.8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006).

### 5. Results

The structural model was tested across the two IRT sub-samples assuming both factor loadings for the latent variables and path coefficients constrained to be equal (Table 5). Results showed inadequate fit from absolute fit measures, with a statistically significant \(\chi^2\) value for the total invariance model (\(\chi^2 = 8433.63, p < .001\)), a GFI value clearly below .90 (GFI = 0.84), and the SRMR = 0.21 (greater than .08). Incremental indices also showed inadequate fit with values far from the cut-off criterion for good fit (> 0.95): NNFI = 0.78, NFI = 0.72, IFI = 0.79, and CFI = 0.79. RMSEA as a parsimonious index was .115, with a CI 90% between .112 and .118, indicating inadequate fit.

The following step was to assess the same structural model through the two IRT sub-samples (British and German) without constraints that is, setting all parameters to be free (see Fig. 2). Results showed an acceptable fit, despite a statistically significant \(\chi^2 = 1893.74, p < .001\), and a GFI = 0.84 slightly below .90, but an SRMR = 0.06, clearly lower than .08. All incremental indices obtained adequate fit values, all greater than .90: NNFI = 0.95, NFI = 0.92, IFI = 0.96, and CFI = 0.96. The RMSEA (.049) and its CI 90% (.046; .052) was indicative of good fit.

The Information Theory indices were used to compare the fit of the two competing models. Both the Model AIC and the Model CAIC were lower for the unconstrained model versus the model that assumes total invariance of parameters (2419.74 and 8691.63 for AIC, respectively; 3732.50 and 9335.53 for CAIC, respectively). Finally, a chi-square square test for model comparison was also implemented and the model with no constraints showed a statistically significant better fit than those with constrained parameters (\(\Delta \chi^2 = 6539.89, \Delta \delta = 130, p < .001\)).

Fig. 2 depicts the results of the multi-sample analysis and the estimated path parameters for each IRT sub-sample. Factor loadings from items to latent variables are not portrayed to make the diagram more readable. Upon observation of the standardized path coefficient values, significant differences between the two IRT sub-samples start to become evident upon analysing the existing relationships between exogenous variables and “acculturation”. The effects of “income” and “urban environment” were insignificant in the two sub-samples. “Age” showed a general negative effect on acculturation, with a slightly higher value in the British sub-sample (-.39**) than in the German sub-sample (-.20**); and this same pattern occurred with “length of residence” (.47** for British IRTs and .34** for German IRTs). Finally, “education level” had a positive relationship with acculturation for British IRTs (.16*), but negative for German IRTs (-.18*).

The general relationship between “acculturation” and “shopping acculturation” was positive as it was hypothesized but obtained a higher value for the British (.37**) than for the German sub-sample (.31**). Greater differential patterns were detected for “shopping motives” when comparing the two sub-samples. For the British IRTs, a greater level of “shopping acculturation” supposes less “information attainment” and “price comparison” (-.37**) but more “social interaction” and “browsing” (.35**) and, to a lesser extent, more convenience seeking and time (.16**), “uniqueness and assortment seeking” (.14**), and “loyal to local merchants” and “post-test loyalty” (.13**).

For the German sub-sample, the pattern is clearly different because higher scores for “shopping acculturation” imply strong but, in any case, positive relationships with “convenience seeking and time” (.57**), “information attainment and price comparison” (.44**), “social interaction and browsing” (.42**), “loyal to local merchants and post-test loyalty” (.40**), and “uniqueness and assortment seeking” (.35**).

### 6. Conclusions, limitations and future research

Our study responds to the call made by Jin et al. (2017) to research tourist shopping behaviour in different types of tourist destinations and the underlying variables influencing it. It also responds to a literature gap detected in the field of IRT studies, a tourist segment that is becoming increasingly important and has not been given all the attention that it deserves. This article does so by putting forward a model, using Structural Equations Modelling (SEM), relating shopping motives with IRT acculturation and shopping acculturation. Likewise, the model analyses the influence exerted by social and demographic variables.

The results obtained constitute useful empirical evidence that the proposed model works when applied to specific nationalities (e.g. English and German). Therefore, the existence of a structural relationship...
between the different background variables and shopping motives is confirmed. Likewise, the results bring to light the particularities of each of the nationalities, both in the sense of relationships (positive or negative) and intensity (greater or lower). As far as the link between shopping acculturation and motives is concerned, in both nationalities, the relationships proposed are significant, although the sense and intensity may vary between them. For example, the British with the highest level of shopping acculturation present a negative relationship with information attainment, whereas in the case of the Germans this relationship is positive. Similarly, the more pronounced the shopping acculturation of the British, the more importance is placed on having information to compare prices, whereas in the case of the Germans the relationship is the opposite.

Regarding the relationship between shopping acculturation and the remaining motives, this is positive, but differences were detected between the sub-samples. To be precise, the German IRTs present a greater intensity in these relationships, whereas in the case of the Germans this relationship is positive. Similarly, the more pronounced the shopping acculturation of the British, the more time is spent at their destination, the greater the levels of acculturation observed (more pronounced among the British). Finally, although the literature on immigrants seems to suggest the influence of the income and urban environment variables, we are not able to confirm this in this study.

As described above, the results obtained, partially agree with that put forward in existing literature regarding immigrants, although IRTs display singular specificities in some of the aspects. This finding evidences the adequateness of the specific research on IRTs and not contemplating them only as pure immigrants, since at the end of the day, they constitute an increasingly growing specific segment that shares partial traits with tourists, residents, and emigrants, all rolled into one.

With respect to the influence of socio-demographic variables on acculturation, firstly, a negative relationship is confirmed between age and acculturation. It is detected that the older the individual, the lower the acculturation level, although this is more intense among the British than the Germans. Secondly, regarding the influence of length of residence, a clear relationship is indeed observed between this variable and acculturation. That is, the more time that is spent at their destination, the greater the levels of acculturation observed (more pronounced among the British). Thirdly, the higher the British person’s education level, the more they acculturate, whereas, the higher the German person’s education level, the less they acculturate. Finally, although the literature on immigrants seems to suggest the influence of the income and urban environment variables, we are not able to confirm this in this study.

As described above, the results obtained, partially agree with that put forward in existing literature regarding immigrants, although IRTs display singular specificities in some of the aspects. This finding evidences the adequateness of the specific research on IRTs and not contemplating them only as pure immigrants, since at the end of the day, they constitute an increasingly growing specific segment that shares partial traits with tourists, residents, and emigrants, all rolled into one.

Without entering into a debate whether preserving the authenticity of the destination will be good or bad for its strategic competitiveness, the results of our research are of particular relevance from the tourist perspective.
destination management point of view, as they clearly improve the understanding of IRTs’ shopping behaviour. Starting from basic socio-demographic variables of the IRTs, it will be feasible to predict their shopping motives and hence it will bring knowledge to determine whether, and how, to adapt the destinations’ commercial activity in order to fulfil their shopping motives or requirements.

For example, the elderly British, with little residence time in the host destination and higher levels of education, are likely to develop lower levels of acculturation, showing a higher attachment to commercial activity close to their culture of origin and will have among their most important shopping motives “information attainment and price comparison”, and among the least important “social interaction and browsing”. Therefore, if the managers’ objective is to strengthen the most important aspects of their shopping motives, they should consider producing multi-lingual brochures containing information on the product or services offered that will probably increase the perceived benefit for this group of IRT. On the other hand, promoting social interactions among this group of individuals will not contribute to satisfying their needs.

In summary, the power of the proposed model consists of the evaluation of the potential actions addressed to the IRTs’ satisfaction. In this sense, prescribed actions aimed at keeping the attention or attracting IRTs, such as multi-lingual information; socializing activities such as cookery workshops or tasting sessions, will not be equally effective with all IRTs. Rather, it will depend on their acculturation levels, which, thanks to the tested model, are now easily predictable based on some easy to obtain socio-demographic information.

Likewise, social interaction could be promoted through the organizing of cookery workshops allowing tastings and learning about the destination’s typical dishes and their ingredients to promote them among the IRTs, depending on their degree of acculturation and shopping acculturation. Social interaction with natives could also be promoted by inviting the IRTs to learn about local traditions in order to participate in them. As has been seen, the possibilities give the option for a syncretic model.

As per the limitations of the study we acknowledge that the results only represent findings from two nationalities and two tourist destinations. Hence, to further validate the model, future studies should include more IRT nationalities and be tested in various tourist destinations.

Finally, to base future research we propose analysing how the Covid-19 global pandemic will affect IRT’s shopping motives, in these turbulent times. Previously neglected motives, such as personal health and safety, will probably assume a dominant role in their consumer behaviour.

Contributions. Author statements

(a) Dr. De-Juan-Vigaray was the project leader designing the conceptual idea and lead author. She designed the questionnaire and managed the necessary market research to collect the data for the Alicante sub-sample. She carried out the literature review in order to prepare the conceptual framework of the study and, together with Dr. Garau, wrote the abstract and the final manuscript, except the methodological section. She also participated in the discussion and prepared the final version of the conclusions. She also managed the organization of the different revisions of the manuscript as well as the preparation of the various letters to the editor, the organization of the answers to the reviewers and the submission and re-submissions. Finally, she compiled and checked the paper’s bibliography.

(b) Dr. Garau-Vadell managed the necessary market research to collect the data for the Balaeric Islands sub-sample. Together with Dr. De-Juan-Vigaray, he wrote the abstract and reviewed the final manuscript, except the methodological section. He also participated in the discussion of the conclusions and contributed to the different revisions of the manuscript.

(c) Dr. Sesé undertook the statistical analysis of the results, designing the structural model used. He participated in the final discussion of the conclusions and contributed to the different revisions of the manuscript.

We are re-submitting all the revised documentation required, such as the highlights showing the relevant results which are of interest to academics, researchers, executives, and consultants alike.

All three authors have agreed to this re-submission and would like to thank all the reviewers that have contributed to the revisions of this paper, which has undoubtedly helped us finally to submit this latest version.

Neither the entire manuscript, nor any part of its content, has been published or accepted by another journal. It is not currently under review at any other publication, and it is not being submitted in its entirety, nor in part, to any other journal.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104229.

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