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DESTINATION IMAGE AND RISK PERCEPTION: AN INTEGRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Laura Perpiña Blanch

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Universitat de Girona

DOCTORAL THESIS

DESTINATION IMAGE AND RISK PERCEPTION:
An Integrative Perspective

Compendium of publications

Laura Perpiña Blanch

2017

DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN TOURISM

Directed by:

Dr. Lluís Prats Planagumà

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Doctoral thesis submitted to obtain the title of doctor by the University of Girona

Universitat de Girona

Girona, 30 de Novembre de 2017

El Dr. Lluís Prats Planagumà i la Dra. Raquel Camprubí Subirana, de la Universitat de Girona,

DECLAREM:

Que el treball titulat *Destination Image and Risk Perception: An Integrative Perspective*, que presenta Laura Perpiña Blanch per a l'obtenció del títol de doctora, ha estat realitzat sota la nostra direcció.

I, perquè així consti i tingui els efectes oportuns, signem aquest document.

Signatures

Dr. Lluís Prats Planagumà

Dra. Raquel Camprubí Subirana

List of publications derived from the doctoral thesis

This doctoral thesis, entitled "Destination Image and Risk perception: An integrative perspective", is a compendium of publications comprising three articles following the same line of research. These publications have been previously accepted or sent to the respective journals and their quality indexes are indicated below.

Article 1: Accepted and published

Title: Destination Image versus Risk Perception.

Authors: Perpiña, L., Camprubí, R., & Prats, L.

Journal: Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research.

JCR (2016): Impact Factor: **2.646.** Quartile: **Q1** Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism (Ranking 10/45). SCOPUS (2016): Impact Factor: **1.553**. Quartile: **Q1** Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management (Ranking 10/84). H Index: 47.

Reference: Perpiña, L., Camprubí, R., & Prats, L. (2017). Destination Image versus Risk Perception. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research. http://doi.org/10.1177/1096348017704497

Article 2: Accepted

Title: Investigating Perceived Risks in International Travel

Authors: Perpiña, L., Prats, L. & Camprubí, R.

Journal: Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism

SCOPUS (2016): Impact Factor: **0.121**. Quartile: **Q4** Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management (Ranking 76/84). H Index: 12.

Article 3: Sent

Title: Image and Risk perceptions: An integrated Approach.

Authors: Perpiña, L., Prats, L. & Camprubí, R.

Journal: Current Issues in Tourism.

JCR (2016): Impact Factor: **2.451.** Quartile: **Q2** Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism (Ranking 12/45). SCOPUS (2016): Impact Factor: **1.232**. Quartile: **Q1** Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management (Ranking 14/84). H Index: 45.

List of conferences, colloquiums and workshops

In addition to the preceding publications, the research carried out provided other outcomes presented in different conferences, colloquiums and workshops, which are listed below.

International colloquium: 7th Tourism PhD Research Colloquium UdG - SHU (2017), collaboration between the University of Girona and the Sheffield Hallam University. Lecture "Image and Risk Perceptions: An Integrated Approach", 30th – 31st May 2017 (Girona, Spain).

International workshop: PhD Workshop "Are you lost in your PhD?" held at the University of Aveiro. Presentation titled "A Model of Destination Perceptions: Image and Risk Perceptions of Colombia as a Tourism Destination", 16th May 2017 (Aveiro, Portugal).

International colloquium: 6th Tourism PhD Research Colloquium SHU - UdG (2016), collaboration between the University of Girona and the Sheffield Hallam University. Lecture "Risk perception in international travel", 5th - 6th June 2016 (Sheffield, United Kingdom).

International conference: Atlas Annual Conference 2015 "Risk in Travel and Tourism: Geographies, behaviors and strategies". Presentation titled "The measurement of perceived risks in tourism research", 20th - 23rd October 2015 (Lisbon, Portugal).

International colloquium: 5th Tourism PhD Research Colloquium UdG - SHU (2015), collaboration between the University of Girona and the Sheffield Hallam University. Lecture "The measurement of risk perception in tourism research", 2nd - 3rd June 2015 (Girona, Spain).

Acknowledgements

This doctoral thesis has been a long road filled with emotional ups and downs. Several people have accompanied me along the way at different times. I wish to thank all of them for their support throughout this intense period of learning.

I would first like to express my deep gratitude to my research supervisor Dr. Lluís Prats for his trust in me all these years, for the second opportunities, and for his patient guidance, support and encouragement to continue this road to the end.

I would also like to thank my research supervisor Dr. Raquel Camprubí for her guidance and assistance during my progress as a researcher. Her encouragement to complete this doctoral thesis was indispensable. Moreover, I would like to thank both supervisors for their availability and advice throughout this project.

My grateful thanks are also extended to Dr. Lluís Coromina for his assistance in helping me understand statistical data analyses. I would like to thank the Area of Communication at the Faculty of Tourism and the Area of Communication and Institutional Relations at the University of Girona for their assistance with data collection.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the members of ONIT research group and the members of the Institute of Research in Tourism INSETUR; and by extension, to the academic staff of the Faculty of Tourism of the University of Girona.

I gratefully acknowledge the BR-UdG grant received from the University of Girona that was of vital support in writing this doctoral thesis.

I want to thank all the people who created such a good atmosphere in the PhD Room, providing camaraderie during the countless hours of work. Thank you for the good times shared, and for helping me reach the end of this road. I wish you all the best. I have had very challenging moments, and without your support I would not have got here. I especially want to mention Sara Forgas and Isabel Paulino. I would also like to thank Judit Diaz for her occasional meetings, which I found very useful.

Special thanks go to all my friends for being by my side, particularly Mireias, Maria, Judit, Gemma, Judit and Oscar. They have always taken the time to listen and support

me, even during the more difficult moments. I also wish to thank my parents for all their love, support and encouragement throughout my studies.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner, who has witnessed all the emotional ups and downs of doing a doctoral thesis first-hand from the very first day. Thank you for being with me these years, for your faithful support as well as your patience and understanding.

My heartfelt thanks go to all of you!

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis explores the perception of tourism destinations though two major lines of research in the tourism field: destination image and risk perception. The first chapter introduces the literatures of destination image and risk perception and outlines the main research objectives. The following three chapters represent the core body of this doctoral thesis, comprising the three required publications to conduct a thesis by a compendium of publications.

Risk attributes were first identified in risk perception literature and then juxtaposed with the attributes of destination image literature in order to carry out a joint analysis. This task led to the first publication of this doctoral thesis, which compares the cognitive evaluations of both risk and image literatures respectively. A content analysis was conducted and results revealed that although the cognitive attributes assessing each concept separately often coincide, they are described differently. Interestingly, this is due to the fact that image studies tend to describe the attributes of tourism destinations positively, whereas risk studies tend to adopt a negative perspective of them. In light of these results, the first study suggests integrating both risk and image perceptions in a new conceptual model to gain a more balanced view of tourism destination perceptions.

The second article focuses on the literature of risk perception and explores the primary risk dimensions associated with international travel and what influences them. In order to do so, several key attributes that contribute to the perceived risks of individuals were identified and then grouped into five resultant dimensions. These were called physical risk, destination risk, value-time risk, personal concerns and inconveniences. Results further revealed that these dimensions are influenced by gender, age, education and past travel experience.

Based on the outcomes of the two previous studies, the third article offers an integrated approach to destination perceptions by merging the concepts of destination image and risk perception into a single construct in terms of cognitive and affective evaluations. A travel behavior model was developed, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data gathered from questionnaires, and also to test the causal relationships among the constructs of subjective knowledge, past travel experience, destination perceptions and intention to visit. Results show that knowledge influences the integrated cognitive and affective evaluations of destination perceptions. These evaluations directly affect overall perceptions, and indirectly affect

individuals' future behavior. In addition, overall perception significantly affects intention to visit and is a significant mediating variable in the behavioral model of tourism destinations.

The final chapter closes this doctoral thesis with the conclusions and indicates its limitations and possible future lines of research.

RESUM

Aquesta tesi doctoral explora la percepció de les destinacions turístiques a través de dues línies de recerca principals en el camp del turisme: la imatge de la destinació i la percepció del risc. El primer capítol introdueix ambdues literatures així com també especifica els principals objectius de la recerca. Els tres següents capítols representen el cos principal d'aquesta tesi doctoral, els quals corresponen a cada un dels tres articles requerits per a fer una tesi per compendi de publicacions.

En el primer article, els atributs identificats en la literatura de la percepció del risc es van juxtaposar als atributs descrits en la literatura d'imatge per a dur a terme un anàlisi conjunt, per així poder comparar les avaluacions cognitives d'ambdues literatures respectivament. Es va realitzar un anàlisi de contingut i els resultats van revelar que els atributs cognitius que separadament avaluen cada concepte sovint coincideixen, però es descriuen diferent. Aquesta diferenciació es deu al fet que els estudis d'imatge tendeixen a descriure els atributs de les destinacions turístiques positivament, mentre que els estudis de risc tendeixen a adoptar la versió negativa d'aquests. A la llum d'aquests resultats, el primer estudi suggereix la integració d'ambdues percepcions, imatge i risc, en un nou model conceptual per tal d'obtenir una visió més integral de les percepcions d'una destinació turística.

El segon article se centra en la literatura de la percepció del risc i explora les principals dimensions de risc associades als viatges internacionals i què els influeix. Per fer-ho, primer es van identificar diversos atributs clau que contribueixen als riscos que les persones perceben al viatjar i, a continuació, aquests atributs es van agrupar en cinc dimensions resultants, denominades risc físic, risc de la destinació, risc de temps i valor, inquietuds personals i, per últim, inconveniències. Els resultats també van revelar que aquestes cinc dimensions es veuen influenciades per factors com el gènere, l'edat, l'educació i l'experiència prèvia en viatges.

En base als resultats dels dos estudis previs, el tercer article ofereix un enfocament integrat de les percepcions d'una destinació, combinant en un sol constructe els conceptes d'imatge i risc pel que fa a les avaluacions cognitives i afectives. Per aquest últim article es va desenvolupar un model del comportament en viatges, i un Model d'Equacions Estructurals (SEM) es va utilitzar per analitzar les dades recollides a través d'enquestes així com també per testar les relacions causals entre els següents constructes: coneixement subjectiu, experiència prèvia en viatges, les percepcions d'una destinació i les intencions de visitar-la en un futur. Els resultats mostren que el

coneixement previ influeix les avaluacions cognitives i afectives integrades, avaluacions que posteriorment i directament afecten les percepcions globals i que indirectament afecten el comportament futur dels individus. A més, la percepció global afecta significativament la intenció de visitar la destinació turística en un futur, essent una variable moderadora significativa en el model de comportament.

Finalment, l'últim capítol tanca aquesta tesi doctoral amb les conclusions finals i indica les limitacions i possibles línies de recerca a seguir en un futur.

RESUMEN

Esta tesis doctoral explora la percepción de las destinaciones turísticas a través de dos líneas de investigación principales en el campo del turismo: la imagen de la destinación y la percepción del riesgo. El primer capítulo introduce las dos literaturas así como también especifica los principales objetivos de la misma investigación. Los tres siguientes capítulos representan el cuerpo principal de esta tesis doctoral, los cuales corresponden a cada uno de los tres artículos requeridos para hacer una tesis por compendio de publicaciones.

En el primer artículo, los atributos identificados en la literatura de la percepción del riesgo se yuxtaponen a los atributos descritos en la literatura de la imagen para llevar a cabo un análisis conjunto, y así poder comparar las evaluaciones cognitivas de ambas literaturas respectivamente. En este caso se realiza un análisis de contenido y los resultados revelan que los atributos cognitivos que separadamente evalúan cada concepto a menudo coinciden, pero se describen de manera diferente. Esta diferenciación se debe al hecho de que los estudios de imagen tienden a describir los atributos de las destinaciones turísticas positivamente, mientras que los estudios de riesgo tienden a adoptar su versión negativa. A la luz de estos resultados, el primer estudio sugiere la integración de ambos conceptos, imagen y riesgo, en un nuevo modelo conceptual con el objetivo de obtener una visión más integral de las percepciones de una destinación turística.

El segundo artículo se centra en la literatura de la percepción del riesgo y explora las principales dimensiones de riesgo asociadas a los viajes internacionales y qué les influye. Para hacerlo, primero se identifican diversos riesgos clave que perciben las personas al viajar y, a continuación, estos se agrupan en cinco dimensiones resultantes, denominadas riego físico, riego de la destinación, riesgo de tiempo y valor, inquietudes personales y, por último, inconveniencias. Los resultados también revelan que estas cinco dimensiones se ven influenciadas por factores como el género, la edad, la educación y la experiencia previa en viajes.

En base a los dos estudios previos, el tercer artículo ofrece un enfoque integrado de las percepciones de una destinación, combinando en un solo constructo los conceptos de imagen y riesgo en cuestión de evaluaciones cognitivas y afectivas. Para este último artículo se desarrolla un modelo del comportamiento en viajes, y un Modelo de Ecuaciones Estructurales (SEM) se utiliza para analizar los datos recogidos a través de encuestas así como también para testar las relaciones causales entre los siguientes

constructos: conocimiento subjetivo, experiencia previa en viajes, las percepciones de una destinación y las intenciones de visitarla en un futuro. Los resultados muestran que el conocimiento previo influye las evaluaciones cognitivas y afectivas, evaluaciones que posteriormente y directamente afectan la percepción global y que indirectamente afectan el comportamiento futuro de los individuos. Además, la percepción global afecta significativamente la intención de visitar una destinación turística en un futuro, demostrando ser una variable moderadora significativa en el modelo propuesto.

Finalmente, el último capítulo cierra la tesis doctoral con las conclusiones finales e indica sus limitaciones así como también posibles líneas de investigación a seguir en un futuro.

INTRODUCTION

Not all individuals perceive tourism destination images and risks in the same way. With this in mind, academics have focused on the perception of tourism destinations as a key area of research in the fields of tourism, marketing and behavioral science. In particular, the tourism literature has explored perceptions of tourism destinations though two major lines of distinct research, destination image and risk perception, which establish the theoretical ground of this doctoral thesis.

A fundamental aspect of this research is focusing on both destination image and risk perception as factors influencing future travel behavior. That is to say, the decision to visit or avoid a particular tourism destination is susceptible to its simultaneously perceived images and risks (Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). Visiting a tourism destination might take place, for instance, when perceived positive images of that destination are strong enough to compensate for and cope with perceived risks (P. J. Chen, Hua, & Wang, 2013). Therefore, the decision to travel to a place might not be based on the absence of risks, but rather on the right balance between images and risks, whether they are perceived or real. Implicitly, perceptions of a tourism destination contain a combination of both positive and negative aspects (P. J. Chen & Kerstetter, 1999), and their examination in conjunction is critical in order to understand a destination's characteristics and behavior intentions (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013).

Although destination image and risk perception are important in determining travel behavior and the decision-making process, they have been rarely examined under the same study. Recent tourism academics claim the need to study images and risks together in order to better understand the perceptions of tourism destinations and their influence on intentions to visit (Becken, Jin, Zhang, & Gao, 2016; Chew & Jahari, 2014). Interestingly, there is also a latent debate over the tendency to examine components of destination perception in order to predict individuals' intentional behaviors (Stylos, Bellou, Andronikidis, & Vassiliadis, 2017). Extending this line of thinking, the importance of this doctoral thesis rests on the congruity of pondering destination image and risk perception as a conjoint cognitive-affective concept in a single study that affects travel behavior. In essence, this concept is a subjective construct and thus depends on individuals' perceptions of destination attributes and emotions (Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Larsen, Brun, & Øgaard, 2009; Trumbo et al., 2016). To enhance the understanding of destination perceptions, it is important to understand the perception of destination attributes and feelings, and how these

predict intention to visit that destination. On this subject, the relevance of this is based on strengthening the tourism literature by empirically testing the utility of image and risk perceptions as an integrated construct, leading to a better understanding of the perceptions individuals have of a tourism destination. Both positive and negative attributes and emotions are taken into account, as well as overall perception and the subsequent intention to visit.

The groundwork of this doctoral thesis involves two concepts which are often studied separately in the tourism literature. Thus, to shed light on the rationale behind this research integrating the concepts 'destination image' and 'risk perception' into one, an analysis of both concepts is needed.

The concept of destination image refers to the perceptions an individual holds of a tourism destination. This stems from a range of attributes and feelings about the destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004b). These perceptions tend to be facilitators for destination choice and attractiveness (Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Moreover, the tourism experience is also vulnerable to the effects of a wide range of natural and manmade risk events such as natural disasters, contagious diseases, cultural and language difficulties, and criminal and terrorist attacks (Brun, 1992; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Awareness of these events might affect the minds of potential travelers and their intentions to travel (Lehto, Douglas, & Park, 2008; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). For this reason, risk perception in the tourism context refers to the perceptual uncertainties that expose an individual to misfortunes and dangers of any nature at any stage of any journey (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Reichel, Fuchs, & Uriely, 2007).

Regarding components, it is widely acknowledged that destination image is made up of three components: cognition, affection and conation (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Notably, recent research acknowledges risk perception as a cognitive-affective phenomenon that affects an individual's behavioral intentions (Becken et al., 2016). The cognitive evaluations of image and risk perceptions usually refer to the knowledge of a destination and are usually assessed on the basis of attributes (Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Shim & You, 2015). Image attributes tend to correspond to the activities, attractions and resources that make a tourism destination attractive (Beerli & Martín, 2004b), while risk attributes tend to correspond to the dangers and problems that jeopardize the safety and comfort of travelers at the destination (Reichel et al., 2007). The affective evaluations of both concepts often refer to personal feelings towards a place and these are generally assessed through looking at

emotions. In image studies the most common approach is four bipolar feelings (Russell, Ward, & Pratt, 1981), whereas risk studies have identified that risks awaken emotional responses like anxiety, dread, fear and worry (Larsen et al., 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Trumbo et al., 2016). For both literatures, the intent component (conation) represents the likelihood of travelling and is assessed through questions related to the probability of visiting a place in the future (Hsu, Wolfe, & Kang, 2004; Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002; Wang & Hsu, 2010). Given this, it is worth highlighting once again that although destination image and risk perception were mostly examined as separate constructs in tourism research, their conceptualization reveals interesting and important similarities, as both concepts present a composition based on cognitive and affective evaluations linked to behavioral intentions.

As antecedents of destination perceptions, previous research shows that perceived images and risks are affected by both personal factors (e.g. gender, age, nationality, income and education) and stimulus factors such as past travel experience and information sources (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Findings from previous research have not proved fully conclusive. This doctoral thesis centers on, and further investigates this topic, taking the variables of gender, age and education to investigate their role in shaping individuals' perceptions of image and risk. Past travel experience was also the focus of this research as previous models proved its influence in shaping the perceptions of tourism destinations (Schroeder, Pennington-Gray, Kaplanidou, & Zhan, 2013; Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, & Winter, 2014). Subjective knowledge is also recognized as an influence on destination perceptions (Kerstetter & Cho, 2004), and this is also examined in this study.

To provide a rationale for the compendium of articles, the specific motives and gaps that prompted each of the three publications are outlined below.

The need to compare the two concepts prompted the determination to conduct the first publication of this doctoral thesis. This compares the cognitive and affective evaluations of destination image and risk perception. While both approaches are in some ways similar, the content of each is distinct and polarized. In this respect, a careful analysis of the literature shows that image studies reflect the positive characteristics of a tourism destination, while risk studies tend to focus on the negative connotations (Chew & Jahari, 2014). The first publication thus aims to verify this contrast by comparing cognitive and affective evaluations as well as providing evidence of this positive-negative duality.

The second article focuses on risk perception as perceived risks in the tourism literature requires a deeper analysis because of its assessment discrepancies. The tourism literature has been paying increasing attention to perceived risks (Sohn & Yoon, 2016), attracting constant interest from tourism researchers over the past three decades (Chew & Jahari, 2014). As a result, risk perception studies have flourished and the concept has been approached in new ways. This has given rise to a large number of measurement scales assessing various elements of risk. One of the reasons for questioning the research on perceived risk stems from this operational inconsistency within the construct across several studies. Even though a number of travel risks were revealed in the literature, a lack of consensus on what to take into consideration impedes a reliable assessment. The second article narrows this gap and provides a more comprehensive analysis of perceived travel risks, developing a wide-ranging measurement scale. Firstly, this article identifies what risks potential travelers may perceive when planning an international trip, and then evaluates the variables influencing them (e.g. gender, age, level of education, and past travel experience). This contributes to the existing body of tourism literature by identifying a broad spectrum of perceived risk and by proposing a scientific framework to better assess risk perception in quantitative tourism research.

The analysis shed light on certain parallels between image and risk perceptions, which in turn assisted in combining them in one construct, and leading to a more thorough evaluation of tourism destinations. In this sense, the third article merges the cognitive and affective components of both image and risk perceptions into a single construct, called destination perceptions. In accordance with previous research (Chew & Jahari, 2014), the third study also follows the recent move towards integrating image and risk perceptions, and examines various literatures to formulate a common framework for the better understanding of destination perceptions and individuals' behavior intentions. There is the need to note that the tourism literature has neglected the impact of the cognitive and affective evaluations on actual rather than intentions to visit a tourism destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; P. J. Chen et al., 2013). Yet, this study seeks to outline the relative impact of each destination perception component when predicting the intentions of individuals. This is done indirectly via overall perception, and thus a conceptual model was proposed and tested. This was intended to examine the structural relationships among the constructs of subjective knowledge, past travel experience, destination perceptions and intentions to visit.

The following section presents the general aim of this doctoral thesis and the specific research objectives of each publication. This is followed by three chapters

corresponding to the three papers in this study encompassed under the topic "Destination Image and Risk Perception: An Integrative Perspective". Lastly, the general conclusions detail the outcome of each research objective, the main contributions made, the main limitations of this doctoral thesis, and possible future lines of research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

This section outlines the general purpose of this doctoral thesis and the specific research objectives of each of the three required publications. The title of the thesis is "Destination Image and Risk Perception: An Integrative Perspective" and the ultimate purpose is:

- ✓ To propose and examine a travel behavior model that is able to capture both the positive and negative aspects influencing individuals' intentions to visit a tourism destination, with the dual image-risk concept as a theoretical basis.

Each article focuses on a specific step to finally bring the literatures of destination image and risk perception together, in terms of cognitive and affective evaluations, in a quantitative study. The specific research objectives of each publication are indicated below with an introductory explanation summarising the research gaps.

In tourism research, destination image and risk perception have been studied and assessed as separate concepts. The literature reveals that image studies tend to reflect the positive characteristics of a tourism destination, while risk studies tend to focus on its negative connotations. In light of this disclosure, the first publication aims to analyze this contrast by comparing the terminology used to describe the cognitive attributes in each literature. The major focus was given to the cognitive evaluations as they are well developed and established in both literatures, image and risk, which allowed a proper comparison to identify the similitudes and differences in relation to the cognitive attributes. The affective evaluations were not included in the analysis because feelings in the risk perception literature present a more complex nature, which limited the assessment in a systematic and structured way, unlike the affective attributes of destination image literature. The first study is entitled "Destination image versus risk perception" and contributes to the methodology of applying quantitative approaches to individuals evaluating images and risks of places.

Hence, the specific research objectives of the first publication are as follows:

1. To provide a summary of the key cognitive attributes measuring destination image and risk perception, respectively.
2. To compare these cognitive attributes with regard to descriptive terms.
3. To outline the positive-negative duality between image and risk literatures in terms of cognitive evaluations.

The tourism experience is susceptible to the effects of a wide range of risk events and the impact of these may affect the minds of potential travellers. Despite previous tourism research revealing a number of perceived risks, a lack of homogeneity in conceptualizing and measuring the concept has led to some confusion about how to assess risk perception in tourism research and to incomparability between studies. Consequently, the second article of this doctoral thesis aims to narrow this research gap and explores several key indicators contributing to an individual's perception of risk in international travel. In this regard, it is important to identify what risks individuals may perceive when planning an international trip and to assess if these perceptions vary according to their characteristics. The second article is entitled "Investigating perceived risks in international travel" and sheds light on the complexity of risk-related perceptions and their variation on the basis of socio-demographic and behavioral antecedents.

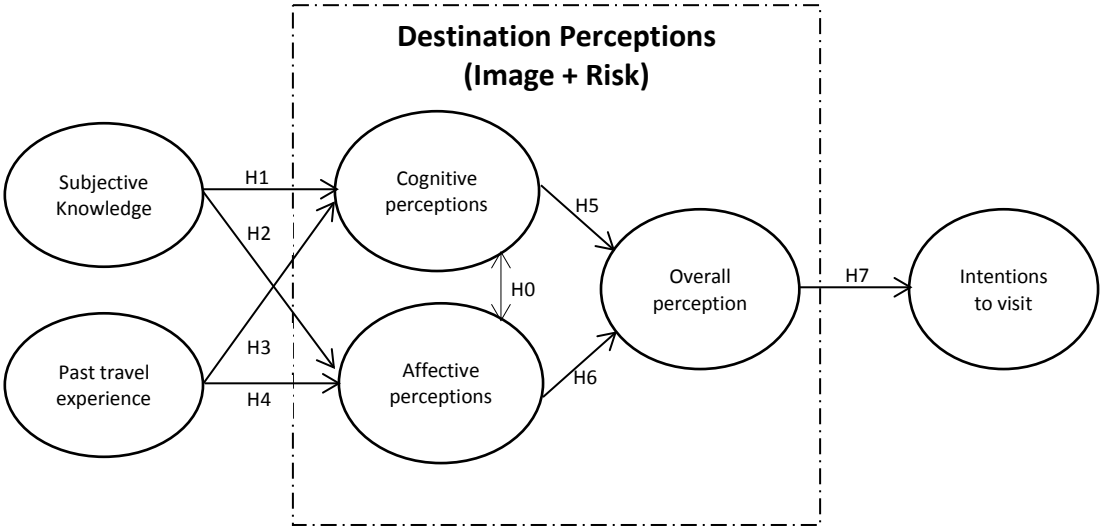
This gives rise to the following research objectives:

1. To identify the primary risk dimensions associated with international travel.
2. To develop a comprehensive scale for measuring risk perception.
3. To determine whether the degree of perceived risk associated with each dimension is influenced by socio-demographic variables or past travel experience, and in the case that it is, to what extent.

Integrating image and risk perceptions is important as both represent a tourism destination and affect future travel behavior. In this regard, the third article "Image and risk perceptions: An integrated approach" followed on from research suggestions in the previous publications, and the recent academic tendency towards integrating them. Despite this trend, few tourism researchers have analyzed them together within the same study, and none have combined them within the same construct. Consequently, this research aims to address this research gap and conducts an empirical study that merges the cognitive and affective evaluations of both image and risk perceptions into one construct, called destination perceptions. Furthermore, it examines the theoretical and empirical evidence of the causal relationships among the

constructs of subjective knowledge, past travel experience, destination perceptions (which include both cognitive and affective constructs) and the conative construct, intention to visit (Figure 1). Accordingly, it is important to formulate and test a set of hypotheses regarding the causal relationships between the constructs of the travel behavior model.

Figure 1. Conceptual model



Given this, the third article addresses the following research objectives:

1. To offer an integrated approach to destination perceptions by merging image and risk perceptions in terms of cognitive and affective evaluations.
2. To explore the influence of subjective knowledge and past travel experience on the cognitive and affective evaluations of destination perceptions.
3. To examine the influence of cognitive and affective evaluations on the overall perception of tourism destinations.
4. To analyze the influence of overall perception on intention to visit.

This doctoral thesis ultimately contributes to the existing body of tourism literature by providing a model that simultaneously evaluates both image and risk perceptions of a tourism destination, combining them in one construct. This single construct in a travel behavior model offers a more comprehensive way to analyze the perceptions an individual has of a tourism destination, as both positive and negative attributes, and emotions, are taken into account.

PUBLICATION 1
Destination Image versus Risk Perception

Reproduction of the paper published in the Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research

DESTINATION IMAGE VERSUS RISK PERCEPTION

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The literature on destination image and risk perception studies was reviewed to provide tourism researchers with a summary of the key cognitive attributes identified in both literatures. A content analysis was conducted, and the main findings revealed an overlap between the attributes assessing each concept in terms of cognition. This is due to the fact that image studies tend to describe the attributes of tourism destinations positively, whereas risk studies tend to adopt the negative version of them. Theoretical implications and suggestions for future research studies are discussed.

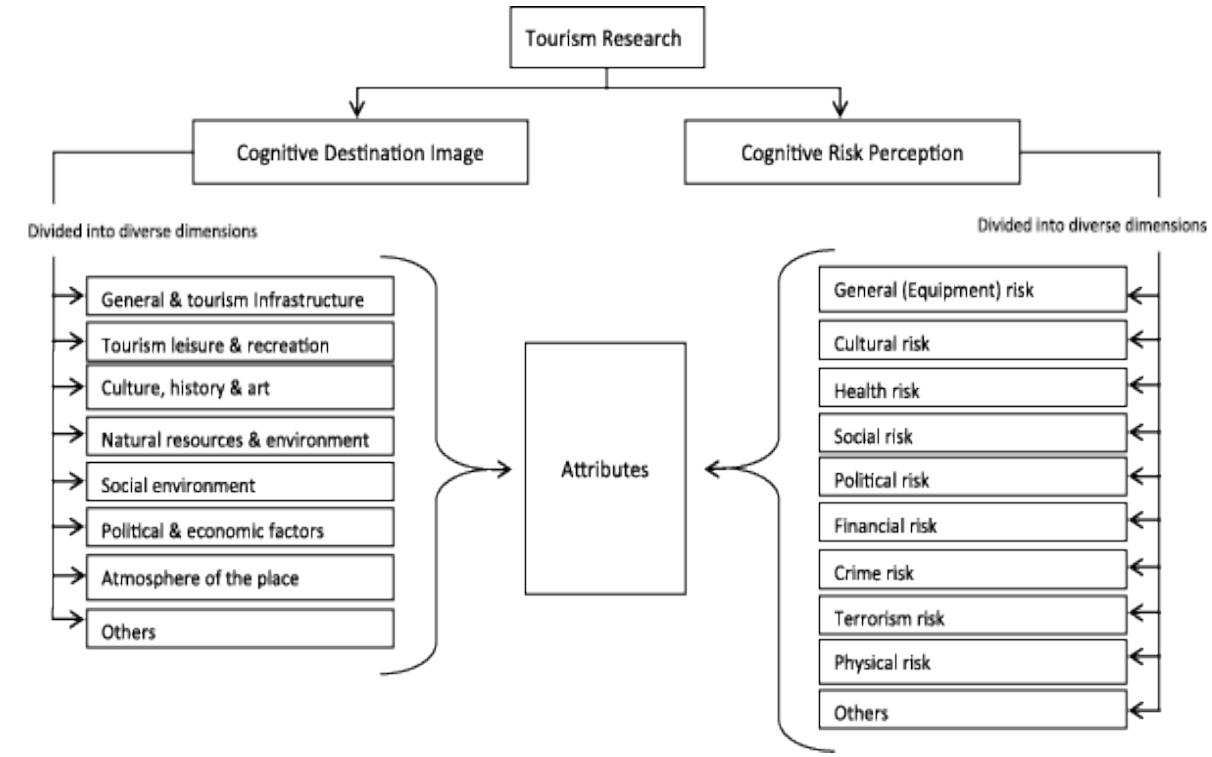
Keywords: *destination image; risk perception; attributes*

INTRODUCTION

The literatures on destination image and risk perception are well established in tourism research, and academics have a wealth of both literatures at their disposal. Yet, destination image and risk perception have been studied and assessed as separate constructs in tourism research. Researchers agree that destination image is formed by the components of cognition, affection, and conation (Pike & Ryan, 2004; Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil, 2007) and that the holistic image of a tourism destination is formed as a result of cognitive and affective evaluations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). However, risk perception is not divided into components but formed by typologies containing several cognitive attributes related to risks that tourists take at any stage of any journey (Fuchs, 2013; He, Park, & Roehl, 2013; Reichel, Fuchs, & Uriely, 2007). This risk perception interpretation separates rather than incorporates cognitive and affective evaluations, as emotions are not usually taken into account (Yang & Nair, 2014). Figure 1 shows the conceptual map of cognition of destination image and risk perception.

In tourism research, an image of a destination can be perceived as positive or negative. Destination image is generally presented as the perceptual representations an individual

Figure 1. Conceptual Map of Cognitive Destination Image and Risk Perception



Source: Adapted from Beerli and Martín (2004) and Reisinger and Mavondo (2006).

holds about a destination when considering a range of attributes and emotions (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). These representations tend to be facilitators for destination choice, attractiveness, and visitor satisfaction. Yet positive images of a destination are not the only factors influencing where tourists choose to go; the degree of risk perception is also a key consideration (Law, 2006; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013).

Traveling involves some risks, and these can be defined as "the shocks, threats and disasters that can negatively impact the tourism industry" (Law, 2006, p. 290). Thus, the perception of risk is "the possibility of various misfortunes which might befall tourists in the process of travelling or at its destination" (Tsaur, Tzeng, & Wang, 1997, p. 798). Risk perception is generally conceptualized as perceptions of uncertainties that a person who is vulnerable to misfortunes and/or to dangers of any nature may be exposed to when traveling to, or at, the destination (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Reichel et al., 2007). Tourism experiences are then susceptible to all sorts of natural or man-made risks. Some risks may be more salient than others in a given destination (Law, 2006), and awareness of the risk might discourage people from traveling to that destination, impeding tourist arrivals (Fuchs, 2013; Lehto, Douglas, & Park, 2008; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998). Risk perceptions can therefore damage the tourism industry (Sönmez, 1998) and inhibit travel (Um & Crompton, 1992). Hence, image literature

reflects the positive characteristics of a tourism destination, while risk literature tends to focus on its negative connotations (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2011; Chew & Jahari, 2014).

The decision to visit or to avoid a destination is partially based on the mental image tourists have of the destination. Some destination images may appeal to the perceived safety/positive image, whereas others may appeal to the perceived risky/negative image. Prominent scholars support the call to interrelate risk perception and destination image literatures in order to benefit both theory and practice within the field (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Lepp, Gibson, & Lane, 2011; Qi, Gibson, & Zhang, 2009; Sönmez, 1998). In light of this need, our research examines the constructs of risk perception and destination image in terms of cognitive evaluations.

In the present study, 62 articles were reviewed and a summary of the key attributes measuring destination image and risk perception is provided. Findings revealed that the cognitive attributes assessing each construct often overlap, but they are described differently. In image studies, the attributes are described positively, whereas in risk studies, they are described negatively. Comparative tables (Tables 2 to 9) show the positive–negative duality in the image and risk terminology used to describe cognitive attributes. In this context of overlap, the main goal of this study is to outline the duality between image and risk literatures in terms of cognitive attributes, and the main contribution is to fuse and unify both literatures in terms of cognitive evaluations. This study expands on existing literature on the subject and gives image and risk researchers new insights into the field.

METHODOLOGY

A content analysis was conducted with the aim of comparing the cognitive attributes of destination image and risk perception in the tourism field. Content analysis is a research method defined as “a phase of information-processing in which communications content is transformed, through objective and systematic application of categorization rules, into data that can be summarized and compared” (Paisley, 1969, p. 133). Initially, the destination image and risk perception articles reviewed were accessed electronically and gathered from the following tourism academic journals in Journal Citation Reports (JCR): *Annals of Tourism Research*, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Tourism Geographies*, and *Tourism Management* (Table 1).

The articles were searched for on each publisher’s website and the selection process followed two consecutive steps (Figure 2). First, the title, abstract and keywords sections of

the articles were scrutinized using the keywords "destination image," "tourism image," "risk perception," and "perceived risk," and the articles were dated between 2000 and 2015. This first exploration provided 227 articles of destination image and 64 articles of risk perception. Second, the methodology and findings sections of the 291 articles were scrutinized using three criteria: The articles had to (1) use a structured method for data collection; (2) provide detailed information on the attributes, items, or variables; and (3) assess the destination image and risk perception of a tourism destination. Only articles fulfilling the criteria were selected. Following this selection process, 62 articles were determined relevant, 45 of these were related to destination image, and 17 to risk perception.

Table 1. Distribution of the Sample

Journal	Impact Factor (2015)	Destination Image, No. of Articles	Risk Perception, No. of Articles
Annals of Tourism Research	2.685	5	1
International Journal of Tourism Research	1.314	7	3
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	0.736	11	4
Journal of Travel Research	2.442	5	4
Tourism Geographies	1.695	2	0
Tourism Management	2.554	15	5
Total		45	17

Content analysis was then used to identify the cognitive attributes of the 62 articles and the terminology used to describe them. The attributes were individually identified from the tables provided in the findings section of the analyzed articles. Most of the attributes proved to be common to both literatures, and the terminology mostly consisted of adjectives. A total of 44 cognitive attributes were identified, which were then grouped into seven preestablished dimensions in accordance with Beerli and Martín (2004): tourism infrastructure, tourism leisure and recreation, culture and history, natural resources and environment, social environment, political and economic factors, and the atmosphere of the place, with an additional dimension called "others". The eight dimensions correspond to Tables 2 to 9, respectively.

Finally, the reliability of an academic research means that the findings of a study should be inherently repeatable. According to Kassarjian (1977), the reliability of a content analysis is related to the formulation of consistent and cohesive dimensions and to the interrelated interjudge agreement. In general, the validity of a study refers to the extent to which a test measures what it was intended to measure. In this regard, this study divided the attributes into preestablished dimensions. Three evaluators checked the resulting categorization to guarantee the consistency of the results. When there were discrepancies, the evaluators

discussed the classification of the resulting attributes and terms until an agreement was reached. This process ensured the validity of the findings.

FINDINGS

The findings (Tables 2 to 9) show that cognitive attributes measuring destination image perception generally coincide with the cognitive attributes that assess risk perception. Therefore, image and risk studies share practically the same attributes. The main perceptible difference is that image studies tend to positively describe the attributes of tourism

Figure 2. Methodology

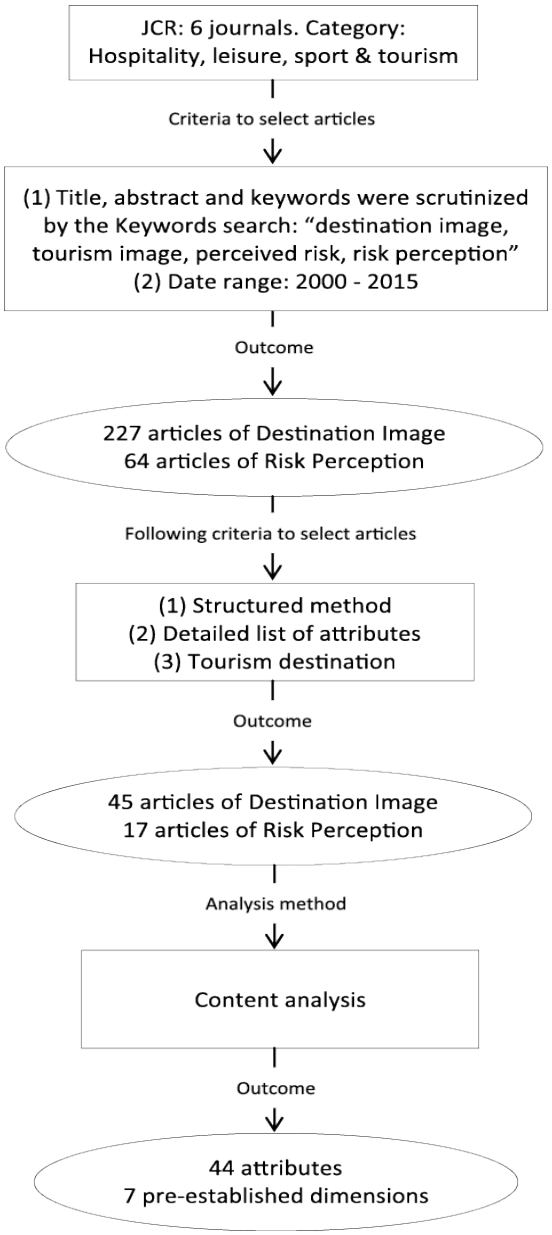


Table 2. Tourism Infrastructure: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Tourism industry	Advanced/growing	5	11	—	0	0
General/tourism infrastructure	Adequate/good/high-quality/organized/well developed	15	33	Crisis/inadequate/poor/problems	2	11
Tourism/travel information and services	Available/convenient/enough/effective/excellent/good/many/useful/well organized/updated	20	44	Not of quality	1	6
Accommodation	Comfortable/suitable/good or high (service, quality, availability)/well-known/plenty/modern/unique/wide variety	35	77	Problems/risk/substandard	3	17
Restaurants	Appealing/many/plenty/good or high (service, quality, availability)/wide variety or selection	17	37	Concern about/poor	3	17
Private/public transportation	Convenient/efficient/good/reliable/well developed	17	37	Breakdown/problems	2	11
Traffic (flow)/roads/ streets	Well communicated/good/lack or low degree	5	11	Accidents/increase of/jams	8	47
Health/medical facilities	Adequate/modern/well developed/sound	6	13	Concern/problems/risk/poor	4	23
Telecommunication facilities	Sound	1	2	Inconvenient/insufficient	1	6
Equipment and organization	-	0	0	Failure/problems/risk	4	23
Access(ibility)	Easy	9	20	Problems	1	6

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 3. Tourism Leisure and Recreation: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Adventure, sport, outdoor, and water activities	Adequate/exciting/good/many/quality/great/wide (variety)/various/a lot/unique	25	55	—	0	0
Nightlife/entertainment	Attractive/good/great/quality/wide array or variety	25	55	—	0	0
Shops/shopping facilities	Cheap/convenient/fascinating/good/great/many/various/wide (variety)	31	68	Cheating when	1	6

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 4. Culture and History: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Cultural, tourist, or historical sites and attractions	A lot/attractive/nice/beautiful/excellent/plentiful/important/similar /interesting/rich/unique/well-known/wide array or variety	38	84	Crowded/polluted/no modern/deteriorated/lack of/problems	2	11
Cultural activities, fairs, events, exhibits, festivals, and shows	Full/good/many/great diversity/interesting/outstanding/wide array/ similar/unique/varied	22	48	—	0	0
Customs/culture/ethnicities/ ways of life/lifestyle	Diverse/interesting/nice/quality/unique/rich/strong/similar/varied	21	46	Barriers/different/not adjusted/negative impression or not accepted by locals/ misunderstanding	8	47
Cuisine/food/gastronomy	Appealing/exotic/wide selection or variety/good/familiar/fresh/ local/varied/quality/similar	25	55	Dislike taste/issues/lack of clean/sick/problems/ unhygienic	10	58
Commercialization/ crowdedness	Low degree or number/not touristy/crowded/uncrowded	5	11	Commercialized/crowded/ increase of tourists/overly touristy	6	35

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 5. Natural Resources and Environment: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Natural attractions	A lot/beautiful/breathtaking/many/gorgeous/scenic/ spectacular/unique/wonder	23	51	Disasters/hostile	11	65
Beaches	Beautiful/good/great/nice/tropical	13	28	—	0	0
Fauna and flora/ wilderness and wildlife	Abundant/fascinating/great (variety)/unique/varied/well preserved	11	24	Dangerous/fire/threatening	2	11
Climate/weather	Good/nice/pleasant	31	68	Bad/not appealing/risk/unexpected	3	17
Landscape/scenery	A lot/attractive/wonder/beautiful/breathtaking/fabulous/ spectacular	29	64	—	0	0
Cleanliness/hygiene/ sanitation	Acceptable/clean/good/high (levels, standard)/neat/ standard/tidy	21	46	Degradation/poor/improper/ problems/lack	4	23
Environment	Clean/friendly/green/neat/tidy/unpolluted/unspoiled/ preserved	20	44	Concern/degradation/increase or severe pollution/polluted	4	23

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 6. Social Environment: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Local people	Courteous/friendly/open/hospitable/receptive/interesting/helpful/ nice/honest/trustworthy/welcoming	38	84	Degradation of the attitude/ hostile/lack of/primitive/sickly/ unfriendly	9	53
Quality of life/ standard of living	Good/high	7	15	—	0	0
Communication	Easy to/few or no problems, difficulties/lack of language barrier	7	15	Difficulties/language barriers	5	29

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 7. Political and Economic Factors: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Political atmosphere	Stable	8	17	Coup/instability/rebel/turmoil/risk/unrest	11	65
Safety/security	High/offers/safe/secure	34	75	—	0	0
Crime/violence	—	0	0	Attacks/increase/risk/serious/victim/witnessed	12	70
Terrorism/war	—	0	0	Attacks/concern/explosion/targeted by/vulnerable	16	94
Drugs/physical aspects	—	0	0	Assault/danger/hurt/fear/injury/risk/side effects/traffic/worries	8	47
Diseases	—	0	0	Contagious/epidemic/infectious/lots/sick/outbreak/tropical/ill	15	88
Travel costs/money/ prices	Adequate/cheap/decent/good/ inexpensive/low/reasonable	20	44	Bribery/crisis/cheat/deceit/expensive/extra/increase/waste/ unexpected	11	65
Value for money	A lot of/good/worth	23	51	Bad/no/not good/not worth/not provide	5	29

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 8. Atmosphere of the Place: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Atmosphere/ destination/place	Adventure/appealing/exciting/enjoyable/exotic/good/famous/high-tech/ fascinating/fashionable/unique/interesting/peaceful/pleasant/relaxing	32	71	Chaotic/ unpredictable	1	6
Name/reputation	Good	8	17	—	0	0
Family/children	Good/many activities for/oriented/suitable/welcoming	8	17	—	0	0

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

Table 9. Others: Summary of Cognitive Attributes

Items	Destination Image (DI) Descriptive Terms	No. of DI Articles	Incidence %[a]	Risk Perception (RP) Descriptive Terms	No. of RP Articles	Incidence %[b]
Timing	Not a waste/timely services /reasonable	3	6	Delays/risk/time-consuming/many hours/too much time/waste of time	9	53
Personality/self-image	Consistent/fits	1	2	Damage/not reflect/positive	8	47
Way family, friends, and people think	Think highly	1	2	Disapprove/enhance social standing/worry/ negatively	9	53
Future success	—	0	0	Negatively/positively enhance	4	23

a. 100% = 45 articles of destination image. b. 100% = 17 articles of risk perception.

destinations, whereas risk studies tend to adopt the negative version of them. In this regard, comparing the terminology used, the most common words in image literature are "good" and "variety of." On the other hand, the most common words in risk literature are "problems" and "lack of." This illustrates that destination image studies measure the attributes in a positive way and denote abundance of choices, whereas risk perception studies assess them in a negative way and denote scarcity. Thus, positive and negative tourism experiences are evoked, respectively. This positive–negative duality of the cognitive attributes mirrors the twofold explanation given in the introduction, between the positivism of destination image studies and the negativism of risk perception research (Chew & Jahari, 2014).

Regarding the incidence percentage of the attributes used to measure cognitive evaluations, there is the need to highlight that destination image literature does not use attributes with inherent negative meanings, such as crime, terrorism, or disease, while in the risk perception literature, these show the highest levels of incidence—70%, 94%, and 88%, respectively (Table 7). In this study, the data analysis demonstrates more attributes related to political and financial factors in the risk perception literature than in the destination image literature, with the exception of safety and value for money. In contrast, destination image literature uses more attributes related to tourism infrastructure and attractions compared with the risk perception literature, such as accommodation (Table 2) and cultural sites (Table 4). Interestingly, customs and food issues were used fairly equally in both literatures—46% and 55% in the destination image literature and 47% and 58% in the risk perception literature (Table 4).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to outline the duality between image and risk literatures in terms of cognitive attributes. Therefore, this study asserts that the attributes that separately assess image and risk constructs frequently overlap as image studies use positive terminology to measure the attributes of tourism destinations, while risk literature adopts the negative version of them.

This study considers that the cognitive evaluation (image–risk) of a tourism destination is composed of the 44 attributes. Accordingly, future research could use these attributes to eliminate duplicate assessment when measuring cognition. It is recommended that future cognitive evaluations include risks that have inherent negative connotations (e.g., crime, terrorism, robberies, kidnappings, and diseases) and that have not been considered previously in image studies. According to several authors, these risks may form the negative

image of a tourism destination (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Avraham, 2004; Chew & Jahari, 2014). This suggests that risks might become part of the cognition of a tourism destination and be analyzed as such. This study asserts the suitability of incorporating risk attributes into the overall cognitive evaluations. How will the inclusion of risk elements in image literature affect overall cognitive evaluations of a tourism destination? In future research, academics should use the attributes presented in previous tables (Tables 2 to 9) to gain a more holistic view of the perceptions of a tourism destination. Further investigations could include the addition and/or deletion of items, or even a modification of the category structure.

With regard to affective evaluations, new considerations should also be explored in future research. The affective component of destination image proposed by Russell, Ward, and Pratt (1981) is widely accepted, and yet risk perception research has failed to recognize risk as a cognitive–affective phenomenon. Hence, looking at the affective side of risk is recommended. Risk perception appears to be closely related to the feelings of uncertainty, worry, fear, and anxiety (Larsen, Brun, & Øgaard, 2009; Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005, 2006). Thus, these risk feelings need to be explored more deeply as the affective evaluations of a tourism destination. Doing this would expand the already accepted theory of affection. Future research is also needed to develop a new conceptual model for overall perception of tourism destinations by applying the findings and discussions revealed in this research.

This study contributes to the literature by identifying critical indicators of image and risk perceptions that influence individual awareness and decisions toward a tourism destination. Hence, this study makes a methodological contribution to the application of tourists' image and risk of places. Enhancing both concepts in tourism will increase awareness among tourism practitioners of the importance of their analysis.

Finally, the findings of this study have implications for practitioners. The image and risk attributes presented can clearly indicate to practitioners the content of the necessary literacy and can help them assess where improvements are needed at a tourism destination. Carrying out an analysis of tourists' perceptions could be used to visualize the strengths and weaknesses of places and furnish practitioners with a more holistic view of the market positions of their tourism destination in comparison to their competitors. Communication strategies for destination marketers of tourism can focus on the aspects individuals evaluate less positively. In cases where individuals show high levels of risk perception concerning a destination, tourism practitioners and official policymakers can then establish risk management plans to strengthen confidence. Based on this, tourism practitioners can develop strategic plans to enhance the positive aspects of their tourism destination and, at

the same time, minimize negative perceptions of the destination, thus improving their competitiveness.

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Submitted May 27, 2016
Accepted February 9, 2017
Refereed Anonymously

PUBLICATION 2
Investigating Perceived Risks in International Travel

Reproduction of the paper accepted in Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism

INVESTIGATING PERCEIVED RISKS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

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This study analyses perceived risks in international tourism and looks at how several key indicators contribute to the individuals' perception of risk in international travel. The purpose of this article is twofold: firstly, to explore the primary risk dimensions associated with international travel; and secondly, to investigate whether sociodemographic variables and past travel experience influence perceived risks. To achieve these purposes, a scale of perceived risks was previously tested using a sample of 530 respondents. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted and a scale of five factors of perceived risks towards travelling internationally was obtained, namely: physical risk, destination risk, value-time risk, personal concerns and inconveniences. This study also revealed that perceptions of risk involved while travelling internationally vary according to personal characteristics, such as gender, age and level of education, as well as past travel experience. Theoretical and practical implications are also discussed.

Keywords: *Risk perception, risk factors, international travel, past travel experience, sociodemographic background*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism experience is susceptible to the effects of a wide range of natural and manmade risk events such as natural disasters, contagious diseases, wars and terrorist attacks (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Lehto, Douglas, & Park, 2008; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). Awareness of these events might exacerbate the level of risk perception and discourage people from travelling internationally to a tourism destination or even to an entire region or country (Fuchs, 2013; Lehto et al., 2008; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). Given that, safety and security has become a determining attribute for international travellers (Omar, Abukhalifeh, & Mohamed, 2015). Besides, the impact of such events affects not only the natural environment and the immediate local communities, but also the minds of potential travellers (Lehto et al., 2008). In this regard, it is important to identify what risks potential travellers may perceive when planning an international trip and assess if these perceptions vary according to individuals' characteristics. Hence, this study sheds light on the complexity of risk-related perceptions among travellers.

In an attempt to provide further insights into this field, the purposes of this study are (1) to determine whether the degree of perceived risk associated with each factor differs according to gender, age, level of education and past travel experience and how and (2) to propose a comprehensive scale for risk perception measurement in tourism research. Accordingly, two research questions guide this study: (1) Do sociodemographic variables and past travel experience influence perceptions of risk associated with international travel? And if so how? (2) How can the scale for risk perception measurement in tourism research be operationalized?

This study contributes to the literature by proposing a scientific framework to better assess risk perception in tourism quantitative research for international travel. In addition, it indicates which factors influence perceived risks.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Risk perception in tourism research

The literature on risk perception is well established in tourism research. Originally, academics identified perceived risks associated with consumer behaviour and the main risk dimensions brought to light were physical, financial, performance, social, psychological and time (Conchar, Zinkhan, Peters, & Olavarrieta, 2004; Dowling & Staelin, 1994; Roselius, 1971). In tourism literature, the concept was pioneered by Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992) and the three main dimensions were physical-equipment, vacation and destination risks. Recently and with the current intensification of risk events that may threaten the safety of travellers, numerous authors have examined perceived risks in the tourism field, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Most risk perception studies approach the study of perceived risks differently. Over the past two decades this has resulted in a large number of different scales, with a large variety of risk typologies and risk attributes. A closer analysis of previous scales reveals a lack of homogeneity in conceptualizing and operationalizing the concept. Hence, a lack of consensus on what elements to take into account when determining risk perception and its measurement scale has led to confusion on how to assess risk perception in tourism research.

For some authors 'attributes' are considered 'typologies' and for other authors the opposite is the case. For instance, some authors consider terrorism as an attribute of the political risk typology (Dolnicar, 2005; Gray & Wilson, 2009; Seddighi, Nuttall, & Theocharous, 2001) or as

an attribute of the physical risk typology (Fuchs, 2013; Reichel, Fuchs, & Uriely, 2007), while other authors consider terrorism a risk perception typology (He, Park, & Roehl, 2013; Law, 2006; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005, 2006; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). Taking this into account, the concept of risk perception in tourism literature presents numerous and differing typology approximations. Consequently, these elements run the risk of giving results that are incomparable and non-generalizable across studies.

The tourism experience is not only influenced by consumer risks but it is also prone to be influenced by particular events such as adverse weather, natural disasters, contagious diseases, political unrest, hostile locals and crime, among others (Reichel et al., 2007; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Therefore, the scope of risks first introduced in consumer behaviour literature has been widened in tourism literature. Even though previous authors developed scales of perceived risks specific to travel, there is still the need to develop a more comprehensive itemized typology of perceived risks related to international travel, and this study addresses that gap.

This study contributes to the existing body of tourism literature by providing a measurement scale for risk perception, which includes all possible aspects of risk that could be used in an instrument to assess the concept. Perceived risks included in scales developed in previous tourism studies were identified, redefined and reorganized as follows. The 26 risk typologies identified are shown in Table 1 and Table 2 presents the 50 risk attributes identified.

Influences on risk perception

In reality, not all travellers perceive risks in the same way. According to Roehl and Fesenmaier (1992), the significance of each risk dimension varies according to individuals and their particular circumstances. Previous studies indicate that risk perceptions are influenced by personal factors such as gender, age, nationality, income and education (Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002; Lepp & Gibson, 2003, 2008; Pizam et al., 2004; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005, 2006; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a, 1998b) and by stimulus factors, such as travel information search (Kozak, Crotts, & Law, 2007; Pizam et al., 2004; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a) and past travel experience (Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). This research is principally interested in gender, age, education and past travel experience as factors that shape tourists' risk perceptions towards travelling internationally.

Regarding the sociodemographic background, researchers revealed that risk perception varies according to gender (George & Swart, 2012; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Pizam et al., 2004;

Qi, Gibson, & Zhang, 2009; Reichel et al., 2007), contrary to Moreira (2008) and Sönmez and Graefe (1998b), who did not find gender influences perceptions of risk. Lepp and Gibson (2003) found that men perceived health and food risks to a lesser degree than women, while war, political stability, crime, cultural barriers and political-religious dogma risks did not vary by gender. Qi et al. (2009) found that women perceived risk of violence more than men and, that men perceived health and cultural risks more than women. Yet, men and women were not different when it comes to perceiving socio-psychological risks. Reichel et al. (2007) revealed that men were concerned about risk dimensions related to socio-psychological, socio-political, mass tourism and behavioural risks, whereas women were more worried about physical, expectations and financial risks.

Table 1. Risk perception typologies

	Environment/Natural risk	Financial/Monetary risk	Physical risk	Psychological risk	Social risk	Time risk	Functional-Equipment risk	Satisfaction/Expectation risk	Health/Disease risk	Political risk	Terrorism risk	Travel/Tourism l/General risk	Food risk	Cultural risk	Crime risk	Planning/Performance risk	Political and religious dogma	Property risk	Site/Destination-related risk	Mass risk	Behavioural risk	Interpersonal risk	Transportation risk	Travel service risk	Concern for/about others	Human induced risks	∑
Chew & Jahari, 2014		x	x	x	x																						4
Chiu & Lin, 2011															x												1
Dolnicar, 2005	x								x	x						x		x									5
Fuchs, 2013		x	x	x	x			x		x									x	x	x						9
Fuchs & Reichel, 2011	x	x		x	x								x											x		x	7
Fuchs et al., 2012											x			x					x	x							4
He et al., 2013		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																10
Gray & Wilson, 2009			x		x					x																	3
Jonas et al., 2011									x			x															2
Law, 2006	x								x		x																3
Lepp & Gibson, 2003									x	x	x		x	x	x		x										7
Lepp et al., 2011														x	x				x			x					4
Lin & Hsu, 2013												x															1
Maser & Weiermair, 1998												x															1
Morakabati, 2011																			x								1
Morakabati et al., 2012												x															1
Moreira, 2008												x															1
Park & Reisinger, 2010	x											x															2
Reichel et al., 2007		x	x	x	x			x		x									x	x	x						9
Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005		x			x				x		x			x													5
Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x											13
Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009		x							x		x	x							x								5
Schroeder et al., 2013												x															1
Seabra et al., 2013												x															1
Seddighi et al., 2001										x																	1
Sharifpour et al., 2014a			x									x							x								3
Sharifpour et al., 2014b			x									x							x								3
Simpson & Siguaw, 2008		x							x			x			x			x	x				x	x	x		9
Sönmez & Graefe, 1998		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																10
Tavitiyaman and Qu, 2013												x															1
Tsaur et al., 1997			x				x																				2
∑	4	10	10	7	9	3	4	5	10	9	8	13	2	5	5	2	1	2	9	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	

Table 2. Risk perception attributes

	Accidents	Criminal attacks	Murders	Robberies	Muggings	Kidnappings	Natural disasters	Adverse weather/environment	Terrorist attacks	Sickness/Illness	Contagious/infectious disease	Lack of access to healthcare	Political instability/turmoil	War/Military conflict	Strikes	Increase of travel costs	Financial/Extra expenses	Racism/Discrimination	Hostile attitude of locals	Harassment by locals	Sexual harassment	Cultural barrier/misunderstanding	Language/communication barrier	Foreign way of life	Trip not self-image/personality	Trip disapproval by friends/family	Getting lost	Loss of money/items/luggage	Dissatisfaction/bad performance	Disappointing experiences	Waste of time	Bad value for money	Accommodation problems	Not clean food and water	Dislike food taste	Lack of hygiene	Transportation problems	Bad roads	Chaotic traffic/bad driving	Pollution	Crowded/Commercialized	Fraud/Deceit/Cheating	Equipment/Organization problems	Telecommunication problems	Electrical power outage	Police and legal issues	Being arrested	Drug problems	Time consuming	Delays	∑
Chew & Jahari, 2014							x										x								x	x			x				x																	7
Chiu & Lin, 2011		x		x																x	x																									x					6
Dolnicar, 2005				x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x											x			x	x	x		x		x															16
Floyd & Pennington-Gray, 2004	x	x					x		x	x																x		x		x				x																	8
Fuchs, 2013	x	x					x		x		x		x		x		x		x						x				x		x										x	x				x			16
Fuchs & Reichel, 2011	x	x					x	x	x				x		x		x		x						x				x																					12
Fuchs et al., 2012								x	x				x			x			x				x			x								x		x						x	x				x			12
He et al., 2013									x		x		x												x	x				x		x		x	x					x			x	x					x		13
Gray & Wilson, 2009		x					x	x	x				x							x	x	x														x								x				x			11
Jonas et al., 2011		x					x		x		x	x	x								x												x														x			9
Lepp et al., 2011		x				x			x		x	x	x	x					x			x	x											x				x												12
Lin & Hsu, 2013	x						x		x																							x	x																	6
Maser & Weiermair, 1998	x	x					x				x											x	x												x	x														9
Morakabati, 2011		x					x		x				x									x														x	x													5
Morakabati et al., 2012				x			x		x		x		x																																							7
Moreira, 2008	x	x					x		x							x			x																x			x	x	x										10
Park & Reisinger, 2010		x					x		x													x																													5
Reichel et al., 2007	x	x					x		x		x		x		x		x		x						x	x			x		x			x	x														18
Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005	x								x	x			x				x					x			x	x			x																						11
Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006	x		x	x					x	x			x				x					x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x																	20
Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009											x		x			x			x				x						x									x	x	x	x								x		11
Schroeder et al., 2013		x					x	x	x		x		x																				x																	7
Seabra et al., 2013	x								x	x			x													x			x		x	x																		9
Seddighi et al., 2001						x			x				x	x																																					4
Sharifpour et al., 2014a	x	x					x	x	x		x		x				x		x			x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x																		19
Sharifpour et al., 2014b	x	x					x	x	x		x		x				x		x			x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x																		19
Simpson & Siguaw, 2008	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x							x	x								x	x				x	x	x		x		x	x	x					x					20
Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013							x				x																																								2
Tsaur et al., 1997		x					x	x			x	x	x						x													x	x		x	x		x				x							13
∑	13	17	1	5	1	3	19	9	23	6	15	4	20	3	3	3	8	1	11	2	3	9	7	1	10	10	1	3	11	5	6	7	4	14	4	5	4	1	5	3	5	6	8	2	1	3	2	5	4	1	

Researchers have also reported that age influences risk perceptions (George & Swart, 2012; Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002). George and Swart (2012) found that older tourists were more concerned about becoming victims of crime. Gibson and Yiannakis (2002) revealed that perceptions of risk tended to decrease with age. However, Sönmez and Graefe (1998b) did not find age influenced risk perceptions. In addition, education has also been found to impact perceptions of risk (Sonmez & Graefe, 1998b). Individuals with a higher level of education had a more positive attitude towards international travel. As a consequence of these conflicting results, and the need to understand risk perception by the individual's sociodemographic characteristics, this study examines risk perception by gender, age and education.

Finally, previous studies indicate that perceived travel risks are affected by past travel experience. Research shows that risk perception decreases when past travel experience increases (Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b). Lepp and Gibson (2003) found that less experienced international travellers perceived a higher risk in relation to health, terrorism and food than more experienced travellers. Similarly, Sharifpour et al. (2014) found that past international travel experience is significantly related to perceived risk dimensions. Their results show that less experienced travellers perceive more risk in relation to physical, destination-related and general risks than more experienced tourists. However, Qi et al. (2009) found no significant relationship between previous travel experience and the level of perceived risks. Given these diverse results, there remains a need to further address the influences of past travel experience on risk perceptions. This issue is addressed in the present study.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling plan

A population of university members and a convenient sampling method were used. From the 553 questionnaires collected, 23 were deleted due to contradictory answers. The final valid sample was 530 respondents and their profile is shown in Table 3. Sample descriptive and frequency statistics were analysed using statistical software SPSS 21 for Windows.

Table 3. Profile of participants (N=530)

Variable	Sample (N=530)	Percentage (%=100)
Gender		
Female	393	74.2
Male	137	25.8

Age		
18-27	352	66,4
28-37	66	12,5
38-47	63	11,9
48+	49	9,2
Education		
High school	99	18.7
Bachelor's degree	260	49.1
Master's degree	82	15.5
Doctorate	47	8.9
Other	42	7.8
Nationality		
Spanish	502	94.7
Other	28	5.3
Nº past international trips (Last 5 years)		
1-5	339	64.0
6-10	119	22.5
11+	54	10.2
None	18	3.4
Nº of continents visited (Lifetime)		
1	287	54.2
2	144	27.2
3	64	12.1
4	25	4.7
5	2	0.4
None	8	1.5
Africa		
Visited Africa before	121	22.8
Not visited Africa before	409	77.2
America		
Visited America before	174	32.8
Not visited America before	356	67.2
Asia		
Visited Asia before	77	14.5
Not visited Asia before	453	85.5
Europe		
Visited other European countries before	502	94.7
Not visited other European countries before	28	5.3
Oceania		
Visited Oceania before	7	1.3
Not visited Oceania before	523	98.7

Research design and attribute development

The risk attributes were mined from the risk perception literature in the tourism field and the questionnaire was designed according to accumulated literature on perceived risks. In total, 50 risks specific to travel were identified (Table 2).

To ensure that these covered all risk-related issues and that the wording was appropriate, a content validity examination was conducted. The final version of the questionnaire was pilot-tested by university members through an online version in order to test comprehensibility, clarity and reliability. Finally, minor changes to wording were made.

Data collection

The questionnaire was developed to test the scale of perceived risks resulting from the attribute mining and identification. A structured, self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data and required approximately 10 minutes to complete. The questionnaire was online, ensuring anonymity and eliminating interviewer bias as well as the likelihood of socially desirable responses. In order to increase the response rate, an incentive was offered to all participants, with the chance to win a weekend for two people.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first collected sociodemographic data related to gender, age, level of education and nationality. With this the researchers could determine whether differences exist in risk perception among respondents. Information regarding past travel experience was collected using a multi-faceted approach. Respondents noted the number of trips made over the previous five years and continents visited in their lifetime. The second section comprised a multi-dimensional scale of 50 attributes of perceived risks, which had been previously identified in the tourism literature (Table 2). In an international pre-trip context for leisure purposes, respondents were requested to rate their level of perceived risk for each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The scale ranged from 1 = "no risk" to 7 = "very high risk". In line with previous studies (Reichel et al., 2007; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014), the respondents were asked about pre-trip perceptions in order to assess their level of risk prior to the potential experience. Moreover, all the items were presented randomly every time the questionnaire was conducted in order to reduce possible biases caused by the item sequence. Note that other available risk perception studies relied on reconstructing past travel experiences (Maser & Weiermair, 1998; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008).

Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS 21 software. Firstly, the validity and reliability of the analysis was examined by undertaking an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with the purpose of ensuring that the scale served the purpose of this research. A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Pearson correlations and independent sample *t* tests were performed to investigate the influences of sociodemographic variables and past travel experience variables on perceived risk factors associated with international travel.

FINDINGS

Exploratory factor analysis of risk attributes

An EFA was conducted to examine the appropriateness of each risk item in addition to improving the validity and reliability of the scale for measuring risk perception. The Kyser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measurement and Bartlett's test of sphericity were conducted to ensure that the data had sufficient inherent correlations to perform EFA. The KMO result of 0.968 indicated that sufficient items were predicted by each factor and the Bartlett's test was significant at the level of 0.000, which indicated that the variables were correlated highly enough to justify the use of EFA. Hence, EFA with principle component and variamax rotation was undertaken with the aim of reducing the dimensions of the risk attributes and identifying the determinant risk dimensions. The cut-off point of item inclusion in a factor was above 0.4. EFA performed item examination and all 50 risk attributes associated with international travel were grouped into 5 factors: (1) physical risks, (2) destination risks, (3) value-time risks, (4) personal concerns and (5) inconveniences. The total cumulative variance explained by these factors was 60.955%. The value of Cronbach's alpha for all the factors was satisfactory and above the recommended value of 0.7, which assured the reliability of the scale as well as the consistency between responses. These results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Exploratory Factor Analysis (N=530)

	Factor loading	Commu nalities	Mean score	Eigen-value	Variance (%)	α
Factor 1: Physical risks				**19.679**	**39.357**	**0.964**
Kidnappings	.894	.814	4.12			
Murders	.888	.808	4.02			
Criminal attacks	.882	.799	4.25			
Terrorist attacks	.870	.774	4.51			
War	.852	.748	4.71			
Contagious diseases	.839	.731	4.40			
Sexual harassment	.805	.696	3.82			
Being arrested	.772	.693	3.89			
Natural disaster	.768	.661	3.86			
Harassment by locals	.754	.666	3.47			
Muggings	.724	.688	4.32			
Drug problems	.681	.639	3.25			
Racism	.664	.646	3.38			
Political instability	.660	.556	3.75			
Not clean food/water	.645	.618	4.33			
Lack of healthcare	.610	.528	4.27			
Robberies	.595	.666	4.46			
Accidents	.525	.581	3.83			
Fraud/Deceit	.517	.637	4.15			
Police & legal issues	.504	.450	3.45			
Hostile locals	.439	.545	3.32			
Factor 2: **Destination risks**				**6.406**	**12.811**	**0.930**
Bad roads	.756	.673	2.91			
Chaotic traffic	.731	.634	3.20			
Transport problems	.649	.625	3.35			
Telecom. problems	.638	.563	3.00			
Lack of hygiene	.612	.619	3.77			
Equip.Org. problems	.602	.614	3.19			
Getting lost	.580	.512	3.21			

Electrical outage	.596	.631	2.80			
Loss of items	.593	.607	3.92			
Trip disapproval	.521	.474	2.24			
Dislike food	.515	.463	2.64			
Lodging problems	.518	.556	3.42			
Pollution	.505	.503	3.43			
Bad experiences	.480	.665	3.25			
Factor 3: Value-time risks				**1.733**	**3.465**	**0.869**
Extra expenses	.771	.689	3.57			
Extra travel costs	.722	.608	3.67			
Bad value for money	.598	.647	3.49			
Delays	.553	.623	3.13			
Long waiting times	.549	.642	3.13			
Crowded attractions	.528	.383	3.55			
Waste of time	.489	.572	2.74			
Sickness/Illness	.461	.400	3.46			
Factor 4: Personal concerns				**1.385**	**2.770**	**0.753**
Trip not self-image	.580	.526	2.50			
Dissatisfaction	.501	.658	2.93			
No adjust to lifestyle	.491	.548	2.48			
Factor 5: Inconveniences				**1.275**	**2.550**	**0.737**
Cultural barrier	.607	.610	3.10			
Language barrier	.561	.531	2.92			
Adverse weather	.566	.514	3.15			
Strikes	.439	.454	2.75			

Rotation method: Variamax with Kaiser. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Sociodemographic and past travel experience influences

ANOVA was used to determine the effect of certain variables on risk factors associated with international travel. The five risk factors were used as dependent variables, while gender, age groups, education and number of past trips were independent variables. A one-way ANOVA revealed that perceived risks vary based on gender, age and education.

As illustrated in Table 5, physical risk is the only risk factor that varies according to gender. The level of perceived physical risk was significantly different between male participants (Mean M=3.70, Standard Deviation SD=1.48) and female participants (M=4.07, SD=1.53). Women showed higher levels of perceived physical risks than men. No significant differences were found across gender for the other risk factors.

Age significantly influenced four risk factors. The youngest age group, from 18 to 27, was characterized by showing the highest levels of risk perception in relation to physical risks (M=4.18, SD=1.50), destination risks (M=3.30, SD=1.17), personal concerns (M=2.73, SD=1.30) and inconveniences (M=3.07, SD=1.19). The oldest age group showed the lowest levels of risk perception regarding physical risks (M=3.11, SD= 1.47) and personal concerns (M=2.17, SD=1.08) whereas the 28-37 age group showed the lowest levels of risk perception with regard to destination risks (M=2.80, SD=1.13) and inconveniences (M=2.66, SD=1.07). In

general, younger participants tend to show higher levels of perceived risks toward international travel than older participants. In other words, risk perception for international travel decreases with age.

Risk perception varies based on education. The level of perceived destination risks was significantly different between those who had high school education (M=3.46, SD=1.30) or a bachelor's degree (M=3.19, SD=1.17), compared to those who had a master's degree (M=2.97, SD=1.12) or a PhD degree (M=2.78, SD=1.02). Regarding value-time risks, significant differences were found between those who had high school (M=3.57, SD=1.36) and those who had a doctorate (M=2.96, SD=1.02). The level of perceived personal risk was significantly different between those who had high school (M=2.98, SD=1.43) and those who had a doctorate (M=2.26, SD=1.12). For risk of inconveniences, there were significant differences between those who had high school (M=3.28, SD=1.24) and a bachelor's degree (M=2.91, SD=1.15) compared to those who had a master's degree (M=2.84, SD=1.13) and a doctorate (M=2.79, SD=1.14). In general, the degree of perceived risks for these four risk factors decreases the higher the level of education.

Table 5. ANOVA - Influence of sociodemographic variables

Variables	Mean square	F	Significance
Gender			
Physical risks	14.205	6.097	0.014*
Destination risks	4.029	2.829	0.093
Value-time risks	1.237	0.842	0.359
Personal concerns	0.001	0.001	0.981
Inconveniences	3.159	2.248	0.134
Age			
Physical risks	19.755	8.768	0.000**
Destination risks	7.102	5.084	0.002**
Value-time risks	1.587	1.081	0.357
Personal concerns	5.310	3.187	0.024*
Inconveniences	3.997	2.867	0.036*
Education level			
Physical risks	2.091	0.888	0.471
Destination risks	4.914	3.503	0.008**
Value-time risks	3.587	2.470	0.044*
Personal concerns	4.932	2.967	0.019*
Inconveniences	3.587	2.576	0.037*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

As shown in Table 6, Pearson correlations showed that perceptions of risk varied significantly regarding past travel experience. Risk perception for international travel decreases the higher the number of past trips made and the more continents visited. Therefore, the least experienced travellers perceive higher levels of risk for international travel than the most experienced ones. More experienced travellers perceived less risk for physical risks factor than less experienced travellers; a pattern that is repeated for each of the five factors.

Table 6. Pearson - Influence of past travel experience

Variables		Nº Past trips abroad (Last 5 years)	Nº Continents visited (Lifetime)
Physical risks	Pearson correlation	-0.132**	-0.149**
	Significance (two-tailed)	0.002	0.001
	N	528	530
Destination risks	Pearson correlation	-0.165**	-0.261**
	Significance (two-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	528	530
Value-time risks	Pearson correlation	-0.059	-0.175**
	Significance (two-tailed)	0.177	0.000
	N	528	530
Personal concerns	Pearson correlation	-0.152**	-0.246**
	Significance (two-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	528	530
Inconveniences	Pearson correlation	-0.161**	-0.234**
	Significance (two-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	528	530

* p < .05; ** p < .01.

As presented in Table 7, independent *t* tests revealed that physical risk varied significantly $t(530) = -2.479$, $p < 0.05$ between those who have been to Africa (M=3.67, SD=1.50) and those who have not (M=4.06, SD=1.53), and $t(530) = -3.225$, $p < 0.01$ showed a significant difference between those who have been to America (M=3.67, SD=1.47) and those who have not (M=4.12, SD=1.54).

According to the results, those who have been to Africa, America and Asia perceive less risk for international travel compared to those who have not been to these continents. Destination risk varied significantly between those who have been to Africa (M=2.78, SD=1.11), America (M=2.83, SD=1.11) and Asia (M=2.67, SD=1.13), and those who have not. The perceived risk for those who have never travelled to Africa was (M=3.27, SD=1.19), America (M=3.32, SD=1.20) and Asia (M=3.25, SD=1.18).

Likewise, value-time risks varied significantly between those who have been to Africa (M=3.04, SD=1.13), America (M=3.11, SD=1.16) and Asia (M=3.00, SD=1.17) and those who have not. For those who had not travelled to Africa the perceived risk was (M=3.43, SD=1.22), America (M=3.45, SD=1.21) and Asia (M=3.40, SD=1.21). Personal concerns also varied significantly between those who have been to Africa (M=2.27, SD=1.17), America (M=2.23, SD=1.11) and Asia (M=2.21, SD=1.23) and those who have not been to Africa (M=2.73, SD=1.31), America (M=2.82, SD=1.34) or Asia (M=2.70, SD=1.29). Equally, inconveniences risk factor varied significantly between those who have been to Africa (M=2.56, SD=1.05), America (M=2.70, SD=1.14) and Asia (M=2.67, SD=1.06) and those who have not been to Africa (M=3.10, SD=1.31), America (M=3.11, SD=1.18) or Asia (M=3.03,

SD=1.19). In particular, prior visits to Africa and America reduce the perceived risk levels of the five factors for international travel.

Prior visits to other European countries only reduced the inconvenience risk factor $t(530) = -2.387$, $p < 0.05$; those who have visited other European countries before perceive lower levels of inconveniences (M=2.95, SD=1.17) compared with those who have not visited the rest of Europe (M=3.50, SD=1.21).

Table 7. Influence of continents visited on risk factors

	t Test for the equality of means			
	t	Significance (two-tailed)	Mean difference	Standard error difference
AFRICA (visited Africa before, not visited Africa before)				
Physical risks	-2.479	0.013*	-0.39161	0.15795
Destination risks	-4.013	0.000**	-0.48954	0.12199
Value-time risks	-3.083	0.002**	-0.38352	0.12442
Personal concerns	-3.508	0.000**	-0.46647	0.13299
Inconveniences	-4.432	0.000**	-0.53512	0.12073
AMERICA (visited America before, not visited America before)				
Physical risks	-3.225	0.001**	-0.45355	0.14062
Destination risks	-4.498	0.000**	-0.48859	0.10863
Value-time risks	-3.045	0.002**	-0.33871	0.11123
Personal concerns	-4.982	0.000**	-0.58544	0.11752
Inconveniences	-3.805	0.000**	-0.41255	0.10842
ASIA (visited Asia before, not visited Asia before)				
Physical risks	-1.139	0.255	-0.21530	0.18900
Destination risks	-3.960	0.000**	-0.57568	0.14536
Value-time risks	-2,698	0.007**	-0.40066	0.14851
Personal concerns	-3.066	0.002**	-0.48701	0.15883
Inconveniences	-2.431	0.015*	-0.35399	0.14564
EUROPE (visited other European countries before, not visited other European countries before)				
Physical risks	-0.980	0.328	-0.29181	0.29783
Destination risks	-1.566	0.118	-0.36294	0.23183
Value-time risks	-0.506	0.613	-0.11920	0.23549
Personal concerns	-1.139	0.255	-0.28723	0.25212
Inconveniences	-2.387	0.017**	-0.54781	0.22947
OCEANIA (visited Oceania before, not visited Oceania before)				
Physical risks	,214	0.831	0.12499	0.58408
Destination risks	,016	0.988	0.00712	0.45530
Value-time risks	,581	0.561	0.26823	0.46140
Personal concerns	-,907	0.365	-0.44815	0.49423
Inconveniences	,122	0.903	0.05531	0.45205

* p < .05; ** p < .01.

DISCUSSION

This study has identified perceptions of risk towards international travel and its influences. The EFA confirmed five significant factors reflecting perceived risks for international travel: physical risk, destination risks, value-time risks, personal concerns and inconveniences. This study identified 50 risk attributes loading on these five risk factors, which constitute a valid and reliable scale for risk perception measurement for international travel.

The physical risk factor in this study corresponds to previous literature (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Fuchs, 2013; Gray & Wilson, 2009; Reichel et al., 2007; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b; Tsaur, Tzeng, & Wang, 1997) and refers to the likelihood of encountering physical danger or injury detrimental to health while travelling or at the destination (Park & Reisinger, 2010; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). Past studies on physical risk focused on terrorism, political turmoil, crime, accidents, natural disasters, contagious diseases and food issues (Fuchs, 2013; Reichel et al., 2007; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014). In this study, the physical factor equally covers the same risks, but it goes into more detail regarding what sort of criminal activities travellers may encounter. The physical risk factor of this study also covers hospitality clashes, referring to any form of hostile behaviour from locals towards tourists that could lead to conflicts between hosts and visitors, such as harassment and racism. These risks refer to both human-induced and external dangers that may physically harm travellers or threaten their personal safety, and which are beyond travellers' control.

The destination risk factor refers to the functional difficulties travellers may encounter at the destination regarding transportation, accommodation, communication and orientation. Although many people like to try out new dishes at the destinations visited, there are still many travellers concerned about food. Hence, food issues are seen as a source of risk as well as the absence of cleanliness, which includes both pollution and lack of hygiene.

According to previous studies, financial and time risks represent separate typologies of risk perception (He et al., 2013; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). In contrast, the results of this study suggest a risk factor that embraces both value and time risks, in accordance with Sharifpour, Walters and Ritchie (2014). Value refers to monetary losses and time refers to the possibility of losing time during the travel experience (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2011; Boo & Gu, 2010; Park & Reisinger, 2010; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006).

The factor of personal concerns expresses that the travel experience may not reflect the travellers' self-image or personality and that the personal self-actualization with the travel experience may not be achieved. These risks associated with personal concerns are congruent with several authors (Fuchs, 2013; He et al., 2013; Park & Reisinger, 2010; Reichel et al., 2007; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006).

Finally, the last factor gathers perceived risks that are inconveniences for the traveller, for example social barriers that may cause difficulties in communicating with foreigners or comprehending other cultures. These findings are also consistent with previous authors (Lepp, Gibson, & Lane, 2011; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, & Winter, 2014; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014).

Regarding the factor loadings revealed by EFA (Table 4), this study demonstrates that the risk items related to crime in an international travel context show the highest factor loadings, followed by the perceived risks of terrorism, war and contagious diseases. In other contexts, e.g. backpacking, crime showed lower factor loadings within the physical risk factor (Reichel et al., 2007). Instead, food issues were of more concern for backpackers. Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, et al. (2014) showed that factor loadings of terrorist attacks and political turmoil are higher than becoming a victim of crime in the Middle East, and Adam (2015) showed that backpackers travelling to Ghana are more concerned with accidents and terrorism than crime. This brief explanation indicates that perceived risks depend on the travel context, on the segment of tourists or on the particular destination analysed. Therefore, some of the perceived risks will be more notorious than others, depending on the case.

Another aim of this research was to consider the influences of sociodemographic variables and past travel experience on the aforementioned five dimensions of risk perception. The findings indicate that perceived risks when travelling internationally vary across gender, age, education and past travel experience. Physical risk is the only factor that differs according to gender, with women showing higher levels of risk perception than men, which supports the findings of Reichel et al. (2007). However, no significant differences were found across gender for the other four risk factors, upholding findings in previous studies (Moreira, 2008; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). Regarding age, the results of this study support previous authors (Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002) indicating that the level of risk perception for international travel decreases with age. The results also revealed that the degree of perceived risk decreased with higher levels of education, in accordance with Sönmez and Graefe (1998b). Differences in risk perception were also found between more experienced travellers and less experienced ones, and this was influenced by number of past trips and continents visited.

This last point supports previous studies (Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b) indicating that risk perception decreases when past travel experience increases.

Theoretical implications indicate that future studies would benefit from using the scale developed in this article, as it would make results comparable across studies. Due to the varied content of the scale, it is possible to develop different versions, customizing criteria in the most efficient way for the purpose of the planned research. Therefore, the scale provides an adaptive assessment system to evaluate risk perception in several study contexts. Overall, this study attempts to provide new theoretical insights into perceived risk of people travelling internationally.

Regarding the practical implications, individuals understand that there are some inherent risks associated with international travel. This study demonstrates that an individual's background matters in risk perception. Perceived risks for international travel decrease with age, with higher levels of education and with more past travel experience. Hence, younger individuals who have a lower level of education and less past travel experience tend to show higher levels of perceived risks toward international travel. Tourism managers of a particular destination should acknowledge risk perceptions specifically associated with their destination. If it is known that the destination is perceived as risky or highly risky, according to the findings of this study, they should endeavour to attract more experienced travellers, as they have lower levels of risk perception when travelling internationally.

CONCLUSIONS

This study contributes to the existing body of tourism knowledge by developing a 50-attribute scale of perceived risks for risk perception measurement in international travel. This scale suggests a variety of critical indictors gathered from a thorough literature review. A wide range of risk items was mined from an extensive literature and they were all proven to be significant and to fit in the aforementioned five determinant factors. Furthermore, the resulting five-factor model indicated an adequate level of reliability and validity. The added value of this scale is that it gathered and considered all possible risk events that could happen to individuals during any travel experience; both those risks that are of a more general nature and those that are specific to a destination. Therefore, this study has established an appropriate scale to measure perceived risks that might discourage people from travelling. In accordance with several authors (He et al., 2013; Reichel et al., 2007; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014), this study further confirms that risk perception is a multidimensional construct, and that each factor comprises several items, especially the

physical and destination factors. For future research, it is recommended that risk factors should not be considered under a single item. This study has also identified significant differences in risk perception due to the effects of gender, age, level of education and past travel experience.

Finally, it should be noted that the data from this study was limited to Spanish university members. Travellers from different nationalities, social cohorts or tourism segments may have different views, as previous studies indicate (Dayour, 2014; Kozak et al., 2007; Pizam et al., 2004; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006; Seddighi et al., 2001; Sönmez, 1998). Therefore, future studies should contribute to empirically confirm the current findings for a wider range of nationalities, social communities or tourism segments.

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PUBLICATION 3
Image and Risk Perceptions: An Integrated Approach

Reproduction of the paper sent to the Current Issues in Tourism

IMAGE AND RISK PERCEPTIONS: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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This study proposes a more integrated tourist behaviour model by including the literatures of destination image and risk perception, and merges the cognitive and affective components of both literatures into a single construct. The structural relationships were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling, and findings indicate that integrated cognitive and affective evaluations directly influence overall perception, and indirectly influence future behaviour; and that subjective knowledge directly influences destination perceptions, in a way that past travel experience does not. Theoretical and practical implications and suggestions for future research studies are discussed.

Keywords: *Destination image, risk perception, destination perceptions, cognitive evaluations, affective evaluations*

INTRODUCTION

Until recently, tourism literature had explored perceptions of tourism destinations though two major lines of research: destination image and risk perception, usually without integrating them in the same study (Chew & Jahari, 2014). Few tourism researchers have investigated destination image and risk perception under the same study (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Becken, Jin, Zhang, & Gao, 2016; Chew & Jahari, 2014; Tang, 2013; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013), and some maintain that perceived risks should be examined alongside perceived images in order to better understand their influence on travel behaviour (Becken et al., 2016; Chew & Jahari, 2014), especially the role of emotions when considering risk destinations (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Lehto, Douglas, & Park, 2008; Lepp, Gibson, & Lane, 2011). This study follows this recent move towards integrating the concepts of image and risk perceptions, and examines various literatures to formulate an integrated framework for the conceptualization of destination perceptions.

Integrating both image and risk perceptions is important, as both represent a destination, and thus affect individuals' future travel behaviour. Research on image generally focuses on the positive aspects of the destination, while risk usually focuses on the negative ones (Chew

& Jahari, 2014; Perpiña, Camprubí, & Prats, 2017). Perceptions of a tourism destination contain both positive and negative aspects simultaneously (P. J. Chen & Kerstetter, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003), therefore examining them together is critical to a better understanding of them (George & Swart, 2012).

To bridge gaps in the tourism literature, this study offers an integrated approach to destination perceptions by merging the concepts of destination image and risk perception in terms of cognitive and affective evaluations. It further examines the theoretical and empirical evidence on causal relationships among the constructs of subjective knowledge, past travel experience, destination perceptions and intention to visit by using a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach. These gaps were addressed by posing three research objectives: (1) to explore the influence of subjective knowledge and past travel experience on the cognitive and affective components; (2) to examine the influence of cognition and affection on overall perceptions; and (3) to analyse the influence of overall perception on intention to visit. A research model was then proposed and tested, taking Colombia as a case study. Avraham and Ketter (2013) suggest that taking this broader view of image and risk perceptions might be particularly important when a destination has prolonged negative images.

This research contributes to the existing body of tourism literature by providing a model that evaluates both image and risk perceptions of a tourism destination simultaneously, integrating them in one construct. This construct in a travel behaviour model offers a more inclusive way to analyse the perceptions an individual has of a place, as both positive and negative attributes, and emotions, are taken into account.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Linking destination image and risk perception

Destination image and risk perception are conceptualized equally in terms of cognitive, and affective evaluations. Thus, it is proposed to merge both concepts into one construct, called destination perceptions, and then further integrating them into a common theoretical framework (Figure 1). Evidence from the literature review is outlined below.

The concept of destination image is widely applied in the fields of tourism, marketing and behavioural science, and is defined as “the individual’s perceptions of the characteristics of destinations” (Coshall, 2000, p. 85). Researchers agree that destination image refers to the perceptual pictures an individual holds of a destination when considering a range of

attributes and feelings (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Tasci & Gartner, 2007), and that it comprises three components: cognition, affection and conation (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil, 2007). Cognition is the sum of what is known about a destination (knowledge); affection refers to personal feelings towards a place (emotions); and conation relates to the likelihood of visiting a place (intention), which is analogous to behaviour, since it is the intent or action component (Pike & Ryan, 2004).

The cognitive component is generally assessed on the basis of destination attributes, which describe a place as a tourism destination, and correspond to its resources and attractions. The affective component proposed by Russell, Ward and Pratt (1981) is widely accepted, and conation is assessed through questions related to the likelihood of visiting that destination in the future.

Perceived risk is also a key consideration when individuals are choosing a tourism destination (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013). The concept is defined as "the possibility of various misfortunes which might befall tourists in the process of travelling or at its destination" (Tsaur, Tzeng, & Wang, 1997, p. 798), and refers to the perceptual uncertainties that a person vulnerable to misfortunes or dangers of any nature can be exposed to when travelling to a destination (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Reichel, Fuchs, & Uriely, 2007).

The literature on risk perception has mainly focused on evaluating cognitive attributes, which refer to the risks and problems any traveller might encounter at any stage of any journey (Fuchs, 2013; Reichel et al., 2007; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Most theories of risk perception are based on cognition, and few attempts have been made to look at the affective evaluations (Yang & Nair, 2014). The notion of risk as feelings was introduced by Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee and Welch (2001), who suggested that affection explains a wide range of risk-related decisions. Since then, other researchers have identified that perceived travel risks awaken affective responses, including anxiety, dread, fear and worry (Larsen, Brun, & Øgaard, 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Shim & You, 2015; Trumbo et al., 2016), which are negatively associated with intention to visit. The most notable update is that recent research proves that the concept of risk perception is a cognitive-affective phenomenon (Becken et al., 2016; Shim & You, 2015; Trumbo et al., 2016). Becken et al. (2016) revealed that potential travellers tend to express negative views about travel risks in China, and that feelings towards particular risks have a significant negative impact on destination image, as well as on intention to visit that destination. Therefore, there is a need to distinguish between the traditional cognitive approach and the recent cognitive-affective

approach. In earlier studies, only the cognitive component of risk perception was considered. Recently, cognitive and affective dimensions have been brought together in studies on risk perception.

Given this evidence, the present study postulates that risk perceptions are based on both cognitive and affective evaluations linked to travel intentions, as destination image. This research adds to the destination image and risk perception literatures in demonstrating that the two concepts complement each other, and their coexistence in a single construct better explains the perception an individual has of a place. Hence, this study merges and unifies the identified attributes of destination image and risk perception into a single cognitive component, and the feelings, into a single affective component (Perpiña et al., 2017).

Previous research revealed that a relationship between cognitive and affective evaluations exits. Trumbo et al. (2016) developed a scale for risk perception as a cognitive-affective process. Results from the study indicated that cognition and affection were significantly correlated. Then, destination image was described as a system of components where cognitive and affective evaluations interact (Tasci et al., 2007). It is hypothesized that:

Cognitive evaluations directly and positively influence (H0) affective evaluations, and vice versa.

Subjective knowledge

Recent research suggests that this concept should be further researched in the tourism field (Deng & Ritchie, 2016). Subjective knowledge is defined as “what individuals perceive that they know” (Brucks, 1985, p. 2) and has been proven that influences travel risk perceptions (Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, & Winter, 2014). Wong and Yeh (2009) revealed that tourists' subjective knowledge modifies the influence of risk perception on tourist hesitation. Findings also revealed that cognition influences attitudes through affection, and that subjective knowledge influences the respondents’ intentions though attitude (Phillips, Asperin, & Wolfe, 2013). Given that subjective knowledge may influence the perception of a tourism destination, it is posited that:

Subjective knowledge directly and positively influences (H1) cognitive evaluations and (H2) affective evaluations.

Past travel experience

Past travel experience is defined as the individual's accumulative travel experiences (Oppermann, 1995) outside the boundaries of the country of residence (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). Previous studies have demonstrated that past travel experience influences the perceived images (Beerli & Martín, 2004a; Chew & Jahari, 2014; Fuchs & Reichel, 2011) and the perceived risks of a tourism destination (Lepp & Gibson, 2008).

Beerli and Martín (2004a) indicated that past experience has a positive and significant relationship with the cognitive and affective dimensions, and Chew and Jahari (2014) revealed that prior experience with a destination is likely to form a positive destination image, despite posterior disasters. However, Vogt and Andereck (2003) reported that although experience increases destination knowledge, past travel experience does not explain destination image formation.

Past travel experience is also significant in that it can create awareness and knowledge of potential risks. Previous tourism studies indicate that perceived travel risks vary based on past travel experience (Kozak, Crotts, & Law, 2007; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a), revealing that more experienced travellers tend to perceive risk less than those less experienced. When perceived risks have a stronger influence on avoidance, rather than likelihood of travel to a destination, past travel experience overpowers positive destination perceptions and behavioural intentions (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). In contrast, Qi et al. (2009) revealed no significant relationship between past travel experience and risk perceptions. Generally, individuals are likely to form perceptions of a tourism destination as a result of their past travel experience. Therefore, the following hypotheses are posited:

Past travel experience directly and positively influences (H3) cognitive evaluations and (H4) affective evaluations.

Overall perceptions

The overall image of a tourism destination results from the complex interactions between cognitive and affective evaluations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Tasci & Gartner, 2007; C. Wang & Hsu, 2010). Qu, Kim, and Im (2011) determined a greater influence of the cognitive component on the overall image than the affective component, especially for those places that are better developed and well known. Yet, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) explained that for areas with a more negative prior image, and for those that have not been previously visited, the affective image may have a greater weight.

Hahm and Wang (2011) revealed that cognitive destination attributes positively influence overall image. In the case study of Sichuan province after the great Wenchuan earthquake, Tang (2013) revealed that international tourists claimed that the disaster had little effect on their destination images, and that they held an overall positive image of the province despite the natural disaster. Alvarez and Campo (2014) explored the image of Israel from the Turks' perspective before and after a political conflict. Their findings determined that affection was significantly damaged due to the political conflict and that the resultant negative affective evaluations negatively influenced the overall image and the intention to visit the destination. Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

Overall perception is directly and positively influenced by (H5) cognitive evaluations and (H6) affective evaluations.

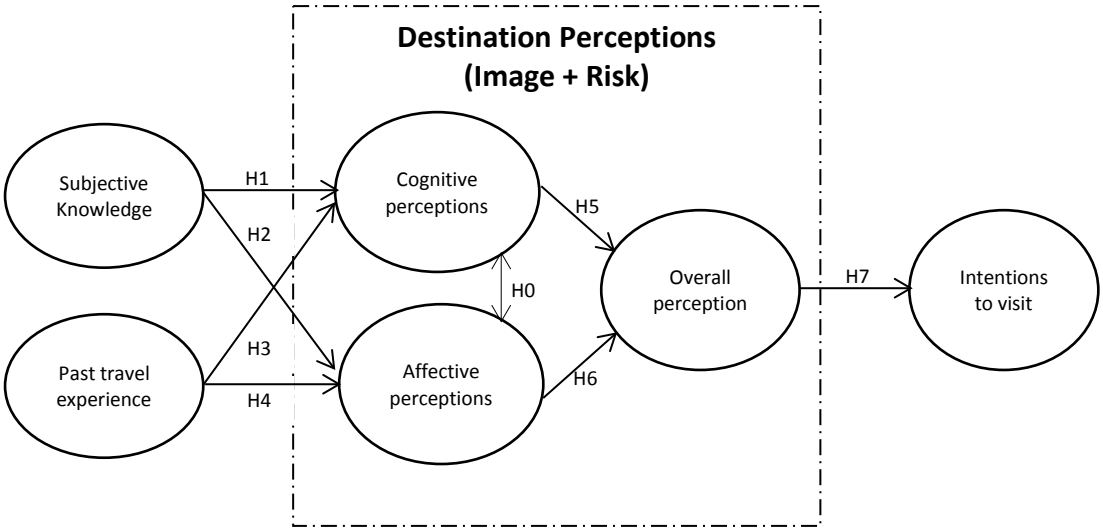
Intention to visit

The relationship between image and risk perceptions with intention to visit is well documented in the tourism literature. However, more recently, scholars have suggested the need to assess how integrating these perceptions influences travel intentions (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013). It remains uncertain how overall perceptions affect travel intentions when events posing a risk have repeatedly occurred at a destination in the past.

Researchers revealed that overall perceptions of a tourism destination have a significant, positive and direct influence on intentions to visit a particular tourism destination (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Hahm & Wang, 2011; Leisen, 2001; Papadimitriou, Apostolopoulou, & Kaplanidou, 2015; Qu et al., 2011). Leisen (2001) revealed that individuals expressing the overall most favourable image had the highest intent to visit the destination and conversely, respondents expressing the overall least favourable image had the lowest intent. Interestingly, Stylos, Vassiliadis, Bellou, and Andronikidis (2016) did not find that cognitive and affective evaluations directly influenced intentions to visit a destination, and that these could only be determined using a holistic image as mediator. Similarly, Qu et al. (2011) confirmed the mediating role of overall image between destination image and travel intentions. Thus, this hypothesis is proposed:

Overall perceptions directly and positively influence (H7) intentions to visit.

Figure 1. Proposed model



METHODOLOGY

Study site

The chosen case study for this research was Colombia, in South America, with Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador as neighbouring countries. In recent years, Colombia's international tourism has increased from 1,405 million visitors in 2010 to more than 2,565 million visitors in 2014 (World Tourism Organization, 2016). This substantial increase in visitor numbers has fuelled Colombia's efforts in taking its tourism potential more seriously, and this has led to better marketing and planning activities, e.g. the campaign called "The only risk is wanting to stay" (Bassols, 2016). In this respect, Colombia is an interesting case study as it has publicly recognized that the country is not exempt from risks and has run a campaign in an exemplary effort to reframe its image as a tourism destination. In addition, the government has declared that it wants to change the current situation in the country in order to put its turbulent past, with the FARC armed conflict, behind it, proof of this is the peace agreement signed in November 2016. The literature suggests that political instability, health, safety and security concerns at the destination - whether real or perceived - have a direct bearing on forming negative perceptions, which in turn negatively influences destination choice. During the 1990s, Colombia was known as the drug and crime capital of the world (Avraham & Ketter, 2013). Colombia has a rich historical and cultural legacy, and numerous civilizations, dating as far back as 7000 B.C. left archaeological and cultural treasures. In addition, the country has a great variety of natural resources (e.g., the Atlantic and Caribbean coastlines, the Andes and the Amazon plain). This vast cultural and natural diversity makes the country a very attractive tourism destination.

Data collection and survey instrument

This study used quantitative methodology, and a questionnaire was devised to address the research objectives: testing the causal relationships between the constructs in the conceptual model; and identifying how Colombia is perceived as a tourism destination. The survey was designed according to accumulated literature on image and risk perceptions (Table 1).

To collect the data, a structured, self-administered questionnaire was posted online via a public university in Spain, and this required approximately 10 minutes to complete. Data collection was carried out during 3 months, from January to March 2017. As the questionnaire was online, this ensured anonymity, thus eliminating interviewer bias as well as the likelihood of socially desirable responses. A sample of 466 adult members of the university completed the questionnaire, which comprised 5 sections, shown in Table 1. The respondents' profile is shown in Table 2. As previous studies indicate that image and risk perceptions are influenced by personal factors (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998b; Tasci & Gartner, 2007), various demographics such as gender, age, educational level and country of origin were measured to assess the influence of socio-demographics on destination perceptions.

Table 1. Survey instrument

Construct (Items)	Measurements	Authors
Section 1 - Travel experience		
Past experience	Nº of trips (Last 5 years)	(Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a; Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002)
Visit Colombia (2 item)	Yes/No	
Section 2 - knowledge: 7-point Likert-type scale		
Overall (1 item)	1=nothing, 7=everything	(Lepp & Gibson, 2011)
Subjective (4 items)	1=strongly disagree 7=strongly agree	(Flynn & Goldsmith, 1999)
Section 3 - Destination perceptions: 7-point Likert-type scale		
Cognition (19 items)	1=very negative 7=very positive	(Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Fuchs, 2013; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008)
Affection (4 items)	7-point semantic-differential scale; negative poles were assigned to smaller values	(Larsen et al., 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Russell et al., 1981)
Overall (1 item)	1=very negative 7=very positive	(Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004a, 2004b)
Section 4 - Future behaviour: 5-point Likert-type scale		
Intentions to visit (1 item)	0=very unlikely 4=very likely	(Hahm & Wang, 2011; Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002)
Section 5 - Sociodemographic information: Gender, age, education, country of origin		

Table 2. Profile

Variable	Sample (N=466)	Percentage (100%)
Gender		
Female	317	68.0
Male	149	32.0
Age		
18-27	300	64.4
28-37	101	21.7
38-47	27	5.8
48+	38	8.2
Education		
High school	109	23,4
Bachelor's degree	210	45,1
Master's degree	111	23,8
Doctorate	27	5,8
Other	9	1,9
Country of origin		
Spain	397	85.2
Other	69	14.8
Nº of trips		
1-5	307	65.9
6-10	103	22.1
11+	41	8.8
None	15	3.2
Colombia		
Visited Colombia before	65	13.9
Not visited Colombia before	401	86.1

Data analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of destination perceptions. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then performed and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to test the paths of the conceptual model. SEM with maximum likelihood was performed to test if independent variables (subjective knowledge and past travel experience) had a significant impact on dependent variables (cognition, affection, overall perception and intention to visit). As answering each question in the online survey was required, there were no missing values in the data. Finally, and in recognition of previous research stating that image and risk perceptions differ according to socio-demographic variables, ANOVAs were performed. SPSS 21 and AMOS 24 were used for the data analyses.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics of Colombia as a tourism destination

Mean scores in Table 3 indicate that Colombia has a very positive image regarding the tourist attractions' dimension of the cognitive values. Mean scores (M) were over 5.00 on a

7-point Likert-type scale. This is particularly positive in relation to landscape (M=6.0), flora and fauna (M=5.84) and beaches (M=5.55). Cognitive attributes that capture the respondents' views on general infrastructure were rated somewhat lower. Regarding the criminal atmosphere dimension, respondents generally perceived that there were a number of travel concerns when travelling to Colombia, with all mean scores being below 3.00. Most prominently, drug problems (M=2.44) and robberies (M=2.54) display an awareness of crime in Colombia. In terms of affective image, respondents rated all items around 4.00, indicating a slight tendency towards positive feelings.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items (N=466)

Item	Mean	SD
Cognition (C)		
Natural attractions	5.56	1.529
Flora and fauna	5.84	1.433
Landscape	6.00	1.334
Beaches	5.55	1.571
Value for money	5.00	1.466
General infrastructure	3.29	1.263
Transportation	3.08	1.149
Traffic flow and roads	2.92	1.131
Health services	3.04	1.224
Hygiene and cleanliness	3.25	1.263
Criminal attacks	2.65	1.534
Robberies and muggings	2.54	1.560
Kidnappings	2.62	1.590
Drug problems	2.44	1.708
Accommodation	3.89	1.337
Shopping facilities	4.05	1.429
Nightlife	4.17	1.698
Food and gastronomy	5.06	1.481
Quality of life	3.54	1.434
Affection (A)		
Unpleasant-Pleasant (A1)	4.47	1.633
Distressing-Relaxing (A2)	3.91	1.472
Anxiety-Serenity (A3)	3.81	1.468
Worry-Calm (A4)	3.38	1.453
Subjective knowledge (SK)		
Overall subjective knowledge of Colombia (SK1)	3.08	1.361
I know *pretty much* about Colombia (SK2)	2.64	1.590
I do feel very *knowledgeabl*e about Colombia (SK3)	2.44	1.611
Among my circle of friends, I am one of the *experts* (SK4)	2.51	1.775
When it comes to Colombia, I really know *a lot* (SK5)	2.25	1.552
Past Experience (PE)		
Nº of past international trips (Last 5 years) (PE1)	5.37	4.533
Overall perception (OP)		
Very negative-Very positive (OP1)	4.34	1.533
Intentions to visit (IV)		
Intention to visit Colombia in the future (IV1)	2,18	1.434

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis

EFA with principle component and variamax rotation was undertaken in order to identify the determinant dimensions of destination perceptions. Items with a loading of less than 0.40 on any factor and items with loadings of 0.40, or higher, on multiple factors were removed (5 items). A three-factor underlying structure was identified after one round of item deletion (Table 4). The Kyser-Meyer-Olkin result of 0.874 indicated that sufficient items were predicted by each factor and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at a level of 0.000, indicating that the variables had sufficient inherent correlations to perform EFA. Then, EFA performed item examination and the 14 attributes assessing destination perceptions were grouped into 3 factors: (1) Tourist attractions, (2) General infrastructure and (3) Criminal atmosphere. The total cumulative variance explained by these factors was 73.758%, and the Cronbach's alpha value for each of the factors was satisfactory and above the recommended value of 0.7, which assured the reliability of the three dimensions, as well as a strong internal consistency.

Table 4. Exploratory Factor Analysis of Cognition (N=466)

	Factor loading	Communalities	Eigen-values	Variance (%)	α
Factor 1: Tourist attractions			5.605	40.034	0.902
Natural attractions	.873	.794			
Flora & fauna	.903	.846			
Landscape	.915	.870			
Beaches	.804	.679			
Value for money	.639	.466			
Factor 2: General infrastructure			2.831	20.220	0.881
General infrastructure	.788	.679			
Transportation	.837	.746			
Traffic flow & roads	.846	.732			
Health services	.762	.637			
Hygiene & cleanliness	.729	.637			
Factor 3: Criminal atmosphere			1.891	13.504	0.920
Criminal attacks	.877	.800			
Robberies & muggings	.902	.831			
Kidnappings	.893	.823			
Drug problems	.876	.784			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation method: Variamax with Kaiser.

CFA was then conducted in order to examine the factorial structure of cognitive and affective evaluations and subjective knowledge. The standardized factors loadings (SFL), t-values, squared multiple correlations (SMC), average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) all proved reasonable and acceptable (Table 5). Focusing on cognitive evaluations, the SFL of the items were between 0.58 and 0.93 and the t-values,

between 13.376 and 26.427, all being statistically significant. The SMC were between 0 and 1, which indicated the reliability of the measured items. Bagozzi and Yi (1988) indicated that the AVE value must be above 0.50 and in this study the AVE results were above the desired value; between 0.58 and 0.74. The CR indicators of the three cognitive factors ranged from 0.878 to 0.922, which exceeded the recommended value of 0.7 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010) and which indicated a good internal consistency of the three factors. Finally, the CFA of cognition achieved a satisfactory fit after adding one covariance between health services and hygiene and cleanliness as suggested by the modification indices. According to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), the desirable χ^2/df value should not exceed 3, and in this case the χ^2/df value was good at 2.83. The initial estimation of the three-factor structure of cognitive evaluations generated other indices with good fit (Table 6). As observed in Tables 5 and 6, the CFA of affective evaluations and subjective knowledge also generated indices with good fit.

Table 5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (N=466)

Constructs, factors and items	SFL[a]	t-value	SMC[b]	AVE	CR
Cognition					
Factor 1: Tourist attractions				0.67	0.908
Natural attractions	.85	22.684	.728		
Flora & fauna	.92	25.898	.854		
Landscape	.93	26.427	.874		
Beaches	.76	19.136	.581		
Value for money	.58	13.376	.336		
Factor 2: General infrastructure				0.58	0.878
General infrastructure	.80	19.814	.636		
Transportation	.86	22.342	.748		
Traffic flow & roads	.80	19.748	.633		
Health services	.68	15.801	.461		
Hygiene and cleanliness	.69	16.047	.471		
Factor 3: Criminal atmosphere				0.74	0.922
Criminal attacks	.86	22.658	.736		
Robberies & muggings	.88	23.701	.779		
Kidnappings	.88	23.388	.766		
Drug problems	.84	21.843	.703		
Affection				0.64	0.879
Unpleasant-Pleasant	.80	19.975	.645		
Distressing-Relaxing	.87	22.634	.764		
Anxiety-Serenity	.78	19.205	.610		
Worry-Calm	.76	18.379	.573		
Subjective Knowledge				0.79	0.951
Overall Knowledge	.87	23.466	.755		
Pretty much	.94	26.667	.876		
Knowledgeable	.90	25.091	.818		
Expert	.85	22.696	.724		
A lot	.90	25.090	.817		

[a]SFL: Standardized Factor Loadings; [b]SMC: Squared Multiple Correlations.

Causal relationships

The model was tested with SEM to empirically analyse the strength of the causal relationships between the constructs, and as presented in Table 6, all of the goodness-of-fit statistics were acceptable and above the recommended threshold values.

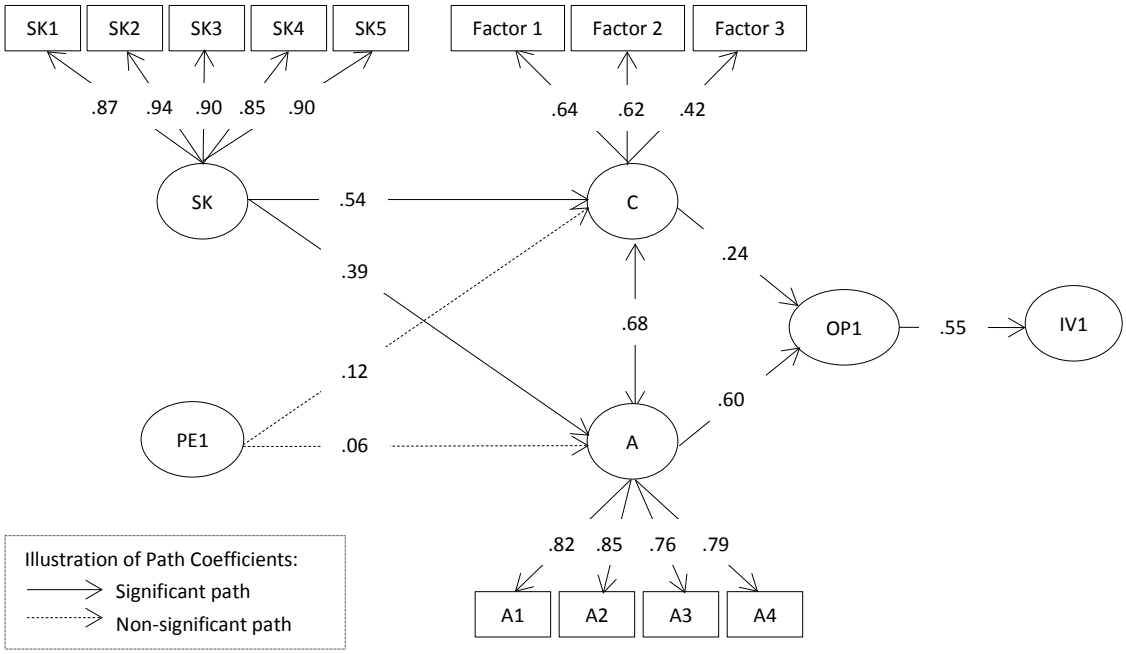
Table 6. Fit Indices Results of CFA Measurements and Model

Construct	χ2	df	NCI <3.00	RMSEA <0.08	SRMR <0.05	GFI >0.9	AGFI >0.9	NFI >0.9	CFI >0.9
Cognition	206.617	73	2.830	0.063	0.047	0.942	0.916	0.955	0.970
Affection	3.632	2	1.816	0.042	0.010	0.996	0.980	0.996	0.998
S. Knowledge	11.588	5	2.318	0.053	0.008	0.990	0.971	0.995	0.997
Model	242.971	85	2,858	0.063	0.052	0.934	0.907	0.946	0.964

Note: χ2 = chi-square; NCI = Normed Chi-Squared Index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index; NFI = normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index.

Proposed hypotheses were tested using a SEM approach with two exogenous constructs (subjective knowledge and past travel experience) and four endogenous constructs (cognitive and affective evaluations, overall perception and visitation intentions). The estimated standardized path coefficients for the model are presented in Figure 2 and they were significant at a 0.05 probability level, except for the paths from past travel experience to cognition and affection.

Figure 2. Model with Estimated Path Coefficients



A causal relationship between cognition and affection (H0) is supported (.68, *t-value* = 7.713, p < .01). Subjective knowledge has a significant positive effect on both cognitive and affective perceptions (.54, *t-value* = 8.499, p < .01 and .39, *t-value* = 7.864, p < .01, respectively), which supports H1 and H2. Past travel experience does not appear to directly influence cognitive and affective perceptions (.12, *t-value* = 2.250, p = .024 and .06, *t-value* = 1.362, p = .173). Therefore, neither relationship is statistically significant, so H3 and H4 are not supported. The cognitive dimension, as hypothesized, has a positive and statistically significant effect on overall perception (.24, *t-value* = 3.302, p < .01), supporting H5. The expected relationship between affective perception and overall perception (H6) is supported by the positive path coefficient (.60, *t-value* = 9.023, p < .01). Finally, the relationship between overall perception and intention to visit is positive and statistically significant (.55, *t-value* = 14.360, p < .01), indicating support for H7. Hence, overall perception, as expected, does have a significant positive effect on intentions to visit.

Differences between groups

A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare possible differences based on key variables (Table 7). Regarding gender, male participants (M = 2.80; SD = 1.57) had a more positive perception of Colombia with respect to criminal issues than females (M = 2.45; SD = 1.35) (Sig. 0.013). Younger people (18-27 group) had less negative perceptions of criminal issues (M = 2.42; SD = 1.41) and general infrastructure (M = 3.05; SD = 0.96) than the over 48 age group, (M = 2.41; SD = 1.20) and (M = 2.83; SD = 0.81) respectively. Among all age groups, those between 28 and 37 had the most positive destination perceptions of these two cognitive dimensions. Destination perceptions also differed according to education level. Those who had a higher level of education were more positive about Colombia in terms of cognitive and affective perceptions, than those who had lower education levels. Those who had visited Colombia before rated Colombia's tourist attractions higher than those who had not (Sig. 0.000); a pattern that is repeated for the other two cognitive dimensions. They also had much better affective perceptions of Colombia (Sig. 0.000) and were more likely to return to Colombia in the future. Overall, some significant differences were found within all sets of comparisons, including gender, age, education and prior experience.

Table 7. ANOVA Results (N=466)

Variables	Mean square	F	Significance	
Gender				
Tourist attractions	0.678	0.437	0.509	
General infrastructure	0.542	0.549	0.459	
Criminal atmosphere	12.643	6.190	0.013	*
Affection	0.383	0.229	0.632	

Age				
Tourist attractions	1.581	1.021	0.383	
General infrastructure	4.821	5.007	0.002	**
Criminal atmosphere	8.779	4.343	0.005	**
Affection	4.252	2.577	0.053	
Education level				
Tourist attractions	3.768	2.465	0.044	*
General infrastructure	1.264	1.282	0.276	
Criminal atmosphere	7.267	3.598	0.007	**
Affection	8.498	5.286	0.000	**
Colombia				
Tourist attractions	24.840	16.587	0.000	**
General infrastructure	11.651	12.077	0.001	**
Criminal atmosphere	24.933	12.368	0.000	**
Affection	59.273	38.417	0.000	**

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study is an initial attempt to examine causal relationships between subjective knowledge, past travel experience, integrated destination perceptions and future travel intentions regarding a tourism destination. While some of the constructs have already been discussed in previous studies, these have not examined the structural relationships between these variables simultaneously in an integrated approach. As shown, the suggested model, which integrates image and risk perceptions in terms of cognition and affection, behaved consistently and presented congruent results. Affection was further developed by aggregating the feelings of anxiety and worry, which have been proven to influence destination perceptions in contexts of risk (Larsen et al., 2009; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Shim & You, 2015), expanding the already accepted theory of affection proposed by Russell et al. (1981).

Using the dual image-risk concept as theoretical ground, the study tested eight hypotheses to examine the proposed model. One empirical finding from this study is that overall perception is a critical aspect which influences intentions to visit tourism destinations assumed to be risky. This is consistent with previous findings in the literature (Papadimitriou et al., 2015; Qu et al., 2011; Stylos et al., 2016). This study found that overall perception is a significant mediating variable in assessing the behavioural model of a tourism destination, again supporting the findings of earlier studies (Qu et al., 2011; Stylos et al., 2016). Moreover, destination perceptions have a significant and indirect impact on future travel behaviour, suggesting that the integrated cognitive and affective evaluations influence individuals' future travel behaviour regarding unsafe tourism destinations. This empirical result also concurs with previous studies based on structural equation modelling analysis of individuals' assessment of risky countries (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Becken et al., 2016;

Phillips et al., 2013; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013). It is then suggested that the proposed conceptual model can be examined in most tourism settings outside of Colombia.

This paper further supports the results of both Baloglu and McCleary (1999) and Alvarez and Campo (2014), and agrees with them in that affective evaluations are more influential on overall perception than cognitive evaluations. This contrasts with other studies which revealed that the cognitive component is the most influential on overall perception (Qu et al., 2011). Similar to the study of Baloglu and McCleary (1999), this research mostly examined perceptions in the absence of actual visitation to the destination. Therefore, it is possible that emotions may have a stronger impact on overall perception before actual visitation whereas cognitive image may exert more influence on overall perception when the actual visit is made. Thus, following recent trends in moving beyond cognitive evaluations, this study's second contribution lies in recognizing the importance of the affective evaluations of destination perceptions (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Becken et al., 2016; Trumbo et al., 2016).

The empirical results also revealed that subjective knowledge significantly affects the cognitive evaluations, thereby supporting previous research (Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, et al., 2014). The results also suggested that affective evaluations increase in the context of highly subjective knowledge, a causal relationship that has not yet been explored by other authors to the researchers' best knowledge. Consequently, this study introduces the causal relationship between subjective knowledge and affection, which was proven to be significant. Results showed that individuals with a higher level of subjective knowledge gave more positive evaluations of cognition and affection, compared to those who had lower levels when considering a trip to a country considered risky.

This study also recognizes subjective knowledge as being a strong determinant of destination perceptions, as it encourages individuals who are very knowledgeable to visit a destination. These findings support previous research in indicating that individuals with a higher level of subjective knowledge show a higher chance of visiting a particular destination (Sharifpour, Walters, Ritchie, et al., 2014; Wong & Yeh, 2009). In contrast, past travel experience did not exert a measurable influence on either cognition, nor on affection, which differs from similar research (Beerli & Martín, 2004b; Chew & Jahari, 2014).

Generally, the findings of the proposed behavioural model can help foresee tourist demand; individuals who develop positive perceptions of tourism destinations show greater overall perception and intention to visit than individuals who have a less positive viewpoint. This suggests that managers and marketers of tourism destinations considered risky should focus

on promoting its most favourable aspects. In the particular case of Colombia, for instance, practitioners should focus on promoting its natural attractions, which were very positively evaluated. Then, affective dimensions are particularly important when investigating intention to visit. As emotions had a strong impact on overall perceptions, a marketing campaign spotlighting notable attractions with messages of how to overcome mixed feelings, might be a particularly useful way to connect with individuals, especially those who associate a destination with negative feelings. Hence, Destination Marketing Organizations need to develop their communication and promotion material to specifically stimulate positive emotions, and downplay negative feelings (e.g. anxiety or worry). It is possible that current approaches which focus on advertising well-known attractions are not sufficient to increase demand, especially among individuals who mostly hold an organic image which is easily influenced by emotions (C. Chen, Lai, Petrick, & Lin, 2016). Hence, findings from this research provide additional rationale for tourism practitioners to improve their competitiveness by enhancing the positive aspects of their destination, while at the same time minimizing any negative perceptions.

Finally, the way a country is perceived is key to its success as a tourism destination (Becken et al., 2016). In an attempt to provide further insights into the case study, results show that tourist attractions in Colombia were perceived very positively, and that individuals' intentions to visit the country were relatively high despite the perceived negative views on general infrastructure and criminal atmosphere. In this regard, individuals continue to have a vivid image of Colombia as a country of crime and drugs. Thus, images of a conflictive past are still present today in the minds of potential travellers. However, this does not negatively influence future intentions to visit the country. As a result, this study reveals that in the context of prolonged conflicts, past perceptions of a country might not be easily changed. This is because pre-existing stereotypical perceptions of the country are likely to negatively affect its image formation, and images and risks formed in the past may have current impacts on the destination, e.g. unstable tourist arrivals. Importantly, the effects of image and risk on forming destination perceptions are likely to be context-specific, and as shown in this study, very positive and very negative perceptions of the same tourism destination may coexist, as found by Alvarez and Campo (2014).

CONCLUSIONS

Few studies have assessed behavioural models of tourism destinations while taking into account the literatures of image and risk perceptions, and none have put them together within the same construct. Therefore, this study introduces destination perceptions as a multidimensional construct, comprising a combination of image and risk attributes, and a

combination of feelings derived from image and risk literatures. It also examines the way several dimensions interact in future travel behaviour. Gaps in the literature are addressed, and findings show the following: (1) subjective knowledge directly affects destination perceptions; (2) which directly affect overall perception, and indirectly affect individuals' future behaviour; and (3) overall perception significantly affects intention to visit as a significant mediating variable. Finally, the findings reinforce the initial idea that a behavioural model integrating image and risk perceptions analyses the perceptions of a tourism destination more thoroughly by including its positive and negative aspects.

However, it is important to acknowledge several limitations of this research. Findings are limited to the variables selected as antecedents for destination perceptions, and there may be other factors influencing the development of destination perceptions. Future research can expand the model by integrating other variables such as information search, cultural proximity and sensation seeking. Applying these latent variables to the behavioural model might help researchers and practitioners to further identify the factors influencing future travel behaviour. Tourism scholars have indicated that non-visitors or first-time visitors' evaluations differ from those of repeaters, as they are at different stages of loyalty (Fuchs & Reichel, 2011; Martínez & Alvarez, 2010; Papadimitriou et al., 2015; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009). Therefore, a promising future study would be to examine the differences between these groups. Another interesting line of research could be conducting longitudinal studies with pre-trip and post-trip perceptions, as recent studies indicate (Lee, Kang, Reisinger, & Kim, 2012; Martín, Beerli, & Nazzareno, 2017; Y. Wang & Davidson, 2010). Finally, as the present study was conducted to explore perceptions of Colombia as a tourism destination, findings were limited to responses from individuals evaluating this destination. Individuals evaluating other destinations may form different opinions about them. To overcome this limitation, future researchers could conduct similar surveys in other tourism destinations.

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GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In the tourism field, this doctoral thesis contributes to the understanding of perceptions of tourism destinations by gathering key insights from the image and risk perception literatures, and by providing a specific measurement scale to assess perceived travel risks. In the last chapter of this research, the general and main conclusions of each of the three articles are outlined. This is followed by a summary of the theoretical and methodological contributions, limitations and future research suggestions.

In general, and from an integrated perspective, the major focus of this study was to examine the effects of destination perceptions, cognitive and affective components, on intention to visit. The argument that destination image and risk perception are two related and complementary constructs was well supported throughout this study, both conceptually and empirically. This research highlights the importance of integrating and evaluating the cognitive and affective images and risks of places in the future development of effective marketing and destination branding strategies to reduce negative perceptions, if any, and image restoration, if needed. Thus, the principal objective of this doctoral thesis was achieved by proposing a travel behavior model that brings together the cognitive and affective evaluations of image and risk perceptions, building on earlier calls for broadening the approaches to assess the perceptions of tourism destinations (Becken et al., 2016). Designing this model constitutes the first academic attempt in the tourism field to test destination perceptions from an integrated perspective.

To provide a summary of this compendium of publications, the following outlines the conclusions derived from each of the three consecutive studies, and how the goals of each study were reached. First, this doctoral thesis asserts that the cognitive attributes of image and risk perception which are assessed separately frequently overlap. This is because image studies tend to use positive terminology to describe the attributes of tourism destinations, while risk literature tends to adopt the negative version of them. In this regard, this study identifies the commonalities and differences between the image and risk attributes that influence individuals' awareness of, and decisions and choices made regarding, a tourism destination. The research objective was thus achieved by outlining the positive-negative duality between image and risk literatures in terms of cognition. In accordance with previous research (Becken et al., 2016; Chew & Jahari, 2014), this study also asserts the suitability of combining them, thus allowing

academics to gain a more balanced view of the perceptions individuals have of tourism destinations.

Given the various alternatives available for measuring the concept of risk perception, the second article needed to develop a reliable and valid measure. Fifty critical indicators of risk perception were identified from an extensive literature review (e.g. Fuchs, 2013; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). All the indicators proved to be significant and can fit in five key dimensions (physical risks, destination risks, value-time risks, personal concerns and inconveniences). These indicators provided a solid base for developing a measurement scale for risk perception assessment in a tourism context. The scale indicated an adequate level of reliability and validity. The added value of this scale is the compilation of a wide spectrum of risk events that could affect any individual during any travel experience. This includes risks that are of both a more general nature and those that are specific to a particular tourism destination. This study identified significant differences in the degree of perceived risks, on the basis of gender, age, level of education and past travel experience. This supports work by previous authors (Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002; Lepp & Gibson, 2003; Reichel et al., 2007; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998a). Evidence suggests that the measuring tool emerging from this study could lead to a better understanding of individuals' perceived risk in international travel.

The third publication explores and tests a travel behavior model while simultaneously integrating image and risk perceptions. The first goal is to corroborate destination perceptions are a single multidimensional construct, comprising a combination of image and risk attributes, and a combination of feelings derived from image and risk literatures. A number of hypotheses emerged from the theoretical review (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Kerstetter & Cho, 2004; Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013), which served as a basis for generating a conceptual model of travel behavior in relation to the perception of a tourism destination. This tested certain antecedents and consequences with data collected from online surveys conducted by a representative sample.

The remaining three objectives of the third article dealt with testing the hypotheses regarding the causal relationships between the constructs of subjective knowledge, past travel experience, destination perceptions and intentions to visit. Except for past travel experience, the results supported the hypotheses set and confirmed that (1) subjective knowledge directly influences destination perceptions, thus supporting previous research (Sharifpour, Walters, & Ritchie, 2014); (2) that destination

perceptions (both cognitive and affective) directly influence overall perception, and indirectly affect individuals' future behavior, also corroborating previous studies (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Becken et al., 2016; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013); and (3) that overall perception significantly mediates intention to visit; this is also consistent with previous findings (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011; Stylos, Vassiliadis, Bellou, & Andronikidis, 2016). One of the key conclusions of the third article is that the proposed behavioral model, which integrates image and risk, not only analyzes the perceptions of a tourism destination more thoroughly, but shows that the relationship between the constructs is theoretically consistent despite the additional complexity.

As such, this study brings multiple contributions. First, it highlights the significance of investigating the cognitive and affective components of destination perceptions as an integrated construct of perceived images and risks, in order to predict individuals' behavioral intentions. Second, it fills the knowledge gap regarding the relative importance of these integrated components of destination perceptions for individuals' intentions to visit. It does this by empirically testing the suggested model, using Colombia as a case study. Third, it demonstrates the value of incorporating the combined effect of components of destination perceptions, including overall perception, when examining behavioral intentions, thus joining the small number of researchers already suggesting that destination image and risk perception should be studied together (Becken et al., 2016; Chew & Jahari, 2014). In this regard, this research contributes to the tourism literature by demonstrating that the concepts of destination image and risk perception complement each other, and that their coexistence in one construct better explains the perception an individual has of a place, as both positive and negative attributes, and emotions, are taken into account. Thus, this research highlights the synergy from combining two theoretical concepts: image and risk, to enhance the behavioral model. It also identifies a broad spectrum of perceived travel risk and proposes a scientific framework to better assess the concept of risk perception in tourism.

Furthermore, this research provides empirical evidence that emotions are more influential on overall perception than they are on cognitive evaluations, thereby supporting earlier findings by Baloglu and McCleary (1999). This doctoral thesis follows and reinforces recent trends in moving beyond cognitive evaluations and contributes to the tourism literature by highlighting the importance of affective evaluations in destination perception studies (Becken et al., 2016; Trumbo et al., 2016). Finally, and in line with Alvarez and Campo's (2014) research, this study highlights the fundamental role of overall perception when predicting individuals' intention to visit, revealing the

extent to which overall perception regulates the causal relationship between the two components of destination perceptions and intention to visit.

Regarding the implications of this work, tourism destinations should incorporate a wide spectrum of positive and negative aspects that are subject to individuals' perceptions into their overall evaluation of tourism, marketing, and destination management strategies. Indeed, a good understanding of how tourists perceive a destination would enable destination marketers and managers to effectively persuade potential travelers to visit. In addition, the data acquired from tourists' perception studies could help destination practitioners to identify a place's strengths and weaknesses, and the determinant factors (Pike, 2015), thus providing critical insights into the appeal of a tourism destination from the tourists' perspective.

Every tourism destination has appealing characteristics (strengths), which are ideal source material for marketing campaigns. The tourism industry tends to offer information presenting the positive aspects of a tourism destination, and when marketers use these as marketing tools, they take a persuasive point of view. Before managing and undertaking tourism destination marketing, practitioners should be familiar with the favorable aspects that best represent the particular characteristics of the destination. Thus, the specific evaluations of these perceptions need to be investigated and monitored. These might catch the interest of potential tourists and persuade them to visit the destination. For example, if scenery is one of the contributing factors influencing a traveler's choice of destination, destination practitioners should consider promoting a specific, positive image of scenery the destination has to offer in order to increase the potential demand from travelers, as shown in this research through the case study.

While, destination perceptions tend to be stable and slow to change over time, they are relative to competitor offers. Therefore, it is important to continuously monitor travelers' perceptions. The fact that a perception, whether positive or negative, may continue long after the factors that formed it have changed (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991) emphasizes the need for tourism destinations to first develop, and then maintain, a positive perception. Destinations perceived as negative, unsafe or risky need to identify weaknesses and address them. For instance, negligence within the tourism infrastructure or an increase in competition might lead to a tourism destination losing its appeal. Acknowledging this redresses negative traits and re-establishes a destination's attractiveness. As O'Leary (2005) noted, this is something positive as it implies that negative perceptions are not beyond redress, but there is a

need to deal with them in order to ensure the continuing success of the tourism industry in any tourism destination. Moreover, it is essential for a destination to understand how to evaluate its negative aspects. A lack of preparation, investment or proper follow-up can result in individuals losing interest in visiting the area, eventually leading to a long term damaged image, and probably extra advertising costs to regain people's confidence (Avraham & Ketter, 2013). In turn, this is about restoring a positive image and bringing back tourists to the area, if needed.

Current approaches which focus on advertising well-known, appealing tourist attractions may not be sufficient to increase tourism demand, especially among individuals who have hold a predominantly organic image which could be influenced by emotions (C. Chen, Lai, Petrick, & Lin, 2016). In this sense, and following on from previous authors (Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999), this research shows that feelings have a significant impact on overall perceptions and behavioral intentions. This means that marketing campaigns should not only spotlight well-known attractions, but at the same time also develop emotional messages. Destination practitioners thus need to develop their communication and promotion material to specifically stimulate positive emotions, and downplay possible negative feelings. The findings from this doctoral thesis provide reasoning for tourism practitioners to improve their competitiveness by enhancing the positive aspects of their destination, while at the same time minimizing any negative perception.

In general, while it is important to enhance the positive aspects of a tourism destination by presenting tourists with appealing attributes and emotions, this study also stresses the importance of managing specific travel negativities by providing risk-specific knowledge. Without understanding the type of perceived risks specific to a tourism destination and their constraints on intentions to visit, general strategies for enhancing perceptions of a tourism destination may be less successful when it comes to persuading potentials tourists to visit a destination.

Overall, this research provides an innovative understanding of the perceptions individuals have of tourism destinations and their subsequent travel behavior. However, as with any study, the findings are subject to certain limitations, and these could serve as the basis for future research. First, the positive-negative duality in this doctoral thesis compared destination image and risk perception literatures. Future research could also explore the similarities and differences between the literatures of destination image, tourist motivations, particularly pull factors, and travel constraints. This line of research could adhere to comparative studies by highlighting the positive

aspects of destination image and motivation studies and contrast this with the opposing point of view taken by perceived constraint studies.

Future research could also conduct a thorough analysis of risk perception and travel constraint, similar to the study by Yang and Nair (2014) which questioned the concept of risk perception and its alternative terms. An initial review of the subject indicates that past studies seem to have used risk perception and travel constraint interchangeably. In the tourism literature, this has caused confusion in understanding what risk is and what constraint is, as well as understanding tourists' experience of danger and travel difficulties. Academics need to know exactly what is being explored or measured, rather than just an approximate notion. Therefore, an up to date analysis of both terms and how they are conceptualized might provide future researchers useful insights when examining the complexity of destination images and travel intentions.

Second, given the imbalance in image versus risk cognitive attributes elicited from the literature review in the first publication (i.e. 45 compared with 17), future research should further evaluate the potential gap of cognition in the risk perception literature (e.g. ensuring all relevant risk variables are included in the theoretical model).

Third, convenience samples were used in studies 2 and 3, which limit the representativeness of the findings. Data collection was limited to university members, and the majority of the study participants were young, well-educated students. This may limit the generalizability of the findings. It should be noted that future research could benefit from adopting a multiple approach to demographic variables when applied to destination perceptions and intention to visit, as done previously by Prayag (2012). Individuals from different social cohorts or tourism segments may have different views on this matter. Hence, a more representative sample, including a wider range of socio-demographic and psychographic variables, would certainly improve the generalizability of the results. To this extent, this research provides a framework for the future exploration of destination perceptions for other communities and tourism segments.

Fourth, the second article conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with the aim of reducing the dimensions of risk perception, following previous studies (Adam, 2015; Fuchs, 2013; Reichel et al., 2007). However, the five dimensions derived from the EFA were not validated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). It would have been appropriate to conduct CFA as well. In study 3, EFA and CFA were conducted on the

same data set, which is a limitation of the research. If the same data is to be used, it is divided randomly into calibration and validation sub-samples or a second data set is used to validate the model using SEM. It would have been appropriate to use an additional data set to provide external validity for the findings of the third study.

Fifth, a one-way ANOVA test was used to examine gender (studies 2 and 3) and previous visits to Columbia (study 3). It would have been suitable to use independent samples t-test, with two sub-groups in the independent variable. In the second article, variation in the risk ratings based on respondents' prior travel experience was lost due to aggregation of the data. A two-way ANOVA tests could have been used to assess the interaction effects between variation in perceived risks in relation to previous visits to specific continents and respondent gender, age and education.

Sixth, the scaled data were not normalized prior to the analyses in studies 2 and 3, thereby not fulfilling the criterion of assumption of normality. In study 2, the unequal group sizes in the sample demographic sub-categories (e.g. female: 74.2%; age 18-27: 66.4%) have not fulfilled the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Yet, it is important to note that the Standard Deviation (SD) values are adequate despite the unequal group sizes in the sample demographic sub-categories. For example, the level of perceived physical risk was significantly different between male participants (Mean M=3.70, SD=1.48) and female participants (M=4.07, SD=1.53), and the SD of the age sub-category, in all sets of comparison, goes from 1.07 to 1.50. Nevertheless, it would have been pertinent to use Games-Howell procedure for the post hoc tests because it controls for type I errors while maintaining both statistical power and accuracy when sample sizes are unequal.

Seventh, this study assessed destination perceptions by adopting an attribute-based approach rather than a unique-based approach, and thus the unique holistic features of destination images were not taken into account (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003). Future studies incorporating quantitative or qualitative methodologies are recommended in order to obtain these unique holistic features of tourism destinations in order to assess whether the proposed model is further corroborated by unique features, as tested previously (Qu et al., 2011). Other studies encompass the unique characteristics of a tourism destination (Choi, Chan, & Wu, 1999; Hui & Wan, 2003), but lack data on tourists' future travel behavior. In addition, findings related to the proposed travel behavior model are limited to the factors selected and which influence destination perceptions. Future research can expand the model by including other factors such as sensation seeking (Lepp & Gibson, 2008), cultural proximity (Huang, Chen, & Lin, 2013)

and information search and decision making, especially the role of social media (Schroeder & Pennington-Gray, 2015). How these factors are related could be a further line of investigation in future studies. Besides, future studies should include examining how destination image and risk attributes are used in the decision choice process by tourists (i.e. in compensatory models or using non-compensatory heuristics).

Eighth, this study tested whether overall perception mediates the relationship between cognitive and affective evaluations and intention to visit. Intention to visit, however, is not the actual visit itself. Therefore, the study did not empirically test whether overall perception actually mediates cognitive and affective evaluations and actual travel behavior. Further studies would need to fully explore whether the mediating effect of overall perception, or satisfaction, extends between destination perceptions and actual visits to the selected tourism destination, as examined in similar studies (Chi & Qu, 2008; Lee, 2009; Ryan & Ninov, 2011).

Finally, a natural progression of this work would also be to analyze destination perceptions as a novel construct in other scenarios with the aim of finding out how effective it is as an assessment tool. This would be a fruitful area, as the results of the third article were limited to responses from individuals evaluating Colombia. Individuals evaluating other destinations may form different opinions and future research is encouraged to conduct similar surveys taking other tourism destinations as case studies. This is consistent with the notion that different attributes and emotions relating to different destinations form the base for different expectations of a travel experience (Um & Crompton, 1999). Another interesting line of research could be to conduct longitudinal studies on pre-trip and post-trip perceptions, as recent studies indicate (Martín, Beerli, & Nazzareno, 2017).

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